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A HISTORY OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE:  
PIONEER IN CHRISTIAN CO-OPERATION

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Department of Church History  
the Graduate School of Theology  
Oberlin College

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

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by  
E. Glenn Besco  
June 1963

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This study is an attempt to trace the history of the Evangelical Alliance. I was introduced to the Alliance by the biography of Philip Schaff. It appeared that this was an interesting and unexplored area of Church history. The Evangelical Alliance has been overlooked by most popular historians of the ecumenical movement. The only work that presents a comprehensive study is the all-embracing history of the ecumenical movement by Ruth Rouse and Stephen C. Neill. Even the renowned Church historian Kenneth S. Latourette relies upon Rouse and Neill's work for the note he makes of the Alliance. I am convinced that this has been a loss to those participating in the ecumenical movement. The material on the Alliance is available and should be more widely used. Many of the "new" problems of unity discussions were also troublesome to the Alliance.

I have been somewhat bound in this study by the fact that available materials deal extensively only with the American Alliance. This study is of such a nature that sources of information are continually being discovered. I discovered the British Evangelical Alliance still exists just in time to receive some information from them.

This study will begin with a rapid survey of the efforts to promote Christian union prior to the nineteenth century. This section is not intended to be anything but a bare sketch. In this introductory

chapter, I have included a sample of nineteenth century ecumenical thought prior to the Alliance in the work of S. S. Schmucker. The next chapters tell the story of the actual formation of the Alliance; the story of the American Alliance; the British Alliance; the major contributions of the Alliance in certain areas; and a brief analysis of the present relation of the Alliance to the modern ecumenical movement. This last chapter has been hindered by my lack of a complete understanding of the World Council of Churches.

A history of this type uses a special vocabulary. In this study the term "ecumenical movement" is used in reference to the World Council of Churches and the movements connected with it. Another word with a special meaning is "evangelical." This term applies to those persons or groups who subscribe to a conservative statement of the Christian faith such as the doctrinal basis of the Evangelical Alliance or the World Evangelical Fellowship. "Christian union" means mutual recognition as Christians by members of differing Church traditions. "Christian union" may or may not include organic union.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ALLIANCE IDEA

#### Early Efforts at Unity

Ever since the Jerusalem Council, called to heal the rift in the Church between the Judaizers and the Helenists, thoughtful men in the Church have been seeking to bring about a manifestation of that unity which is in Christ. The Ecumenical Councils of the first thousand centuries were generally concerned that the faith in Christ and its implications be correctly and uniformly manifested in the Church. Those who denied the councils and broke the unity of the Church, either for doctrinal or for practical reasons, found that they were outside of the fellowship of the majority of Christian believers. For the most part these heretical and schismatical groups eventually died out. The Monophysite and Nestorian Christians, who were cut off from general Christian fellowship as a result of the Christological controversies of the fifth century, have continued to maintain a separate existence to the present time. Until recent times there has been no regret on the part of the Christian community at large over this schism. These groups are considered heretical and, therefore, damned.

Another ancient schism presents a somewhat different picture. The Great Schism between the Eastern Church and the Western Church has prompted sincere regret and sporadic attempts to unite these two portions of the Church who share a common tradition reaching into the

middle ages. Since the split became final in the period of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries the two churches have grown further and further apart in their doctrine and in their practices. Still, attempts at unification are being made. As late as 1963, the Russian Orthodox Church and the Roman Church are making overtures toward each other.

Almost as soon as the Reformers pronounced their independence from the Pope at Rome, they began to seek ways to recover the broken unity of the visible church. The Diet of Augsburg was the well-known attempt to re-unite the Romans and the Lutherans. This attempt failed because neither side could abandon the points which split them. After Trent, such attempts have been doomed to failure.

The Reformers, then, looked at each other as possible allies in their conflict with the Roman hierarchy. The Marburg colloquy of 1529 is the best known attempt at union among the reformers. Luther and Zwingli could agree that the proper administration of the Sacraments and preaching of the Word are the essence of the Church; but, they could not agree on what the Sacrament was. Other attempts to reconcile the German, Swiss, and English reformation were made both by individuals and by consultations. None of them succeeded in forming any lasting union. Each group went its own way, dividing and sub-dividing as contemporary issues seemed to make division imperative. National divisions separated those groups which held to the same confessions and creeds, causing them to develop customs and usages differing widely from practices of those of the same confession in other nations.



It is not our purpose closely to examine the attempts to promote and express the unity of the Church prior to the nineteenth century. A few of the most outstanding efforts have been briefly mentioned to show that though, through human frailty the Church is divided, thoughtful Christians have always been distressed at the lack of harmony and unity in the visible Church.

#### The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

The Church in Great Britain has been the scene of extensive schism. Whether this is caused by the natural temperament of the British, or because of the rather stiff regulations of the government, it has had far reaching effects. By 1846, there were at least 45 separate and competing churches and sects in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. There were extremely bitter relations between many of the dissenters and the Established Church. The Established Church was itself split into two parties long before the Tractarian Controversy. The Church in Scotland presents an impossible picture of division, realignment and re-division. Scottish ecclesiastical feuds were as bitter as Scottish clan feuds. Attempts to enforce the Protestant Establishment in Ireland did not make for pleasant relations between Roman Catholics and Protestants in that part of the British Empire. The division between Christians was so deep that it was a common conviction that members of various denominations could not pray together. Some doctrine which caused division was certain to be mentioned and a fresh

impetus would be given to controversy. The British and Foreign Bible Society never had a prayer in its sessions from 1804 to 1859. Quakers were welcomed into the Bible Society and they could not participate in pre-arranged prayer. To many the best policy to promote unity was to avoid all contact with those of different opinions. It was generally believed that conferences aiming at restoring the unity of the Church would only intensify existing quarrels. Unanimity in belief was deemed to be a necessary prerequisite to conference between members of different sects.<sup>1</sup>

The Evangelical revivals which began spontaneously in various countries in the mid-eighteenth century, were substantially to change the ecclesiastical climate. When Christians began to feel the need to help their fellowman as a result of their own personal contact with the Savior, they found that it was absolutely necessary to form societies for this work which crossed ecclesiastical boundaries. When the Protestant churches began to look out from their own national and ecclesiastical limits they discovered that there were multitudes ignorant of the saving power of the gospel in their own countries and in the world at large. It was in evangelistic activity that the Protestant churches first began to lament their divisions and seriously attempt to remedy them. Here the Church discovered that the divisions which it

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<sup>1</sup> Ruth Rouse and Stephen Neill, A History of the Ecumenical Movement: 1517-1948 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954), p. 315.

took so seriously were incomprehensible to the unconverted.

One result of this re-awakened evangelistic zeal was schism in the church. The German Moravians and the English Methodists soon found that it was impossible to be a church within the Church. Their extreme warmth of devotion could not live inside of the rather cold established church. And yet, their passionate concern for the gospel and the souls of their fellows could not allow them to be indifferent to the need for unity in the Church. It is no accident that the German pietist, Count Zinzendorf, was one of the leading eighteenth century advocates of Christian union.

The Evangelical revivals of the eighteenth century were closely followed by a more wide-spread and far-reaching awakening in the early nineteenth century. This mood was expressed in the United States as the Second Great Awakening. This new wave of Evangelistic zeal found expression in both the United States and in Great Britain in a plethora of societies formed to do good works in response to the gospel.

Hundreds of voluntary societies were formed with members from various denominations represented in all of them. The Bible Societies even hired Roman Catholics to distribute the Scriptures in some countries. The societies were each organized for a specific purpose. There were Bible and tract societies, missionary societies, societies for seamen, societies to promote the Sabbath, temperance societies, anti-slavery societies, and anti-Roman Catholic societies. Many of the members of these societies were laymen who could not understand why the Church was

divided. As the Protestants worked together in their good works they came to realize that, though the differences between them were great, they were in agreement on a surprising number of points of doctrine. Cooperation in these voluntary societies set the climate for further discussion on fuller Christian cooperation.

In this climate there began to appear letters and appeals to Christians of all denominations to consider the causes which separated them and to see if there was some way in which the unity of the Church could be made visible. Dean Kniewal of Danzig, in 1842, made tours throughout the Continent advocating a plan for federation of Christians which would be similar to the federation of the United States. Dr. Merle d'Aubigné, the French Protestant leader, was working in the 1830's for a confederation among the Swiss churches. At Lyons, he succeeded in forming a "union church" of the various French Reformed factions in that city. As early as 1749, Gilbert Tennent, the American Presbyterian revivalist, wrote his Irenicum Ecclesiasticum with his views of peace in the church. Another American J. M. Mason, made a Plea for Sacramental Communion on Catholic Principles, in 1816. We shall take a close look at the plan of S. S. Schmucker later. His Fraternal Appeal to the American Churches appeared in 1838.<sup>2</sup> The editor of the New Englander in April, 1844, while reviewing a sermon by Rev. Thomas Brainerd at the Third Presbytery of Philadelphia in 1841, dreams of a council "for union

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<sup>2</sup> Rouse and Neill, op. cit., p. 318.

and communion, and for the extension of the saving knowledge of Christ."<sup>3</sup>

In 1839, repeated conferences were held between ministers of various denominations in London. The subject of Christian cooperation was considered by the London Congregational Board but was dropped.<sup>4</sup>

Interest in finding some means of promoting union or cooperation was becoming lively. Dr. Patton, an American Presbyterian, wrote, in 1845, to J. Angell James proposing a convention of delegates from the Evangelical churches of Europe, America, Scotland, Ireland, etc., to meet in London. The exact origin of the call for the conference at Liverpool, which was the climax of this period of "ecumenical" concern, is a disputed question. We shall consider this further when we discuss the Liverpool conference and the formation of the Evangelical Alliance, in the next section. The point is that in the nineteenth century there was a number of men concerned with the problems of the division of the Church.

### S. S. Schmucker

We shall now take a closer look at the ideas of S. S. Schmucker which are generally acknowledged to have served as the impetus for the discussion that culminated in the formation of the Evangelical

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<sup>3</sup> The New Englander, Vol. 2 (New Haven: A. H. Maltly, 1844), p. 254.

<sup>4</sup> The British Quarterly Review, Vol. III (London: Jackson and Walford, 1846), p. 526.

Alliance. Samuel S. Schmucker was a liberal American Lutheran. His liberal ideas caused him and his followers to be looked upon with suspicion by the more conservative Lutherans in the United States. He was the first professor of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. He served as head of the seminary from 1826 until 1864. He died in 1873, just before the New York Conference of the Evangelical Alliance.

His paper on Christian union was first published in The Biblical Repository for January and April, 1838.<sup>5</sup> Notice of his paper was made in several religious periodicals. At the annual meeting of the American Tract Society in New York, in 1839, a society for promoting Christian union and cooperation was formed. The society distributed Schmucker's Fraternal Appeal to the American Churches, with a Plan for Catholic Union on Apostolic Principles, to most of the evangelical clergy in the United States. Although the society survived only a short time, Schmucker's plan was thus made known to a larger audience.<sup>6</sup>

Schmucker analyzes the causes of Protestant strife and finds several reasons for continued Protestant disunity. The first cause is that churches are not connected by geographical location but are

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<sup>5</sup> The Christian Review, Vol. XII (Boston: William Heath, 1847), p. 155 ff.

<sup>6</sup> Philip Schaff and S. Irenaeus Prime (eds.), History, Essays, Orations, and Other Documents of The Sixth General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1874), p. 743.

connected with other churches, elsewhere, of the same creed. This naturally fails to promote unity in a single city. The second cause is closely related, in that churches of the same confessional family are divided on the ground of doctrinal diversity. Another reason for discord is that the churches insist upon using "creeds which embody not only the undisputed doctrines of Christianity, but also the sectarian principles of some particular denomination." No one seems to be trying to overcome denominational differences, because each new generation is trained to become sectarian. A deeper cause of strife is "sectarian idolatry or man-worship." Each denomination has its theologian whose words tend to become more important than the words of Christ. Then the churches are proud of their divisions, they are proud of their history and traditions, and because of this self-pride they maintain their peculiarities. A source of strife in the community with a divided Church is the particular zeal with which sects seek to proselytize in order to get more members and, therefore, more money into their treasury.<sup>7</sup> Schmucker thus points up the cause for much of Protestant strife. His task is then to see how the situation can be remedied and what obstacles must be overcome.

Schmucker called for a close federation of denominations in which each denomination would retain its own organization and worship

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<sup>7</sup> S. S. Schmucker, Fraternal Appeal to the American Churches, with a Plan for Catholic Union on Apostolic Principles, second edition (New York: Gould and Newman, 1839), p. 72 ff.

practices. The denominations would resolve not to discipline any member or minister for holding any doctrine which was held by any other of the confederated churches as long as his character was unexceptionable and he conformed to the rules of government, discipline, and worship adopted by his group. Schmucker's doctrinal basis was an amalgamation of the confessions of the confederating groups. He states his guiding principle:

That all those doctrines which the great body of all Christians whom God has owned by his grace and Spirit, and who have free access to the Scriptures, agree in finding in them are certainly taught there; and all those points on which they differ are less certain, are doubtful.<sup>8</sup>

Schmucker was convinced, as have been many men before and after him that the essentials of Christian faith could be defined and set up as the standard of Christian belief in a united Church. He rejected the idea of a council to arrive at the common confession because it would have to re-do all the discussions on each article, thus causing more strife. So he compiled what he called the United Protestant Confession in order to eliminate these problems. He used, entirely, phrases and articles from the recognized confessions. This creed was to be used as the term of sacramental, ecclesiastical and ministerial communion. His final creed was in two parts, the Apostle's Creed, which served to link the Protestant church with the ancient Church, and the United Protestant Confession. Schmucker believed that concord in fundamentals was the

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 98.



only doctrinal unity which existed among the New Testament Christians and thus was all that was necessary. He could not see the time when greater unity in doctrine would exist in the Church on earth. With this common confession of faith there would be no cause for discrimination at the communion table. He proposed an annual joint communion service to be held in each community, which would further strengthen the unity. In his plan, the Bible would gain a much larger place in Christian education than it had hitherto enjoyed. There would no longer be any need to spend so much time on peculiar confessions.

In cases relating to the common cause of Christianity there would be complete cooperation and unity in action. Missionaries going into foreign lands would use and profess no other creed than the Bible and the Apostolic Protestant Confession. They would be free to adopt any form of worship and government which they would prefer and which would best suit the needs of their converts.

There would be no supreme governing body in this plan because Schmucker was convinced that such bodies tend to "an increase of power-- they are the foster-mother of papacy, and dangerous to true liberty of conscience." A small "senatorial delegation" chosen equally from each denomination might meet for advice, not for legislation. They would not even meet at stated intervals lest they might become too powerful.<sup>9</sup>

He made no provision for the adoption of his plan. He asked

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<sup>9</sup> Schmucker, op. cit., pp. 90-128.

that prominent individuals cooperate and exert their influence for his proposals. He requested that his plan and the Apostolic Protestant Confession be printed in religious periodicals. He thought that he had to first gain friends among Christian individuals in the various denominations, who would then work for his plan, or for some better plan of union.

As to the adoption of the plan by individual denominations the duty and the glory of that is left to the leading minds and active friends of the Redeemer in each. Will they not speedily come to the help of the Lord, by stepping forth in behalf of the plan, forming voluntary associations of its friends, and bringing it before their several judicatories for discussion?<sup>10</sup>

Schmucker envisioned that these voluntary associations would be formed throughout the land. They would discuss the subject of Christian union in all its relations, approve the proposed Plan of Apostolic Protestant Union, or build a better plan if the need arose. They could raise funds to distribute good tracts on the subject; and each member would resolve to bring the object of the Appeal to the ecclesiastical bodies to which they belonged.

Although Schmucker's appeal was enthusiastically received in some quarters, the bulk of American Protestantism failed to take much note of it. Therefore, Schmucker reminded Protestantism of his appeal in 1845, in an address called, "Overture on Christian Union." In the "overture," he called for a meeting in New York during May, 1846. Due

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<sup>10</sup> Schmucker, op. cit., p. xv.

to the fact that a similar call was issued almost simultaneously from Liverpool for a conference on Christian union in London for 1846, Schmucker cancelled his call. Schmucker went to London and took part in the organization of the Evangelical Alliance.<sup>11</sup>

Schmucker was not satisfied with the Evangelical Alliance in its completed form. He looked upon it as a step in the right direction; but, not as the fulfillment of his dream. In preparation for the International Conference of the Evangelical Alliance which met in New York in 1873, Schmucker prepared a "Fraternal Appeal to the Friends of the Evangelical Alliance and of Christian Union." Although consideration of this document puts us beyond the formation of the Alliance, it would be well to consider Schmucker's plan for readjustment of the Alliance to better fulfill his hopes for Christian Union. This plan was for a council or federation of Churches. The World Evangelical Alliance would be formed of one hundred delegates from each national branch of the Alliance. These delegates would be elected by each denomination, according to its size. The delegation would be equally lay and clerical. The World Evangelical Alliance would meet every seven years. Its doctrinal basis would remain the same as that of the 1846 Evangelical Alliance. No one would be admitted to membership except members of a confederate church or congregation. Members would sign the doctrinal pledge, approve the design and constitution of the Evangelical Alliance,

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<sup>11</sup> Schaff and Prime, op. cit., p. 743. See Chapter 2.

and pay a set due. This world organization would be an "advisory council" to promote objects of common interest. "The design and great work of the World's Evangelical Alliance is to take under its review the general interests of Christianity and humanity in all nations, throughout the entire field which the Savior says, is the world."<sup>12</sup> This work would include foreign missions, subjects of peace, war, and international law.

The national Alliances would be free to organize as they saw fit. Schmucker gives a plan for the American branch. There would be an equal delegation from each denomination of lay and clerical delegates. They would meet triennially. The same qualifications would hold true for membership in the national branch as in the World's Evangelical Alliance. Delegations would come from church bodies counting five hundred ministers or over. Bodies with less than five hundred ministers would combine to make five hundred and send joint delegates. He suggests twenty-five delegates from each body; but, this number may be altered. The meetings of the American Alliance would be open to all church members. An individual might become a contributing member by sending in a contribution. Schmucker foresaw that not all of the "highest judicatories" of the denominations would consent to send delegates. In this case those members of such denominations could group together and send one-half the denominational quota of delegates. The

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<sup>12</sup> Schaff and Prime, op. cit., p. 744.

objects of such a national alliance would be to promote harmony, to supply the gospel to waste places, to maintain Bible reading in public schools, to prepare tracts and circulate them, to make concerted action in missions to heathen immigrants, and "to promote love and sacramental communion, recognition and co-operation among Christians of different denominations in objects of common interest."<sup>13</sup>

The individual denominations would maintain their existing officers and rules. They would act as a branch of the Alliance by assigning time in their fixed order of business to the affairs of the Alliance. It goes without saying that the denominations must be evangelical and must have five hundred ministers. They would also have to approve the Constitution and design of the World's Evangelical Alliance and the American National Branch, and elect delegates to the conferences of these bodies. When acting as a branch of the Alliance their actions would be merely advisory to their congregations. The chief duty of the denominational branches would be to discuss the topics and recommendations of the world and national bodies and to take any necessary action on them.

It is interesting to note that while Schmucker's plans are basically federations of churches, he envisions far more than has been embodied in present-day federations. He would have complete inter-communion and free exchange of ministers. He would have the federated

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

body take charge of, or at least set policy for, forms of outreach beyond the local parish. He envisioned that denominational organizations would speedily be dissolved. This is somewhat more than a mere federation of churches.

Schmucker's plan of union suffers from the same fault which afflicts any plan that tries to set a minimum basis of doctrinal agreement. There is never agreement on what constitutes these minimal requirements. Terms of admission of members cannot be left as a non-essential to the Baptist, who must insist upon baptism of adult members by immersion. This implies a difference in understanding of the meaning of the Sacraments within the evangelical churches that Schmucker ignores.

Schmucker was heard by only a part of his own American Lutheranism. Most people regarded his suggestions as an interesting experiment and nothing more. The Evangelical Alliance refused to have his last paper read at the New York conference. It was merely printed in the final report with the note that although this was a proper subject for discussion, no action could be taken due to constitutional restrictions against interfering with denominational relations and ecclesiastical legislation. Schmucker was not in a position to be heard by a wide public. He was a small voice in a minority group. He was satisfied to make the appeals for action and to leave the actual work to more capable hands for accomplishment. When the Liverpool invitation came he was happy to cancel his meeting in order that the other might have free reign. Schmucker's voice was heard by others who were able to reach a

wider audience and who could accomplish a part of that for which he hoped.

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## CHAPTER III

## THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE IS FORMED

The Liverpool Conference

By 1845, the need was widely felt for a general conference of Protestant Christians. The mood had gained several proponents in England and in America. Both countries can justly lay claim to giving rise to the idea that sparked the Liverpool meeting in 1845. Dr. Leonard Bacon, Dr. William Paton and Dr. Robert Baird, in the autumn of 1843, wrote to Rev. J. Angell James of Birmingham and to Dr. Merle d'Aubigné to ask them to bring the proposition forward. Dr. Baird says that they did, in 1844, and that their call resulted in the Liverpool conference.<sup>1</sup> J. Angell James had already suggested at a meeting of the Congregational Union, in 1842, that a union of voluntary churches would be desirable. This suggestion led to a meeting, on June 1, 1843, at Exeter Hall, of people from many denominations including the Church of England. There were 12,000 tickets issued to people in attendance at this meeting.<sup>2</sup> This meeting could have led to the Liverpool conference. The editor of The Christian Observer, the paper of the evangelical party in the Church of England, credits the Liverpool conference to the

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Baird, The Progress and Prospects of Christianity in the United States of America (London: Partridge and Oakey, 1851), p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> Rouse and Neill, op. cit., p. 319.



proceedings of the Anti-Maynooth Committee that met in the spring of 1844. This meeting was called by Sir Culling Smith in protest of the Maynooth College Endowment proposed by Sir Robert Peel and the cabinet. The Maynooth endowment was an attempt to endow a Roman Catholic college by the British cabinet. This protest meeting brought Protestants together in opposition to this measure and the discussion could have led to the Liverpool meeting.<sup>3</sup> All of these events contributed to the resolution of a group of Scottish ministers to issue the call for the Liverpool conference. J. Angell James and Sir Culling Smith were active in the Liverpool conference as well as these preliminary meetings. It has been suggested that the duty of calling the conference was given to the Scottish churches because they were not so involved with the strife of the English churches.

At any rate, the call which directly resulted in the conference came from fifty-five Scots who represented the Free Church of Scotland, United Secession Church, Relief Church, Reformed Presbyterian Church, Original Session Church, Congregational and Baptist Churches. The call went to "Evangelical Christians of England, Wales, and Ireland." The announced object of the meeting was, "To associate and concentrate the strength of an enlightened Protestantism against the encroachments of Popery and Puseyism; and to promote the interests of a

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<sup>3</sup> The Christian Observer, Vol. 45 (London: J. Hatchard and Son, 1845), p. 735.

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<sup>3</sup> The Christian Observer, Vol. 45 (London: J. Hatchard and Son, 1845), p. 735.

scriptural Christianity."<sup>4</sup> This invitation was sent only to those who had publicly manifested their concern for union. In addition to representatives from the above free churches there were twenty members of the Established Church present. In all, about 216 persons were actually present. The meeting lasted three days. There were six public meetings and several sub-committee meetings "for framing resolutions and the course of future action." The entire first meeting was given to prayer and reading of the Scriptures.<sup>5</sup> From the beginning of the conference it was clear that the meeting would be more than a devotional, union meeting. The intention was to indicate a basis for a greater meeting on the subject of Christian Union.

The Christian Observer published a letter from the Rev. E. Bickersteth, an evangelical Anglican, in which he lists the resolutions of the Liverpool conference. The meeting was chaired by the Rev. J. A. James of Birmingham; the Rev. Dr. Raffles of Liverpool; the Rev. Edward Bickersteth; the Rev. Dr. Newton; the Rev. W. Innes of Edinburg; and the Rev. Dr. John Brown of Edinburgh. The important resolutions are included as an appendix.

Then the conference expressed its opinion that "alienation of Christians from one another, on account of lesser differences, has been one of the greatest evils in the Church of Christ." This has been the

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 735.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 728.

chief hindrance to the progress of the gospel both at home and abroad. Those assembled expressed their own humiliation for their part in theological and ecclesiastical disputes. They had good reason to do this because many of them were leading antagonists of the Established church. They "earnestly and affectionately recommended" that they, as well as their friends "put away all bitterness and wrath, anger and clamour, and evil speaking, with all malice." They agreed to spend some time in the forenoon of each Monday in prayer for the Holy Spirit to hasten and solidify all attempts to promote Christian union. The conference was happy to report that not only was there "a general and warm desire for extended Christian union, but ample ground of common truth, on a cordial belief in which the assembled brethren could themselves unite, for many important objects." At this time it was still deemed necessary for there to be broad agreement on doctrine before any Christian organization could be formed. This was one way of insuring a kind of harmony which might not be so easily attained in a more heterogenous group. The members of this conference, as well as those at the London conference, were conscious of a threat to Christianity from skepticism and the coming industrial revolution. Already at this time the social reforms of British voting practices had been accomplished. This concern led the conference to see this doctrinal basis as a kind of testimony to Truth. The next conference was to embrace only such persons as "hold and maintain what are usually understood to be evangelical views" of Christian doctrine. The basis agreed upon at Liverpool is as follows:

1. The Divine inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of Holy Scripture.

2. The unity of the Godhead, and the Trinity of persons therein.

3. The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall.

4. The incarnation of the Son of God, and his work of atonement for sinners of mankind.

5. The justification of the sinner by faith alone.

6. The work of the Holy Spirit in the conversion and sanctification of the sinner.

7. The right and duty of private judgment in the interpretation of Holy Scripture.

8. The Divine institution of the Christian ministry, and the authority and perpetuity of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.<sup>6</sup>

The Conference made provision for a Provisional Committee of four geographical divisions to meet in an aggregate meeting in Liverpool in January and at Birmingham in April. The aggregate meetings were empowered to make all the necessary arrangements for the general meeting to be held in London in the next summer. The Provisional Committee was to "use their efforts, by holding meetings, and by other suitable means, to awaken attention to the subject of Christian Union, to explain the objects, and, as far as possible, to diffuse the Spirit of the present Conference in several localities."<sup>7</sup> There was little discussion on what

<sup>6</sup> The Christian Observer, Vol. 45, p. 729.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 729 ff.

the practical objects of the proposed Alliance would be. These were to come from the Provisional Committee.

An extensive body of literature rapidly appeared on the subject of the Proposed Evangelical Alliance. The conference published a Brief Statement of the Proceedings of the Conference in Liverpool for Promoting Christian Union, and of the Object of the Proposed Evangelical Alliance. The London Branch of the Provisional Committee published an address on the subject. Persons who were at the conference wrote brief addresses which were either published separately or in periodicals. The Archbishop of Dublin, Richard Whately, published an open letter to his clergy in which he forbid them to join the Alliance, because it could only lead to further division by starting a new church. The Christian Observer published severe criticisms of the Alliance after it was urged to publish a letter of Rev. Edward Bickersteth on the subject. The editor of The Christian Observer was alarmed at the thought of the proposed Alliance because some of the members of the Liverpool conference and many of the Alliance supporters were public exponents of definite anti-Establishment principles. He quoted all of the Alliance leaders who ever spoke against the Establishment and assumed that they had not changed their minds on this subject. It was apparently true that some of the more zealous evangelicals did see the Alliance as a move to get rid of Popishness and Establishment in one blow. Because the invitation to Liverpool came from Scotland, the Alliance was identified with a renewed interest in the Solemn League and Covenant occasioned by the two-

hundredth anniversary of the League. One doubtful source of the invitation was from an anniversary celebration of the League and Covenant held in Scotland just prior to the Liverpool invitation. The editor did not want any united opposition to establishment nor could he understand how a loyal Church of England man could associate with dissenters in Christian Union.

The Christian Observer makes its sharpest blows at the doctrinal basis adopted at Liverpool. The editor charged that the basis was too ambiguous and open to such wide interpretation that it did not say anything. The phrase "what is generally understood to be evangelical views" had no meaning to him; given their interpretations it could embrace the Tractarians as well as Papists. "The divine institution of the Christian ministry" was open to the same charge. Did this mean the apostolic succession or did it mean some general ministerial function given outside of the traditional laying on of hands. He makes quite a bit out of apparently unreconcilable doctrinal differences. He wonders if they will sing Wesleyan "free grace" hymns or Calvinist "predestination" hymns. Certainly some of his fears were well taken; but he seems motivated by fear of the dissenters and fear of trying the unknown more than by common sense.

Other persons shared these fears of such an organization as the proposed Alliance. At the fiftieth anniversary celebration of the Alliance, A. J. Arnold tells of a man who remarked to Rev. J. Angell James, "Oh you will, all of you, be like the clean and unclean beasts in

Noah's ark." Rev. James is reported to have answered, "If we get on as quietly and harmoniously as they did in the ark, I shall be quite satisfied."<sup>8</sup> It was still a popular opinion that the best way to act toward those who differed from you was to bring them around to your point of view. It seemed ridiculous and even scandalous to many persons to think of pretending to be in agreement with other denominations, even if disagreements were acknowledged. This opinion is summed up in the following quotation from the dissenting newspaper, The Patriot.

Though men may have the root of the matter in them, yet, if many, or even a few of their leading sentiments are anti-scriptural, or if their conduct in some chief particular is at variance with the rules of the Gospel, it is my duty to refuse spiritual fellowship with them, till they become orthodox and holy. I am not to hate or injure; but instead of treating them as worthy disciples of Christ, I am to do all God commands me for reclaiming them from the paths of error and sin.<sup>9</sup>

#### The London Conference

Invitations to the General Conference to be held in London were sent to evangelical Christians throughout the world. Some of those who received the invitation in America met in New York, on May 12 and 13, 1846, to discuss the proposal. The meeting rejoiced in the proposed general Convention of Christians in London. They approved of the basis

<sup>8</sup> A. J. Arnold (ed.), Jubilee of the Evangelical Alliance: Proceedings of the Tenth International Conference. Held in London, June 29-July 4, 1896 (London: John F. Shaw and Co., 1897), p. 45.

<sup>9</sup> The Christian Observer, Col. 46, p. 498.



if it implied a doctrine of eternal rewards and punishment. This suggestion resulted in a ninth article of the basis. The Americans felt that the London meeting should say something about the Sabbath. They hoped that in the proposed union individual liberty in regard to worship forms would be maintained. They hoped that one result would be a wider diffusion of the Bible. They rejoiced in the proposal to hear reports of the state of evangelical religion in various countries. Justin Edwards, Henry Pohlman, John McLeod, William Patton, Leonard Bacon, Romeo Elton, and Alexander Mann signed the document which was sent to the London provisional committee.<sup>10</sup>

After careful and thorough preparation the Conference on Christian Union finally got under way in London on August 19, 1846. There were nine-hundred-twenty-five members who listed their names on the rolls. Almost one-third, or two-hundred-ninety-five were laymen.

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<sup>10</sup> Report of the Proceedings of the Conference held at Freemason's Hall, London, from August 19th to Sept. 2nd, 1846 (London: Partridge & Oakey, 1847), p. xxvi. Hereinafter referred to as, Report of the Proceedings.... Correspondence in reply to the invitation to come to London was received from several sources: The Church in Geneva; a Pastoral Conference in Berlin; the Evangelical Synod of Tecklenburg; A. Capadose, M.D., the Hague; A. W. Möller, Lübeck; a Pastoral Conference of Evangelical Ministers at Königsberg; Evangelical Church at Morges; Ministers in Dantzic; Dr. Merle d'Aubigné containing a plea for Lutherans in Russian; Missionaries and other Christians at the Cape of Good Hope; an Evangelical Alliance formed in Canada; Convention of Friends of Christian Union in New York; the Toronto Association for Christian Union; the Ministers of Baltimore, U.S.A.; New Hampshire Free Will Baptists; Perth, Canada, Evangelical Alliance; Baptist Union, Birmingham; Methodist New Connexion, Manchester; Wesleyan Methodist Association, whose annual assembly urged that the basis be changed to allow Quakers to become members; The Wesleyan Conference; and the Anti-Slavery Society of London, who urged the exclusion of slave holders.

The American delegation was rather small; seventy-five persons listed the United States as their homes. This American delegation was largely clerical; only fifteen laymen are listed. Most of the Americans were delegated by their ruling ecclesiastical bodies to attend the conference. This act of delegation indicates an active interest in Christian union among the American churches. A complete list of American delegates will be found in the appendix. The meeting was dominated by British Congregational, Methodist, and Established Churchman. It is interesting to note the list of denominations represented. Many of the groups listed have long since disappeared or merged with other groups. There is also some apparent confusion of denominational names. Some members refused to list their denomination, preferring to be known simply as evangelical Christians. There are fifty-four denominations listed, some with only one representative.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The complete list is as follows: Advent Church, 2; African Methodist Episcopal, 1; American Episcopal, 1; Associate Reformed, 1; Associate Synod of Ulster, 1; Baptist, 76; Bible Christians, 4; Calvinistic Methodists, 7; Congregationalist, 183; Church of God, 1; Dutch Reformed, 4; English Presbyterian Church, 34; Church of England, 135; Church of Geneva, 2; Church of Scotland, 14; Evangelical Church, Brussels, 1; Evangelical Church of France, 2; Evangelical Friends, 1; Evangelical Lutheran, 3; Free Church of England, 1; Free Church of Scotland, 27; Free Evangelical Church of France, 1; French Congregational Church, 1; French Protestant Church, 1; Swedish Protestant Church, 2; Reformed Church of France, 2; French Reformed Church, 5; General Baptist, 4; General Lutheran Church, 1; German Reformed, 1; Irish Established Church, 19; Irish Presbyterian, 17; Lutheran Church, 7; Methodist Episcopal Church, 17; Methodist New Connexion, 3; Moravian, 4; Original Separation, 2; Primitive Methodist, 8; Reformed Church of Bremen, 1; Reformed Church of Geneva, 1; Reformed German Church, 1; Reformed Presbyterian, 15; Reformed Swiss Church, 4; (continued on page 30)

The Conference was chaired by Sir Culling Eardley Smith.

Lists of possible chairmen for devotional, business, and public meetings were proposed by the Provisional Committee and approved by the Conference. All of the chairmen for the business sessions were laymen. There was some concern that Americans should be represented on these lists; but, it was decided not to include them because they were unfamiliar with English ways of conducting business. Reporters were banned from the conference. The proceedings and discussions were recorded by stenographers and made public in the Report of the Proceedings of the Conference.... Members were asked not to release reports to the press until after the conference was over. The reason for this is obvious. They did not want the meeting to be misrepresented.

The members were invited by Rev. B. W. Noel, of the Church of England, to participate in Holy Communion at his church on the first Sunday of the conference. About 150 of the brethren from various denominations attended the 8:00 service.<sup>12</sup> Each session was opened with devotional exercises conducted by various ministers.

The Provisional Committee had done its work well. A complete agenda of resolutions was proposed and placed in the hands of the

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(continued from page 29) Theological School, Geneva, 1; United Church, Prussia, 4; United Evangelical German, 1; United Secession, 47; Welsh Congregationalist, 1; Welsh Calvinistic Methodist, 2; Wesleyan Association, 12; Wesleyan Methodist, 168; Relief Synod, 7; Secession Church, 1; Presbyterian, U.S.A., 31. (Report of the Proceedings..., Appendix C, p. xcvi.)

<sup>12</sup> Report of the Proceedings..., p. 159.

members of the conference. These resolutions were carefully scrutinized by the conference before they were adopted. The first hurdle which had to be passed in the formation of the Alliance was the feasibility of the Alliance idea. This had been well debated in the preceding months; the members came with the conviction that they could and would form an Evangelical Alliance. At the Liverpool conference, there was some question as to just what this union would be. Some clearly hoped for an organized union of churches, others believed that a federation of churches would be possible, while the majority were of the opinion that there could be no visible union except of persons on the basis of certain common and essential points of doctrine. Denominational differences were still too important to be overlooked. The goal was a manifestation of the essential unity of the invisible Church, which could be most practically expressed in the lives of individuals acting on the ground of their common Christianity. The purpose of the Evangelical Alliance was not to create the unity of the Church, but to confess and express it. It was hoped that the members could exhibit to the world, "that a living and everlasting union binds all true believers together in the fellowship of the Church of Christ." The conference expressed their deep sense of sinfulness at their participation in the divisions of the Church. It might be noted that several members opposed this resolution on the grounds that they did not feel any particular guilt for the divisions.

The Alliance was formed with the following resolution.

That, therefore, the members of this conference are deeply convinced of the desirableness of forming a confederation on the basis of great evangelical principles held in common by them, which may afford opportunity to members of the Church of Christ of cultivating brotherly love, enjoying Christian intercourse, and promoting such other objects as they may hereafter agree to prosecute together; and they hereby proceed to form such a confederation under the name of "THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE."<sup>13</sup>

As soon as this resolution passed, the conference rose in unison and sang the doxology. It took several minutes to restore order, so great was the rejoicing. The first hurdle had been passed; the Alliance had been formed. The rejoicing was great but a little premature; they had only decided on the need for such an organization and its name. There were still thorny problems in the road to complete formation.

The next crisis to be faced in the formation of this new experiment in Christian cooperation was to determine what the doctrinal basis of admission would be. The Liverpool doctrinal basis was only intended to be a guide for further discussion. There had been plenty of discussion in the months between Liverpool and London. Dr. Chalmers, who was very influential in the formation of the Alliance, urged that the proposed Alliance abandon the Liverpool basis and replace it with the simple confession of Peter: that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. He argued that this was the only essential in which they could all unite. But, his argument did not make much impression on the friends of the Alliance. Instead of being shortened, the basis was en-

<sup>13</sup> Report of the Proceedings..., p. 74.

larged. The Americans had insisted that a ninth article be included which would serve to witness against Universalism, which was presenting a real threat to New England theology. The conference was very much concerned with satisfying the Americans. Thus, the article that became the eighth article was introduced.

The basis was considered seriatim and then sent to a committee who returned it with the articles rearranged in their present form. In addition to the introduction of the article on the judgment, the article dealing with the Christian ministry and the Sacraments received much discussion. This was due to the desire of many members of the conference to include the Quakers in their fellowship. It was generally concluded that the Quakers were Christians; but, as the discussion pointed out, the Quakers were rejected by the article on the Scriptures as surely as they were by the sacramental article. This article testifying to the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures was deemed so important in the Protestant protest against Rome that it could not be abandoned. If this article cast out the Quakers then there was no reason to delete the article on sacraments, because the conference was fully agreed on its truth. A very interesting point was brought out in these discussions on the doctrinal basis. The sentiment was stated without challenge that the Alliance did not propose to include all Christians. This is a curious fact. While they wished to witness to Christian unity, they could not include all Christians in their fellowship. There was a heated debate over the explaining clause which followed the statement of

the basis. The clause was sent to a committee where it was completely re-worded, but still maintaining its original sense. The original clause was clumsily worded and was passed in an improved form.

The doctrinal basis was finally ratified, nemine contradicente, on August 24. At the announcement of this, the conference rose and sang, "All Hail the Great Immanuel's Name." The basis with the accompanying explanations is as follows:

With a view, however, of furnishing the most satisfactory explanation, and guarding against misconception, in regard to their design, and the means of its attainment, they deem it expedient explicitly to state as follows:

Resolved, That the parties composing the Alliance shall be such persons only as hold and maintain what are usually understood to be evangelical views, in regard to the matters of doctrine understated, namely,

1. The Divine Inspiration, Authority, and Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures.

2. The Right and Duty of Private Judgment in the Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.

3. The Unity of the Godhead, and the Trinity of the Persons therein.

4. The utter Depravity of Human Nature in consequence of the Fall.

5. The Incarnation of the Son of God, His work of Atonement for sinners of mankind, and His Mediatorial Intercession and Reign.

6. The Justification of the sinner by Faith alone.

7. The work of the Holy Spirit in the Conversion and Sanctification of the sinner.

8. The Immortality of the Soul, the Resurrection of the Body, the Judgment of the World by our Lord Jesus Christ, with

the Eternal Blessedness of the Righteous, and the Eternal Punishment of the Wicked.

9. The Divine institution of the Christian Ministry, and the obligation and perpetuity of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

It is, however, distinctly declared: First, that this brief Summary is not to be regarded, in any formal or Ecclesiastical sense, as a Creed or Confession, nor the adoption of it as involving an assumption of the right authoritatively to define the limits of Christian Brotherhood, but simply as an indication of the class of persons whom it is desirable to embrace within the Alliance: Second, that the selection of certain tenets, with the omission of others, is not to be held as implying that the former constitute the whole body of important Truth, or that the latter are un-important.<sup>14</sup>

The Evangelical Alliance has been criticized because of the restricted nature of its doctrinal basis. While the limits of its basis have been one of the causes which prevented the Alliance from fulfilling the dreams of its founders, it must be remembered that this basis was drawn up in 1846. Christians were still generally confident in the absolute truth of their doctrinal statements. It must be admitted that the basis is a summary of Christian doctrine as taught and affirmed by the majority of Christians. The basis has served its purpose of limiting and defining the bounds of fellowship which Christians of the nineteenth century and which conservative Christians of the twentieth century could not in good conscience overstep. S. H. Cox of America summed up the reasons of the conference for having such a doctrinal

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<sup>14</sup> Report of the Proceedings..., p. 189.



basis in his speech supporting it. He says that it will be used as a test of admission which will serve to guard the Alliance against embracing false Christians. It will serve as a bond of union, a point to which all members can testify as true. And most important of all it will serve as a testimony to the world of the truth which binds all evangelical Protestants. It will show the Romans and skeptics that Protestantism is united even though it may appear in diverse forms. The feeling was strong that such an affirmation of Truth would help stem the advancing tide of the foes of evangelical Christianity.

One of the chief objections to the Alliance was that it did not propose any practical objects. Those who had not been involved in the meetings were convinced that the Alliance members were sitting up in their ivory tower having some kind of esoteric experience which had no connection with everyday life. The editor of The New Englander thought that they had sacrificed a great deal to get this pleasant spiritual feeling. He could not see associating with Established Churchmen, who were so corrupted by their system. He called for an Alliance based upon definite anti-establishment principles. He wanted the Alliance to set as its objects the removal of all state churches and of Roman Catholicism. This was one proposed object for the Alliance. Dr. Chalmers had this same object in mind when he proposed a Protestant Alliance without a doctrinal basis but with the practical objects of anti-Romanism and education of the poor.

Happily, the members of the Alliance saw that there were al-

ready too many societies organized for such practical ends. The editor of The British Quarterly Review must have had several supporters in the conference, because his warning that the Alliance must not be "organized intolerance" was heeded. He could not see how the Alliance could undertake any practical action with such a vast and diverse membership.

"Their vocation, as the friends of Christian Union, is, not to become correctors of public bodies or of systems, but simply to receive all good men who are willing to be of their fellowship."<sup>15</sup> It was hoped that its object would be to promote the causes of Christianity and the unity of the Church.

Since the Alliance was composed of individual Christians only, its objects were those which would be accomplished by individual action.

The great object of the Evangelical Alliance be, to aid in manifesting, as far as practicable, the unity which exists among the true disciples of Christ; to promote their union by fraternal and devotional intercourse; to discourage all envyings, strifes, and divisions; to impress upon Christians a deeper sense of the great duty of obeying their Lord's command to "love one another," and to seek the full accomplishment of his prayer.<sup>16</sup>

The members of the Alliance were reminded that it would be an important step toward Christian union if they would do their duty

...to be kind, tender-hearted, forbearing one another in love, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath for-

<sup>15</sup> The British Quarterly Review, Vol. III, p. 533.

<sup>16</sup> Report of the Proceedings..., p. 240.

given them; in everything seeking to be followers of God, as dear children, and to walk in love as Christ also has loved them.<sup>17</sup>

In the time of extremely scathing ecclesiastical debate this was a very practical and helpful encouragement.

To further the Alliance's objects it was decided to receive at conferences reports of the progress of vital religion in all parts of the world and to open and maintain correspondence with Christian brethren who may be in difficulty and opposition, to encourage them, and to diffuse interest in their welfare.

The Alliance contemplates chiefly the stimulating of Christians to such efforts as the exigencies of the case may demand, by giving forth its views in regard to them, rather than carrying out these views by an organization of its own.<sup>18</sup>

In the area of promoting religious liberty the Alliance found what was to be its chief object.

Dr. Schmucker was given the responsibility of moving the adoption of the organization of the Evangelical Alliance. The plan was to have an "ecumenical," world-wide fellowship. Immediately, it was decided to consider Schmucker's motion seriatim. The first clause read:

That the Alliance shall consist of those persons, in all parts of the World, who shall concur in the Principles and Objects adopted by the Conference; it being understood that such Members adhere as Christians, in their individual capacity.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 212.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 240.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 290.

As soon as this clause had been read, Rev. J. Howard Hinton, a London Baptist, moved:

That in the First Clause, after the words "those persons," the words "not being Slaveholders," be inserted.<sup>20</sup>

He did this because of the proposal to make a General Organization that would bring all branches into close contact. This motion caused quite a stir from the conference, so much so that one brother had to rise to ask that there be no more "audible marks of disapprobation or the contrary." Thus the controversy began which was to wreck the Alliance's hopes of accomplishing a world-wide organization. Dr. Hinton and most of the British members could not recognize the Christian character of slaveholders and could not meet with them in Christian fellowship.

It had been anticipated that this issue would arise. The Americans had hoped that the Alliance would leave this issue completely alone and busy itself with other urgent matters. The relations between the United States and Great Britain were rather touchy at this time because of commercial and political difficulties. There was also very strong anti-slavery sentiment throughout the British Isles. The emancipation of British slaves had come, peacefully, only ten years prior, after a long and bitter conflict. The British could not understand the apparent American compromise with slavery. The radical

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 290.

abolitionist views of Garrison had gained a wide audience in Britain. These radical ideas were not popular with the American delegation. This was certainly the hottest issue of the day.

In order not to cut off much of its support in the British Isles the Provisional Committee, at an aggregate meeting in Birmingham in April, 1846, passed a resolution as follows:

That, while this Committee deem it unnecessary and inexpedient to enter into any question on the subject of Slaveholding, or on the difficult circumstances in which Christian Brethren may be placed in Countries where the law of Slavery prevails; they are of opinion, that invitations ought not to be sent to individuals, who, whether by their own fault, or otherwise, may be in the unhappy position of holding their fellow-men as Slaves.<sup>21</sup>

This new restriction did not reach New York until May, when several of the delegates had already embarked for the meeting. The Americans did not have time for any formal action on this matter before coming to London. Upon their arrival in London they were given a form to sign in which they approved of the "Doctrinal basis and principles contained in the accompanying document." They were thus enrolled as corresponding members of the Evangelical Alliance. At the same time their attention was directed to a separate document compiled by the London Division in July, 1846. This document called attention to the Birmingham resolution printed above, and stated that this matter would be brought to the attention of the August conference. The

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 402.

Americans regarded this document as objectionable. In addition to the issue being irrelevant and coming too late for consideration, it was offensive to them as Americans. They stated that it was calculated "to wound the feelings of unoffending Christian Brethren in the Slaveholding states, and to retard the abolition of slavery" in the United States. The British just did not understand the American position. They could not see how a man could be opposed to slavery and still hold slaves. The American protest finally met with some sympathy when the entire delegation suggested that they would pull out of the Alliance if the British did not stop interfering in this matter.

The Americans were disappointed that this issue had been raised. They had hoped that all members in good standing of all Protestant denominations might be members of "this holy Alliance"; and that any difficulties and evils seemingly "inconsistent with true religion" would be taken care of by the "proper ecclesiastical organization." They would have left all national and local evils to national and local agencies.<sup>22</sup> This was not a straw man that they were fighting. There were Americans who tried to enter the conference but were denied membership in the Evangelical Alliance because they were slaveholders. Dr. S. H. Cox reminded the conference of the case of a Mr. Gordon, a pious man from Kentucky, who owned nine slaves and who had been rejected by the Alliance. American slaveholders continued to be

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<sup>22</sup> Robert Baird, op. cit., p. 43.

rejected from British and international Alliance meetings until after 1865.

This issue came up late Thursday night. All day Friday was spent in debate. The conference had planned to adjourn before the week was over, but without a settlement on this issue this was not possible. Finally the issue was referred to a committee to meet early Saturday morning and to report back that evening with a solution. Finally a resolution allowing Slaveholders was passed, provided that they held their slaves because they had no other choice. This was an unhappy compromise. The conference recessed to meet again on Monday. Monday the subject was again brought forth. Both the abolitionists and the Americans were not satisfied with the compromise requirement. After the matter had been discussed all morning, it was decided to return it to the same committee for reconsideration. The conference adjourned until Tuesday morning, September 1. The conference had been in session for eleven days. Many of the members had left and those remaining were getting weary of debate.

The outcome was that, on Tuesday morning, the conference passed resolutions which left the details of organization uncertain until the branch Alliances could be formed and another general conference held. Members of district organizations could become members of the Alliance only by the consent of all the district organizations or by a vote of a general conference. They could be members of any district organization by requirements set up by the district. The

district organizations were not to be held responsible for the actions of any other district. Seven areas were recommended for the formation of district organizations: The United Kingdom; The United States; France, Belgium, and French Switzerland; North of Germany; South of Germany and German Switzerland; British North America; the West Indies.

A General Conference was to be convened as soon as it was desired by the district organizations and with their unanimous concurrence. Provided, that the members of the London conference, who retain their membership, were considered members, and that "all questions relating to the convening of it shall be determined by such members only of the district organizations, as shall also be members of the Alliance."<sup>23</sup> Thus, in the words of Sir Culling Smith, "The Conference refused to give a diluted testimony against slavery. That it found it impossible to retain its testimony as it stood; but that, it sacrificed to its sense of duty in the matter of slavery, the cherished idea of an immediate, numerous, mutually responsible Ecumenical membership."<sup>24</sup>

To many of the English, the Alliance had shown a soft stand on the subject of slavery by refusing to pretend to form a General

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<sup>23</sup> Report of the Proceedings..., p. 503.

<sup>24</sup> Arthur Tappan, et. al., Remonstrance and Protest against the course pursued by the Evangelical Alliance on the question of American Slavery (New York: W. Harned, 1847).



Organization based on the exclusion of slaveholders. Such an organization could not have been world-wide because it would have excluded the entire American delegation. The extreme radical anti-slavers could only believe that the slavery issue had been purposely avoided to form a kind of world Alliance which might have some slaveholders in it. Immediately after the Alliance adjourned, a protest meeting was staged in Exeter Hall by the Anti-church-and-state party. The rallying point of the meeting was anti-slavery. Lloyd Garrison and George Thompson were the chief speakers. They vehemently attacked the English ministers for giving in to the Americans and the Americans for their "hypocritical and sanctimonious support of slavery." The meeting met with such hearty approval from the English people that the London Patriot pronounced this as the death blow for the Evangelical Alliance.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, in spite of open opposition, and misunderstanding, for better or for worse, the Evangelical Alliance was launched. In spite of its rather unhappy ending the London conference was truly remarkable. It was the first meeting of its kind. Never before had so many from so far been convened with the sole purpose of doing something about the divisions of the Church. It was unique in that, in an age when such a thing was unheard of, it tried to embrace Calvinist and Arminian, dissenter and Churchman in its fellowship. The task was not

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<sup>25</sup> The New Englander, Vol. V, p. 106.

easy, as Dr. Edward Steane, the first Secretary of the Alliance, wrote,

It has required incessant thoughtfulness and the most watchful care lest an indiscreet word spoken or sentence written should wound the sensitiveness or offend the prejudices of the curiously mixed and balanced ideas of which our association is composed.<sup>26</sup>

The meeting was a mountain top experience for the members. They returned to their respective homes with a new inspiration and enthusiasm born from this unique experience in their lives. They had witnessed what they had believed all along--Christians are one body in Christ. Thus they took as their motto--Unum Corpus in Christo. Many of them believed that this was the first step toward the time when there would be an "Alliance, not only of individual Christians, but of all the Christians and all the Churches throughout the World."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Rouse and Neill, op. cit., p. 320.

<sup>27</sup> Report of the Proceedings..., p. 202.

## CHAPTER IV

## THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE IN THE UNITED STATES

First Attempts at Forming an American Branch

Upon their return home, the American brethren who had taken part in the great Alliance Meeting in London, in 1846, lost no time in calling the attention of the Christian public to the subject. Several large and interesting meetings were held in the city of New York, at which the Doctrinal Articles and Practical Resolutions were read, and statements made by those who had been present at the meetings in Europe.

During the Anniversaries in New York, in the month of May, 1847, after much consideration and discussion, the Articles of the General Alliance were accepted with entire unanimity.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the American Church historian, Robert Baird, describes what happened in America as a result of the London conference. The question of what to do with slaveholders had come up in London and could not be avoided in America. Baird reports that the problem was put "in as acceptable a shape as was consistent with the maintenance of affinity with the General Alliance."<sup>2</sup> He does not explain what this means; but, it apparently meant that the American Alliance had to make some restrictions regarding slaveholders. It is probable from the discussion at London that the Americans allowed slaveholders, who through no fault of their own were slaveholders, to become members.

<sup>1</sup> Baird, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

With high hopes, the American Alliance was launched.

Auxiliaries were started; meetings for prayer were held. In smaller towns the Alliance held meetings with all or most of the evangelical ministers. A monthly magazine, The Christian Union, was started in 1848. As long as Baird served as editor the magazine was published; but, when he left in 1850, the magazine ceased. For several winters public meetings "for prayer and exhortation in reference to the duty of Christian Union," were held in New York City. An agent was employed by the Alliance to "visit churches and preach on the subject." In 1851, a small group was maintaining the Alliance with annual meetings.<sup>3</sup>

Baird's report was given to the First International Conference of the Alliance in 1851. There is no record of American activities between this time and 1867. In his report Baird tells of the difficulties confronting the American Branch. The foremost objection to the Alliance was, of course, the slaveholding issue. The restriction was opposed by moderates because they felt it would hurt persons in slaveholding states who justly needed Christian fellowship and Christian union. The abolitionists objected because they thought the American members of the Alliance had taken a weak attitude against slavery. The second and third objection listed by Baird further explain the first. The Americans did not like the idea of foreign

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

dictation in any sphere, especially ecclesiastical. This was especially true when such dictation came from England. The majority of Americans looked upon the Evangelical Alliance as a British experiment in union of British Christians with British prejudices. While Baird was in London, he and a group of American brethren met with the Council of the British Alliance to discuss and iron out their difficulties. Nothing was settled in these meetings. But, the British were at least willing to listen to the Americans.

The American Civil War finally came in 1861. The exigency of the moment and the natural death of the members of the 1846 conference meant that, for all intents and purposes, the feeble Evangelical Alliance was dead in America. The Civil War did stimulate the cause of political and social solidarity. Men found that there was a world beyond their local horizons inhabited by fellow Americans just like them. The War also affected thinking about Christian union. Ministers from different churches left their parishes to minister to the soldiers and found that they were offering the same prayers and preaching the same Savior. The chaplains found a new attitude toward their fellow Christians.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Henry B. Smith, Report on the State of Religion in the United States of America made to the Fifth General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance at Amsterdam, 1867 (New York: Evangelical Alliance, 1868), p. 24.

The American Alliance Is Revived

It was not so much the Civil War as the leadership of Philip Schaff that caused the revival of the Evangelical Alliance. June 7, 1866, at the Madison Square Presbyterian Church, Dr. Schaff presided at a meeting designed to promote the cause of the Evangelical Alliance in the United States. Dr. James McCosh, professor in Queen's College, Belfast, was the featured speaker at this meeting. Schaff says that the meeting "called forth radical speeches against ancient creeds, but they were carried substantially in the end." Schaff, the historian, would not have any union not based upon historic Christianity. The meeting did not meet with too much success, for we find Schaff writing, six months later, to Dr. McCosh: "Unfortunately, we have no encouragement whatever from the laity as yet. But we hope for the best."<sup>5</sup>

The American Branch was reorganized, January 30, 1867. William E. Dodge, a prominent and philanthropic merchant from New York, was elected president. He served in this capacity for at least twenty-six years. During his presidency he, personally, met most of the Alliance expenses. In addition to the details of organization, a committee headed by Henry B. Smith, chairman of the executive committee, drew up a report for the Fifth General Conference of the

<sup>5</sup> David Schaff, Life of Philip Schaff (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897), p. 254.

Alliance which met in Amsterdam, in 1867.<sup>6</sup> S. Irenaeus Prime, who was in Europe at this time, presented the report. The American Branch adopted the 1846 doctrinal basis of the Alliance, with the explanation that the articles and explanatory statement are to be seen as "a summary of the consensus of the various Evangelical Confessions of Faith." The explanation also emphasized that the Alliance was "taking broad, historical, and evangelical catholic ground," and more emphasis was placed upon the person and work of Jesus Christ. Schaff's influence on the formulation of these explanations is evident.<sup>7</sup>

The Civil War had solved the great practical problem which had been the ruination of the American Alliance--the question of fellowship with slaveholders. Membership in the Alliance was open to any person, who on his own application, signed the Constitution and assented to the principles, basis, and objects of the Alliance. The Alliance set a rather ambitious object as its goal. It hoped to act as a "Bureau of Correspondence and Information" in obtaining facts, and relaying them with pertinent suggestions, about organized infidelity and superstition, religious freedom, the observance of the Lord's Day, and "immoral habits of society." Of course, the promotion of evangelical union was to be the chief object. In 1874, this elaborate

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<sup>6</sup> Henry B. Smith, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> The basis is given in full in Appendix O. It appears in each Annual Report.

statement of objectives was shortened to:

The objects of this Association shall be to manifest and strengthen Christian unity, and to promote religious liberty and co-operation in Christian work, without interfering with the internal affairs of different denominations.<sup>8</sup>

Provision was made for the adoption of local organizations. By 1870, the Alliance was gaining wider popular support. Auxiliaries were formed in fifteen different cities. They ranged from Boston to Americus, Kansas, and Pella, Iowa; and from Duluth, Minnesota, to Washington, D.C. Cleveland, Cincinnati, Springfield, and Oberlin gave Ohio more auxiliary units than any other state.<sup>9</sup> As is the case with most local cooperative efforts, these auxiliaries were probably

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<sup>8</sup> Nineteenth Annual Report of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States of America, 1887 (New York: Evangelical Alliance, 1887), p. 31.

<sup>9</sup> The list published in the 1871 Annual Report is the most complete list of auxiliaries available. All of these units were organized in 1870. Washington, D.C., Peter Parker, M.D., Pres.; Rev. G. J. Butler, Sec. Boston, Mass., Hon. Robert C. Winthrop, Pres.; Rev. James B. Dunn, Sec. Baltimore, Md., Charles J. Baker, Pres.; Prof. Thomas D. Baird, Sec. Philadelphia, Pa., Geo. H. Stuart, Pres.; Rev. B. B. Hotchkin, Sec. Cleveland, O., T. P. Handy, Pres.; Rev. Wm. H. Goodrich, Sec. Pittsburgh, Pa., Felix R. Brunot, Pres.; Rev. S. F. Scovel, Sec. Cincinnati, O., Rt. Rev. C. P. McIlvaine, Pres.; Rev. Henry D. Moore, Sec. Chicago, Ill., John V. Farwell, Pres.; Rev. Robert Patterson, Sec. Syracuse, N. Y., Rev. S. B. Canfield, Pres.; Rev. Jesse T. Peck, Sec. Northern N. Y., Willard Does, Pres.; Rev. James Gardner, Sec. Springfield, O., Rev. Samuel Sprecher, Pres.; Rev. A. Lowry, Sec. Americus, Kans., M. L. Hancock, Pres.; Rev. J. A. Collins, Sec. Oberlin, O., Rev. Henry Cowles, Pres.; Rev. W. C. French, Sec. Lake Superior (Duluth, Minn.), Rev. Mason Gallagher, Pres.; Rev. J. R. Creighton, Sec. Pella, Iowa, no pres.; Mr. C. Rhynsburger, Sec.



largely clerical and their continued existence depended upon the enthusiasm of a few leaders who might move at any time and leave the effort to die. If the auxiliary did nothing more than to cause some local interest in Christian union, even if it was transient, they made a contribution.

### The New York Conference

At the General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance in Amsterdam, the United States delegation invited the Alliance to New York for its next conference in 1870. The Amsterdam Conference accepted the invitation and suggested that the American Branch "enter into correspondence with the other Branches with a view to the acceptance of the invitation, should it be found desirable and practicable."<sup>10</sup> (Correspondence between Branches to set a General Conference was made necessary when the proposed General Organization lost all of its power as a result of the slavery issue at London.) The U.S. Alliance soon began preparation for the New York conference. It met on November 4, 1869, in Collegiate Dutch Reformed Church to set up the program; \$10,000 were raised to be applied toward the expense of the conference.

Dr. Schaff journeyed to Europe to promote the coming conference and the cause of the Evangelical Alliance. He worked especially in his native German Switzerland and in Germany. He met

<sup>10</sup> Henry B. Smith, op. cit., p. 43.

with the leaders of strict confessional Lutheranism, Tischendorf, Kahnis, Delitzsch, Luthardt and Keil, only to discover that while they were interested in "Christian union as distinct from church union and amalgamation," they could not come to the New York Conference, as it would put them in the position of associating with "Unionists, Baptists and Methodists whom they oppose at home."<sup>11</sup> Schaff contacted Dorner and Tholuck. Tholuck declined his invitation because of old age. He agreed to send a paper instead. Schaff was particularly eager to have these men in New York, in hopes that their prestige would enhance the Alliance. He wrote articles for many of the German religious papers; but, wished that he could solicit someone else to do this. The entire burden of German correspondence fell upon his shoulders. "But I cannot withdraw from the Alliance work, for the honor of Protestantism and the honor of the United States are now involved in this conference."<sup>12</sup> While in Germany Schaff secured a letter of encouragement for the Alliance from Kaiser Wilhelm.

On his way home, Schaff stopped in London to attend a meeting there in preparation for the New York conference. Three hundred delegates from England were announced. But, as Schaff wrote to Dorner, "I cannot believe that more than one-half that number will come." Meetings were held every Sunday in New York City to arouse

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<sup>11</sup> David Schaff, op. cit., pp. 248-9.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 256.

interest in the coming conference.

General Grant, Vice-President Colfax, and Secretary of State Fisk have set their names to a paper indorsing the aims of the conference and expressing the hope that it may further the cause of Christian union among all the churches of the land.<sup>13</sup>

While Schaff took care of the promotion of the conference among Europeans, S. Irenaeus Prime, editor of the New York Observer, was the leading spirit in making the local arrangements for the conference. Prime collaborated with Schaff in writing the history of the conference.

The roar of the guns of the Franco-Prussian War meant that there would be no General Conference of Christians in New York, in the fall of 1870. The conference was postponed indefinitely. Schaff wrote in his journal:

The General Conference is dead and buried, in the hope of a blissful resurrection in 1871. I am busy all week with winding up the business. It is a very sore disappointment. So much precious time, strength and care apparently wasted! But when God speaks man must be silent. The postponement will be overruled for the best.

And then he speaks only as a German protestant could:

The tables are turned. France is invaded and humbled to the dust. Napoleon is doomed. With him goes military despotism, haughty imperialism, a standing menace to the peace of Europe, perhaps also the temporal power of the pope. God is dealing harder blows to Rome now than the General Conference could have dealt. Germany is united, and the union cemented by blood spilled in defence of the fatherland. We stand in

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

silent awe before the judgment of the Almighty, who is now writing a stirring chapter of history on the soil of unhappy, deluded France.<sup>14</sup>

Wars are continual, but they never last forever. After the brief flurry of the war which ended in crushing defeat for France, world affairs soon returned to "normal." One year after the war, in 1872, the U.S. Alliance re-scheduled the General Conference for October 2-12, 1873. For the most part, the arrangements remained the same for the new meeting as before. The Y.M.C.A., again, offered the use of its building along with St. Paul's Methodist, Fourth Avenue Presbyterian, and Madison Square Presbyterian churches. Interested New Yorkers offered to open their homes to delegates. The three years delay only served to increase interest in the meeting.

The conference opened in the Y.M.C.A. building, on October 2, 1873, with a social reception for members of the conference, pastors of contributing churches, families entertaining delegates, and other friends of the Alliance. "All branches of the one Evangelical Church were represented by clergymen and laymen, distinguished by various peculiarities, yet rejoicing to feel that they were one in Christ Jesus."<sup>15</sup> The history of the conference and the newspaper reports give detailed accounts of the elaborate decoration of the room for this occasion. The room was decorated to suit the taste of the

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 257.

<sup>15</sup> Philip Schaff and Irenaeus Prime, op. cit., p. 6.

age, with bunting, flags and mottoes--an impressive stage for an equally impressive meeting. Cordial greetings were exchanged the first evening from Lord Alfred Churchill; Rev. George Fisch of Paris; Rev. Franck Coulin of Geneva; Prof. Dorner of Berlin; Prof. Christlieb of Bonn; and Narāyan Sheshādri, a converted high-caste Brahmin of Bombay, India.<sup>16</sup>

William E. Dodge presided at the opening business session on October 3, in Steinway Hall. It was reported that there were five-hundred-sixteen delegates present from twenty-three countries. The United States delegation with two-hundred-ninety-four members far outnumbered the next largest delegation, that of the British with seventy-five members. This was clearly an American conference. Theodore D. Woolsey of New Haven, Conn., was elected president of the conference.<sup>17</sup> The conference adopted the following rules of order.

1. The proceedings of the conference shall be conducted according to the rules and regulations governing parliamentary bodies.

2. A committee on the daily programme shall be appointed, to whom shall be referred, without debate, the papers, and overtures, and other matters submitted for the conference.

3. As the object of the conference is a comparison of views and free discussion, and not legislation, no resolutions committing the conference to special measures will be entertained.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 7-11.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 11 ff.

4. No member shall be allowed to speak more than once on the same subject without the unanimous consent of the conference.<sup>18</sup>

It can be seen from these rules just what lines of action were to be taken by the conference. The meeting was to be strictly a meeting for fellowship and the exchange of ideas and information.

Even though the membership rolls contained only five-hundred-sixteen names, the meetings were open and interest was high in New York. The second day the crowd was too large for the Y.M.C.A. hall and a simultaneous meeting was hastily arranged in the Fourth Avenue Presbyterian Church. The general topic of the second day was "Christian Union." October 5 was Sunday and the pulpits of New York were filled by the visitors. On Monday, the conference listened to papers on "Christianity and Its Antagonisms." Again the crowds forced a sectional meeting. That evening the Alliance broke up into language meetings. A French meeting was held in Association Hall and a Welsh meeting in the Welsh Presbyterian Church. The general topic for the fifth day was "The Christian Life." A children's meeting was held in the afternoon at the Church of the Disciples. Henry Ward Beecher and Joseph Parker spoke at two meetings in the afternoon, an improvised meeting in Association Hall and the meeting of seminarians at the Madison Square Presbyterian Church. The subject was "The Pulpit of the Age." The evening session held in Broadway Tabernacle dealt with

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 16-17.

the Sunday schools. Wednesday morning three meetings heard the speakers discuss "Romanism and Protestantism." This was a popular subject in 1873, so soon after the Vatican Council. On the seventh day, after two meetings on "Christianity and Civil Government," a special evening session was held. Prof. Christlieb read his paper, "The Best Methods of Counteracting Modern Infidelity." "For two hours and three-quarters he held the attention of a vast assembly and many remained standing during the whole time."<sup>19</sup> A special feature of the day's program was a visit to the prisons, charity homes, and insane hospital in New York. On Friday, the crowds caused a necessity for four separate meetings on the general topic, "Christian Missions-- Foreign and Domestic." In the evening Dr. Schaff presided at a German meeting. The remainder of the conference enjoyed themselves at the Murray Hill mansion of William Dodge. The closing business session was held on Saturday. Aside from the usual expressions of appreciation, nothing was done. The closing public meetings were in three sections on "Christianity and Social Reforms." The meeting officially closed at the afternoon session. The next week many of the foreign delegates visited Princeton, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., as the guests of the Pennsylvania Railroad. In Washington, they were personally received by President and Mrs. Grant and the Cabinet.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 20-46.

Public interest in the meeting was extremely high. The New York Times published the complete speeches of each speaker for every day of the conference. Advance notice was given of every meeting through the pages of the newspapers. It was reported that as many as 15,000 persons attended one day's sessions. The conference thus accomplished what it had meant to do. It was a demonstration of Christian union. It was more than this. It was an exchange of ideas and information.

We rally here for no purpose that is selfish or secular, doctrinal or ecclesiastical. We have come simply for God's honor and man's help. We have not assembled for the defense of Protestantism. The necessity for that is passed, thank God.

But this Christian convocation has been summoned for fresh declarations of unity realized, for the interchange of the elements of varied Christian civilizations, for debating and arguing in defense of Christian liberty, for asserting the franchise of free conscience, for making full exposition of catholic orthodoxy in applied religion, proving that the Evangelical Alliance holds and enforces those measures of truth which all Christian denominations confess and apply as essential for righteous rule in government, the correct ordering of society, and the salvation of the soul.<sup>21</sup>

The give and take between speakers was not as evident as that witnessed at the London conference in 1846; but the purpose of this meeting was different and the climate had changed considerably. The speakers were free to say, politely, what they thought of one another. They were not always kind to the Americans. J. F. Astié reported that Europeans had given him the duty of "remonstrating with the religious public of

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 708.



America concerning the too ample space they give to statistical details. They regard this as a very worldly and superficial mode of estimating the progress of the kingdom of God."<sup>22</sup> Apparently, Americans have been preoccupied with numbers for quite some time.

Ideas were not only exchanged in the speeches; but also, in the correspondence placed in the records. The Conference received greetings from the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, while not a member, sympathized with the Alliance idea. Schaff received another statement for the Alliance from the Emperor William of Germany, which was also placed in the records. Several letters were received urging the conference to take some form of action. Because of its rules these were either silently placed in the records or turned over to a proper organization. These included the subject of peaceful arbitration, Russian advances in Asia, Sanctification of the Lord's Day, the need for an International Apologetic Association, and information about religious liberty and the opium trade in Turkey. The conference was also informed of the organization of an Alliance in Brazil, July 21, 1873. The branch was mostly European and was unable to attend the conference.<sup>23</sup>

Probably the most interesting correspondence came from the Old Catholic Congress. One of the chief factors for making the New York Conference a success was the Vatican Council of 1870. The council's

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 550.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 719 ff.

decrees on papal infallibility came as quite a blow to the Protestant world and to certain Roman Catholics. The growing strength and extreme conservatism of Pius IX gave all Protestants new fear of Rome. The Roman Catholics, who could not accept the new dogma of infallibility, withdrew from communion with Rome under the leadership of Bishop Reinkens and Dr. Döllinger. They maintained friendly relationships with several Protestants. They invited Protestants to their first three conferences. The Swiss Evangelical Alliance sent a letter of encouragement to them. Dr. Schaff, himself, personally invited Prof. von Schulte, Bishop Reinkens, and Dr. Döllinger to attend the New York Conference "without committing them to our Protestantism, nor committing the Alliance to their Old Catholicism." Circumstances not named in the report prevented them from attending. Schaff looked upon the Old Catholics with much sympathy. As he read the letter from Bishop Reinkens, he said:

as the Old Catholics meet Protestants half-way, and are sincerely aiming at a Reformation of the Romish Church by a return to primitive purity and simplicity, Protestants ought to consider it a duty and privilege to extend to them the helping arm of prayer and active sympathy.<sup>24</sup>

It is sad to note that the Alliance's contact with the Old Catholics ended with the active leadership of Schaff.

A note of sadness marred the return of two of the European delegates. Prof. Pronier of Geneva and the Rev. Antonio Carrasco of

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 485-486.

Madrid were killed in a shipwreck on the way home. A fund was raised by the Evangelical Alliance for the widows' support and the education of their children. Mrs. Pronier made a cash settlement with the Alliance. Mrs. Carrasco re-married; as her children reached their majority, they were educated by the fund. The fund remained in the hands of the U.S. Alliance, until 1898, when it was given to the International Institute for Girls at San Sebastian, Spain, an undenominational institution incorporated in Massachusetts. The total amount of the gift indicates the amount of the fund--\$5,000 in 4% U.S. bonds plus \$500 interest.<sup>25</sup>

Schaff sums up the feelings of most of those who attended the meetings of the conference, when he wrote in his journal:

What a conference! It has surpassed the most sanguine expectations. The Spirit of God took hold of it and subdued all explosive elements and antagonistic interests, national (French and German), sectional (North and South), sectarian and personal, and has made it a grand and imposing exhibition of Christian unity. God has shown what He can do when He chooses and He will bring about a real unity in His own good time to the amazement of the world. All little discontents are drowned in the ocean of universal harmony. Great encouragement of faith and hope. Gratitude of delegates who were overwhelmed with hospitality and kindness, such as they never experienced before. The interest of the community has been astounding. All my labors of four years are abundantly rewarded. Thus ends the most important chapter of my life, too rich to be noted down here. God be praised. I never felt more thankful and humble.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Thirtieth Annual Report of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States of America, 1897 (New York: Evangelical Alliance, 1898), p. 9.

<sup>26</sup> David Schaff, op. cit., p. 273.

The European delegates were amazed at the vigor and dedication of the American churches. For most of them this was the only trip to the New World of their lives. Dr. Dorner wrote to Schaff:

The memories of our journey continue to be fresh and vivid, and I am sure that North America, the much-ridiculed and ill-famed, has won a place of esteem in the eyes of the German Christians, from a churchly and Christian point of view. For us the gain is this, that our hearts look out into the future of the church with more courage and freedom.<sup>27</sup>

The general American public, apparently, never caught the same spirit of spiritual accomplishment from the meetings. The American mind placed greater emphasis on the practical outcome of the conference than upon its spiritual accomplishments. The New York Times, in an editorial about the conference, was concerned that the conference had cost the Americans about fifty-thousand dollars.

We are not to judge the good effected by this interesting gathering from the mere reports in the papers. They only show us what is going on upon the surface. The great value of the meetings arises from the fact that they tend to make Protestant ministers go to work with more heartiness than before, and to impress upon their minds the conviction that however much they may differ on many points, they are in the main working to maintain a common cause.<sup>28</sup>

The immediate result of the conference in America was a spurt of interest in the Evangelical Alliance. Any organization that could stage a show as big as the New York Conference caught the imagination of the American public. The American Alliance met the next day after the

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> The New York Times, October 9, 1873.

General Conference. At this session they voted to hold "a biennial session for the discussion of living issues in religion, morals, and sociology."<sup>29</sup> These meetings never occurred, the two national conferences and one international conference sponsored by the Alliance to deal with these "living issues of religion" belong to another chapter in American Alliance history.

The actual members of the Alliance met annually in New York, during the month of January, to take care of necessary business, which included election of officers and recognizing new auxiliaries. In spite of the success of the New York conference the Alliance was never able to capture the imagination of a capable leader with sufficient time and interest to give full time to promoting the Alliance. Schaff, had so many other interests, in teaching and writing, that he could not give permanent aid to the Alliance. He was the only man who had the ability to administer and promote the Alliance. Except for a few scattered centers of New England influence throughout the country, New York City was to remain the center of Alliance activity.

#### Josiah Strong and the Alliance's Social Reform Program

The members of the Alliance thought that they had discovered the leader they needed in Josiah Strong. Josiah Strong was the minister of the Central Congregational Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. He had had a

<sup>29</sup> Schaff and Prime, op. cit., p. 710.

diverse career ranging from mission pastor to college professor to home missions secretary. Strong gained national repute through his book, Our Country, which was published in 1885. This book was originally a handbook of the Congregational Home Missionary Society; but, in Strong's hands it was completely reworked. The book dealt with the needs and perils to the American way of life and to the Christian religion. These perils included, Jesuitism, Mormonism, skepticism, revolutionary socialistic organizations, and above all uncontrolled immigration. Strong's remedy for these evils was the social gospel. His book became an instant success. The executive board of the Alliance was impressed with this man who could state so well the needs of the times and who held up the gospel as the saving agent for society. On October 29, 1886, they called Josiah Strong to be the General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States. He would give his "whole time to the duties of his office."<sup>30</sup>

There was a certain emphasis in the Alliance from the beginning upon the social aspect of the gospel. In addition to being an expression of Christian union the Alliance saw itself as a united foe to all who opposed the gospel in any way, be they Romans, skeptics, or defilers of the Sabbath. The framers of the Alliance and those at the New York meeting, though, never spoke of the Alliance as an agent to fight the slums and the evil they brood. By 1886, the social gospel with its

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<sup>30</sup> Nineteenth Annual Report, 1887, p. 5.

emphasis upon the kingdom of God coming upon earth in the immediate future, had such a hold upon the minds of American Christians that Strong's program of social reform seemed to be the providential call to a new line of work for the American Alliance.

Strong's first concern was for social reform; then Christian union would come of itself. Thus, he reversed the pattern of Alliance action. Instead of unity for reform, he wanted reform for unity. Emphasis upon Christian union is absent from Strong's writings. Cooperation was necessary for the church to fulfill her social mission; it would cut down on needless competition, make the best use of existing resources, and develop latent forces in the church.<sup>31</sup> This new twist on the Alliance idea was almost imperceptible. The Alliance had always been indifferent toward organic union as the answer to unity, and had sought to be an organization of individuals. Now it was individuals organized with a purpose--to remedy the evils of society. The Evangelical Alliance for the United States had found its object. The Alliance set out to arouse and unite the members of the Evangelical churches toward social action.

The Nineteenth Annual Report of 1887 was the declaration of this new line of work. Aid was planned to be given to the local Alliances in their efforts at "reaching the entire population with the

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<sup>31</sup> Josiah Strong, The New Era (New York: Baker & Taylor, 1893), p. 298 ff.

Gospel." Social and labor tracts were written and sent out for distribution. Plans were under way for conventions to educate and stir the churches for their new work. Strong hoped to "create a literature of practical Christian work, of such value that it alone would justify all our labor and expenses."<sup>32</sup> If the people only knew the condition of the country their "foolish optimism" would be overcome and they would work to remedy the evils.

When the Alliance becomes a great bureau of information, there will be a mass of papers and facts sent in from all parts of the land, which, when carefully sifted and verified, will afford abundant material for a valuable monthly publication.<sup>33</sup>

For some reason the American Alliance was never able to publish a regular paper for this purpose. A guess would be that the reason was insufficient funds. In its new work the Alliance, in Strong's words,

... recognizes Jesus Christ as the only Savior of society as well as the only savior of the individual ... (and) shall seek to prove the deep practical interest of the allied churches in whatever concerns human welfare, all its activities shall be subservient to spiritual results, which must always be the supreme object of the churches.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, the new theological basis of the American Alliance was laid: it was the social gospel as interpreted by Josiah Strong and his followers.

While still maintaining the Basis of 1846, to accommodate the European

<sup>32</sup> Nineteenth Annual Report, 1887, p. 9.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>34</sup> Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, 1895 (New York: Evangelical Alliance, 1897), p. 5.



branches, the American branch rejected the articles on the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures, by adding the progressive theory of evolution to their means of revelation; the article on the utter depravity of human nature was altered by asserting the basic divinity of man; the "American" article on judgment and eternal punishment became the final triumph of the kingdom of God over the lives of every man. The other articles were re-interpreted to fit the new mood.

The method chosen by the Alliance to carry out this vigorous social action was house-to-house visitation. This call for cooperation at the local level by churches and individuals fit perfectly into the Alliance ideas about unity. This method of evangelism, social reform, and Christian cooperation was to be the distinctive mark of the Alliance for the twelve years, from 1886-1898, that Josiah Strong served as General Secretary. The method was not new with the Alliance. At the American Christian Commission (formed as the U.S. Christian Commission by the Y.M.C.A. during the Civil War) meeting in 1868, a speaker proposed house-to-house visitation in the cities as a systematic method of evangelizing the city by the Y.M.C.A.<sup>35</sup> Judging from the close relations between the Alliance and the Association, this is probably the source for the Alliance idea of visitation.

House-to-house visitation became the sure mark of a local

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<sup>35</sup> Winthrop Hudson, American Protestantism (Chicago: University Press, 1961), p. 115.

auxiliary. Organization of new auxiliaries was discouraged if this program of visitation could not be started under supervision. The Alliance feared that if this method was rapidly adopted, leaders could not be properly trained and it would tend to become a mere religious census. Mis-used, this method would lead to failure and frustration. The method had a very definite object that was for the visitor to get to know, personally, every person in his area--to know his physical as well as his spiritual needs. Baltimore was the first large city to become fully organized in 1887. In one year twenty-five thousand families were visited. The secretary of the Baltimore Alliance wrote:

It has given a new conception of Christian work and interest to those who have enlisted in the movement. By testimony of pastors from many churches, it has led people to church and homes. It has provided the organization and materials for a complete system of visitation of the whole city, and has demonstrated its feasibility and usefulness.<sup>36</sup>

The organization of house-to-house visitation by the Evangelical Alliance made necessary the appointment of Dr. Frank Russell as Field Secretary to supervise the new work. He began his job in March, 1888. With two full time staff members and a challenging object the Alliance appeared to be strong and healthy.

For the Christian the first step in social reform is evangelism. In house-to-house visitation the Alliance had found a method of

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<sup>36</sup> Evangelical Alliance, National Needs and Remedies. The Discussions of the General Christian Conference held in Boston, December, 1889 (New York: Baker and Taylor Co., 1890), p. 19.

evangelism which not only reached the people but when carried out as planned, it kept the people in the church. The problem of reaching the masses was seen by the Evangelical Alliance to be the major problem in carrying out any social reform. As Strong says:

It is among the masses that the greatest and most significant changes are taking place; it is the masses in this country which control our institutions and which will determine the character of the coming civilization, and it is the masses which are, for the most part, alienated from the churches. The very class which most needs the moulding [sic.] hand of the church, if the new civilization is to be Christian, is the very class which today never comes within the reach of the pulpit. When these facts are appreciated by the churches they will certainly see that if the people will not seek the churches, the churches must seek the people; and if the people are to be sought, it must be where they are, viz., in their homes and shops. This means 'house-to-house' visitation.<sup>37</sup>

Strong believed that personal contact through cooperative effort was the solution to the evils of the century. This could be achieved in larger churches if they became institutional, but most churches could not afford this kind of program. The method of house-to-house visitation was the other option.

The exact method of approach to house-to-house visitation was left up to the local auxiliary. The method had to suit local conditions. It was hoped that successful approaches would be shared with other cities through the National Evangelical Alliance. The object of

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<sup>37</sup> Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, 1891 (New York: Evangelical Alliance, 1892), p. 8.

the method was to remain the same--"to cover all the inhabited territory with the kindness of Christian acquaintance,"<sup>38</sup> The various methods made the same requirements upon the auxiliaries in the various cities. In order for house-to-house visitation to be effective it had to have the active support of a number of laymen. This meant that a larger number of the church membership would have to be employed as a working gospel force. The denominations had to be massed together for this kind of field work, yet their distinguishing characteristics would remain untouched. The workers in house-to-house visitation would have to develop the ability to make individual acquaintance with those not connected with the church in their area. The community would be so thoroughly visited that every family would share the influence of the work. The work must be continued as a part of the regular church life in the community. This last point was the most difficult for the Alliance to maintain. House-to-house visitation was not merely another religious census. It was an honest effort to learn to know, personally, every person in the community. This was a big assignment; but, the Alliance believed it could be done with the cooperation of every church.

The plan for organizing a local Alliance as advocated by Frank Russell, in Boston in 1889, begins with a group of pastors who decide to lead their churches in the work. They contact the national office or

<sup>38</sup> Frank Russell's report in: Redford, R. A. (ed.), Christendom from the Standpoint of Italy. Proceedings of the Ninth General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance held in Florence, 1891 (London: Offices of the Evangelical Alliance, 1891), p. 223.

their own state secretary for the Alliance. With the backing and information thus obtained they hold a public meeting in which the Alliance is explained. In a short time, a second meeting is held for all pastors and one layman for every hundred members in each participating church. A temporary slate of officers is chosen; they report at the next meeting on a constitution, by-laws and permanent officers. At this second meeting the territory is divided into hundred family units. A group of laymen, called supervisors, are given a section of hundred family units with one layman for each hundred family unit under them. These hundred family units are then divided into ten family areas for each visitor. No visitor is to be responsible for more than ten families. At the third meeting the pastor and the visitors from his church meet and directions are given for the visitors. Previous actions are ratified at a fourth meeting of all visitors and a monthly meeting is set. Section meetings (hundred family units) are scheduled and the visitors are assigned their fields. At the monthly meetings, reports from the visitors are received by the section supervisor. The visitors are to obtain the church relationship of each family and report it to the proper church. Only if a family does not state a church preference are the visitors to invite them to their denomination. Most important of all, the visitors are to report the physical needs of the families in their areas. They are also to keep a close tab on illegal and immoral activities and businesses

which are being conducted in their areas.<sup>39</sup> The national Alliance recognized that such a plan might be too complicated for small cities or rural areas. Therefore, they approved two other patterns of visitation. The first pattern was a simple auxiliary without the duty of visitation. In this form the,

... local Alliance is concerned with everything that Christianity is intended to do for the community in which it is organized. It is a Sabbath alliance; it is a temperance alliance; it is an alliance to enforce law and order; it is an alliance for tenement-house reform and for every other reform which is related to human welfare; it is an alliance of the good for the purpose of overcoming evil.<sup>40</sup>

A second pattern for the more ambitious communities added the requirement of an annual canvass of the community. A third pattern of organization was known as the community plan. This was less simple and "the organization of Alliances of this sort beyond the reach of personal supervision from the New York office is not recommended."<sup>41</sup> The preferred pattern of systematic house-to-house visitation was tried successfully in Oswego, N. Y., according to Frank Russell's report to the Washington Conference in 1887.

The advantages to the church and the community that used house-to-house visitation were supposed to be several. First, the pro-

<sup>39</sup> National Needs and Remedies, op. cit., p. 104 ff.

<sup>40</sup> Methods of the Evangelical Alliance, no information.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. The complete copy of the folder giving the Alliance methods is printed in Appendix F.

gram used a large number of lay people. It served to intermingle the denominations, so that the distinctions began to vanish. Real Christian fellowship among the workers and the people they visited was established. The method made certain that the entire territory would be reached by gospel workers. Denomination work was actually aided by the Alliance program; a census was obtained enabling denominations to know where their members were; denominational work was not affected; and the experience gained in visitation would serve as a guide for new denominational work. As the work continued it tended to improve when the workers learned their jobs better. The methods were flexible and adaptable to any situation. The work was spread among several laymen and pastors and thus did not become a burden to any one. The program was inexpensive and most important of all, it was an attempt to "discharge our plain duty to the unreached."<sup>42</sup>

The Alliance program sounds like an effective way to meet the needs of the city. It is now recognized as the best form of evangelism on a denominational level. There is little doubt that in those communities where this could succeed, it would be a help to the churches and to the community. Needless to say, the program did not produce the results with which Russell lauds it. House-to-house visitation failed because it took too much time away from the pressing parish work of each pastor. It also meant that the laymen had to spend a lot of time in calling and

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<sup>42</sup> National Needs and Remedies, pp. 108-111.

in reporting meetings. Cooperative community effort of this type never works unless there is the full participation of every church in the community. In many communities, this is impossible to expect. In communities that are small enough for this type of unilateral cooperation, everyone knows everyone anyway and the program is useless. In the metropolitan centers where this type of program would be very helpful, it is not possible to accomplish. The Alliance recognized some of these limitations. They never tried to organize the entire city of New York. Most of this work was limited to the medium-sized city. By 1893, just six years after the program was initiated, the Alliance dropped this requirement from its local Alliances. The Alliance had to admit that the churches "are not as ready for the movement as was believed." The program was not understood by the churches. It was intended to be more than inviting people to church. It was intended to be used to get to know people in "friendly, helpful, personal relations," in a manner similar to the work of the Salvation Army. In dropping the program of visitation the Alliance hoped that it could become an agency to co-ordinate the activities of the milieu of organizations formed in the 1880's and 1890's for social reform. This co-ordination would extend only to distinctly Christian groups. In admitting its inability to adequately promote this form of evangelism and reform, the Alliance did not give up its two principles of "personal conduct and co-operation in Christian



work." Only the method was changed.<sup>43</sup>

Another important factor in the decision to drop this requirement was the resignation of Frank Russell from his position as Field Secretary. He resigned in 1894.<sup>44</sup> In this same year the flurry of Alliance activity begins to end. The Alliance failed to capitalize on the enthusiasm generated after the New York conference, because of lack of leadership; and for the same reason this program of local cooperation could not exist without a zealous leader. For the five years that Russell had been Field Secretary he had worked hard for the Alliance program. He travelled throughout the Eastern half of the United States promoting the Alliance objective. In 1890 he visited the Oberlin Theological Seminary and presented the evangelism methods of the Evangelical Alliance to the students. But, the task of overseeing house-to-house visitation in the various cities was too overwhelming for one man to perform.

The program of house-to-house visitation was originally conceived to include both the rural districts as well as the city areas.

<sup>43</sup> Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, 1894 (New York: Evangelical Alliance, 1895), p. 6.

<sup>44</sup> Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, 1893 (New York: Evangelical Alliance, 1894), p. 12.

The same report which carried the announcement of the resignation of Frank Russell, included a memorial to Dr. Philip Schaff. The contributions were noted and he was duly eulogized. Schaff had remained an honorary Secretary to the Alliance, even though it had strayed from the pattern he set for it in its re-organization in 1867, p. 13.

In the summers of 1889 and 1890, five counties in New York state were investigated by Alliance teams. It was discovered that only one-fourth to one-tenth of the population attended church. On the open countryside, abandoned churches dotted the landscape, while in the villages, several small churches existed side by side competing with one another for the allegiance of the local community. This familiar scene in American rural communities was an eye-opener to the Alliance at the time when the drift of the population to the cities was first being revealed. The Alliance began a limited effort to evangelize Oneida and Chenango counties in New York. By 1892, the Alliance was taking credit for the surveys of the religious condition of surrounding populations which were being carried on in several communities at that time. The chief complaint of the Alliance reports is that the local clergy did not give their support to the Alliance program. The clergy was preoccupied and so burdened with their abounding labors that they did not even read the Evangelical Alliance materials. The Alliance continued its interest in the rural communities. We find in 1899, the Alliance had made an investigation into the power of Protestantism over nominal Protestants in New England and New York. The conclusion of this study was that a vast amount of work needed to be done in these areas. Town-centers were found where morality was at a low ebb, while large regions between town-centers were completely void of any religious influence. "Such town centers and neglected interspaces, are not only in sore need, they are also a moral and spiritual menace." Only with a pure and spiritually

earnest ministry, a faithful membership and loving cooperation could New England become "Immanuel's land, in very truth."<sup>45</sup> Through such studies and investigations as this the Alliance undoubtedly had some local influence in arousing interest in a problem which continues to be one of the neglected areas of the Church's outreach effort. Rural people knew about these problems without the Alliance's investigations; but, many city cousins still harbored the myth of the "pure" country life of their ancestors. Through these investigations into the spiritual conditions of both the rural and urban communities the Alliance hoped to arouse the support of Christians in its efforts for social reform and redemption of society. Without continuous renewal of the stimulus, such arousal does not make lasting contributions.

The Evangelical Alliance also made efforts at reform outside of the ecclesiastical sphere. The earliest attempts at influencing legislative reform were made in the New York state legislature. The Alliance set up a legislative committee with the Rev. James M. King as a lobbyist. His duties were to guard particularly against laws that would give any power to ultramontaniam. The Alliance took credit for the defeat of a bill proposing a "division of the common school fund and its perversion to sectarian uses."<sup>46</sup> The Alliance shared the fear of a

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<sup>45</sup> Thirty-second Annual Report of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, 1899 (New York: Evangelical Alliance, 1900), pp. 7-8.

<sup>46</sup> Nineteenth Annual Report, 1887, pp. 18-19.

large majority of the American protestants that public funds might be given to Roman Catholic parochial schools, thereby strengthening the Roman position. Because many of the Roman Catholics were immigrants with "alien" attitudes and customs, Protestants looked to the maintenance of the common schools as the best means of assimilating the immigrant into the American culture. Outside of New York state the Alliance did not directly lobby for the reforms which it advocated. Bishop Edward Andrews of Washington, D.C., reminded the Washington Conference of the Alliance that they did not seek the cure for evils in legislation as much as in the "faithful preaching of the word, and the luminous holiness and personal effort of each believer."<sup>47</sup>

On the national level the Alliance wrote letters to Congressmen and issued resolutions supporting or opposing legislation. Here, again, the major issue was separation of Church and State. The twenty-sixth annual meeting, in 1894, asked for the passage by the United States Congress of a sixteenth amendment to the United States Constitution prohibiting states from establishing religion and using tax money to support any institution which is "wholly, or in part, under sectarian or ecclesiastical control." At this time it was particularly feared by most Americans that the Mormons were establishing a state religion in Utah. This same Alliance meeting also made a protest to Congress

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<sup>47</sup> National Perils and Opportunities. The Discussions of the General Christian Conference held in Washington, D.C., December, 1887 (New York: Baker and Taylor Co., 1887), p. 7.

against using government funds to support sectarian schools among the American Indians. This was a touchy issue because several Protestant missions depended upon government funds to operate their schools. The Alliance hoped that the free common school system would be extended by the United States government to the Indians.

The cause of international peace was another one dear to the Alliance. President Cleveland and his Secretary of State, Walter Gresham, had negotiated and signed a treaty with Great Britain which was signed January 11, 1897. The treaty pledged the two governments to submit all serious matters of dispute that might arise between them to settlement by arbitration.<sup>48</sup> The Alliance sent letters in behalf of the treaty to several thousand leaders throughout the country. Their replies were summarized and sent to every United States Senator. But the Senate rejected the treaty. The Alliance hoped that its effort in behalf of the treaty had had an educational value for the cause of peace.

The same report that carried the results of the Alliance's efforts for international arbitration carried notice of the organization of the Pennsylvania State Evangelical Alliance with Rev. William Webb as State Secretary. The organization was not only for "education of public opinion and of the popular conscience" but also a "medium through which

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<sup>48</sup> Woodrow Wilson, A History of the American People, Vol. v (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1908), p. 248.

they could be quickly and effectively brought to bear on legislation."<sup>49</sup> Pennsylvania with New York and Michigan were the only states to form state-wide Alliances. In Pennsylvania the Alliance began another approach to social reform. This was a campaign among the young people's organizations--the Christian Endeavor, Epworth Leagues, Baptist Unions, and Luther Leagues--to aid in distribution of literature for social reform. They were to distribute this literature especially to the "indifferent" class of people. The literature was written by the "best brains in the country"; it was adapted to every class, with special attention given to the task of better acquainting the immigrants with American institutions and their rights and duties as American citizens. The Christian Endeavor societies in California were particularly eager to help in this type of activity. Josiah Strong made a speaking tour of California to further arouse and organize this new work.

The American Alliance gave extensive support to the General Alliance's program of Universal Week of Prayer. The Week of Prayer will be discussed in a later chapter. In 1896, the materialism and social problems of the end of the nineteenth century and the demands of the approaching century caused the Alliance to call for Tuesday, November 17, 1896, to be set aside as a "Quiet Day," a time for deepening the spiritual life of pastors and church leaders through prayer and meditation in

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<sup>49</sup> Thirtieth Annual Report of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, 1897 (New York: The Evangelical Alliance, 1898), p. 8.

preparation for the "campaign of the coming winter." The call went to religious papers, seminaries and pastors. The day was "extensively observed."<sup>50</sup> This was the most passive of the Alliance's many sided efforts at effecting social reforms.

Perhaps the most influential and the most spectacular expression of the Alliance's determination to do something about the social problems of the nineteenth century were the three conferences held to discuss these problems. The first two of the conferences were national. The last conference, held in connection with the Chicago Columbian Exposition, was international in name only. The titles given to the official reports of these conferences serve as accurate indications of the motives of the Alliance. The first conference was held in Washington, D.C., December, 1887; the report appeared as: National Perils and Opportunities. The Boston conference of December, 1889, reported its discussions as: National Needs and Remedies. The Chicago conference issued its report in two volumes entitled: Christianity Practically Applied. The confident note of optimism which characterized the nineteenth century American mind is clearly sounded by these convocations.

In the call to the Washington conference, the Alliance stated the perils which prompted the need for the conference, and gave a clue

<sup>50</sup> Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, 1896 (New York: Evangelical Alliance, 1898), pp. 12-15.

to the remedy which would be discussed.

The existence of great cities, severe competition, an unemployed class, increasing pauperism and crime, are the occasion and evidence of a wide-spread discontent, for which the ballot affords no remedy.... Will not those who have enjoyed "government of the people, by the people, and for the people," be the first to learn that the essential evils of society are caused, not by misrule, but by sin, and that the gospel, therefore, must furnish the solution of the great social problems.

The Christian church has not yet fully recognized its relations to the entire life of the community and the nation.

Denominations and local churches, each intent on its own good work, have fallen into a harmful competition instead of engaging in an intelligent and comprehensive co-operation.

Do not important changes in population and in the habits and temper of the people require some changes in the methods of Christian work.<sup>51</sup>

The perils are really opportunity for the Church. The questions put to the public in the call express confidence that by hearty cooperation of all Evangelical Christians through the methods of the Evangelical Alliance the Church will respond to its responsibilities. The call was signed by prominent citizens, including Phillips Brooks, Timothy Dwight, General O. O. Howard, U.S. Army, James Fairchild, and John Jay.<sup>52</sup>

The conference was held the first week in December with between twelve and fifteen hundred delegates present. Since the Alliance had a standing rule that no question could be brought to a vote, resolutions could only be privately urged. This meant that the conference would

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<sup>51</sup> National Perils and Opportunities, p. vi.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.



only be a means of expressing public opinion and urging action upon the proper legislative and ecclesiastical bodies. It is impossible to measure the influence of such a meeting because similar pleas were coming from many other sources.

In his address Strong explained the plan of organization of local Alliances already discussed in this paper. Strong noted that "most people lack initiative" and that it was one of the chief duties of the Alliances to arouse and organize this potential power. He hoped that the experience of each Alliance would be shared through the National organization and thus develop new and better methods for effecting social reform.

W. E. Dodge, the president of the Alliance since its formation, reminded the meeting that the Alliance had no theories of its own to assert; it was simply calling for study and investigation by individuals and groups, locally, in the hope that this would lead to co-operation of the churches in a spirit of love. He sounded the note of the social gospel which was now characteristic of the Evangelical Alliance.

The duty is clear and plain, and the call of God direct. The Christian Church must be united in heart, must co-operate fully, must assume the aggressive, and advance along the whole line.

The times call for an applied Christianity that can meet all the needs and relations of man to man. It cannot remain merely defensive, and must prove its adaptedness to all needs and all conditions. The full brotherhood of men under the one

Father and in one household must be its watchword, with a meaning never known before.<sup>53</sup>

Dodge had been taken in by the shift from unity for social reform to social reform for unity.

Bishop Samuel Harris of Michigan expressed the convictions of the delegates regarding the relationship of American civilization as they knew it to the Church of Christ. American civilization was viewed as the fulfillment of God's plan because it was both Protestant and evangelical in its foundations. Any change in the American way of life would be grievous. This is why the Alliance listed immigration as one of the major perils and worked incessantly for the "Americanization" of the immigrant as soon as possible. The American church was, therefore, responsible for the maintenance of American culture. "If our American civilization is much longer to endure as we prize it, then combination must take place of competition among the evangelical Christians of this land."<sup>54</sup> It was at this meeting that a Professor Wolf from Gettysburg Seminary gave the other side of the issue. He reminded the Alliance of the many contributions of the immigrants, and that most of the Germans were pious evangelical Christians. He asked that the older American churches leave the Germans alone in their Americanization. He did not like the idea of American missions among German protestants. Of course,

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 304.

the Alliance did not pay much attention to this address.

Philip Schaff addressed this conference; but, his speech ignored the issues and discussions that dominated it. He spoke about Christian union. He stated that the time had come to place less emphasis upon individual cooperation and begin to work for "mutual official recognition" on the part of the denominations. Mission societies in particular needed to get together to prevent "injurious rivalry and collision."<sup>55</sup>

The subject of comity came up in another connection at the conference. The National Congregational Council of the United States had appointed a committee for the promotion of inter-denominational comity. In the Evangelical Alliance they believed that they had found the proper body for this work, "one function of which is the promotion, by judicious means of just that sympathy and concurrence of action which the National Congregational Council was anxious to procure." The Alliance did no more than recognize the letter, with the excuse that no vote could be taken on any matter. Comity never received more than a nod of approval and timid assertion from the American Alliance.

The Washington Conference ended with shouts of success from its promoters. The published edition of the discussion was widely circulated.

The second general conference for Christians to discuss social

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 334.

problems was held in Boston in 1889. This conference was not as well attended as the Washington Conference; only five hundred delegates were registered. Denominational representation was comparatively large, with sixteen denominations listed. The needs of the times and the Alliance's remedy--cooperation and personal contact--were the subject of this conference. The conference operated under the same rules and procedures as the previous conference in Washington. It was seen as a continuation of the former conference; after discussion of the perils and opportunities it was now proper to examine the needs and remedies.

W. E. Dodge's speech at this conference shows the further influence of Strong's social gospel. He says: "Laying aside for the moment our individual church connections, we are simply Christian brothers, longing to aid each other in doing our Father's work."<sup>56</sup> Dodge hoped that the Alliance would not see the need for any multiplication of agencies or organizations, outside of the united activity of the churches as now constituted. "The various denominations are fully organized and equipped. Duty and responsibility rests with them."<sup>57</sup> This attitude led Dodge to be a major promoter of the Federal Council of Churches.

The Boston conference was certainly not a conference on Church unity in the tradition of the Evangelical Alliance conferences. The Rev. A. J. Gordon of Boston gives an interesting view of Christian unity.

<sup>56</sup> National Needs and Remedies, p. 3.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

"I have ... few tears to shed with those who are weeping over 'the scandal of a divided Christendom,' as the phrase is." He went on to explain that each sect in Christendom contains the full Christ. Christ is not divided. He uses the illustration of the communion wafer, that contains the fulness of Christ. The nineteenth century seems to prove to him that Christ can and wants to use a divided Church to bring higher glory to himself. The missionary accomplishments of the century seem to prove this thesis. The division of the Church has been divinely inspired and is good. Division is the best means of reaching the world; and then the time comes for unity in harmonizing the world. This strange interpretation of Church unity and division is not necessarily an expression of the Alliance's point of view but it is included to show that some members of the Alliance were thinking along these lines.

The speakers at the Boston Conference made some penetrating analyzations of the nineteenth century mood. Fulton Cutting, in his report from New York, speaks of the vast number of organizations, "nobling our age with an ever ready philanthropy"; but, he says these organizations are mostly "an element of excitement" and "an element of interest in mere humanity--the ordinary interest in humanity which is felt by people who do not have very much heart in Christian work."<sup>58</sup> Walter Laidlaw of West Troy, New York, gives a most appealing statement of the American mood ever since the early nineteenth century. "Our people no

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

longer regard themselves as a society of the saved, but begin to regard themselves as a society of saviours."<sup>59</sup>

The World's Columbian Exposition, in Chicago, in 1893, gave the Alliance a chance to place its program of social reform before a very large audience. The exposition was the major event in the United States in 1893. The Alliance feared that the commissioners of the exposition would keep it open on Sundays. Therefore a committee on Sunday closing of the Columbian Exposition was formed and sent a resolution to the United States Columbian Commission asking that in accordance with the "customs and convictions, social and religious, of the American from the beginnings of their history" that the exposition be closed on Sunday.<sup>60</sup> The protest probably had little effect.

The World's Christian Conference, as it was called, is further proof of how far the American Alliance had come from the World Alliance pattern. The conference is not considered by the Alliance as being in the stream of international conferences. The preoccupation of this conference was unabashedly social reform. The reports of the conference were published in two volumes; nearly one-third of the first volume and all of volume two is concerned with the social gospel and social needs. Problems discussed at this conference ranged from the mission of the Church to sociological training for the ministry to public bath houses

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>60</sup> Twenty-fourth Annual Report, 1891, p. 4.

in New York City. Strong planned this meeting to be a "School of applied Christianity of the utmost practical value." The "school" dealt with these four areas: (1) The religious condition of Protestant Christendom. (2) Christian union and cooperation. (3) Christian liberty. (4) The church and social problems. The first three areas and part of the last are in the first volume. Charles Bonney, President of the World's Congress Auxiliary, in his welcoming speech before the Alliance repeats the popular sentiment regarding the Alliance.

The Evangelical Alliance is a special agency raised up by the hand of divine Providence to promote the unity and peace of mankind. Its special province seems to be to destroy that kind of theology which sets the different sects and organizations of the Christian religion at war with each other about their points of difference, instead of uniting with each other against the common foes of infidelity and religion everywhere. I suppose the last part of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew may be declared almost the divine constitution of the Evangelical Alliance.... The Evangelical Alliance, as I understand it, is a grand demonstration of applied Christianity.... To be evangelical, we are told, is to act according to the Gospel or what is contained therein. And so this Alliance comes before the world declaring that it seeks the furtherance of its opinions with the intent to manifest and strengthen Christian unity.<sup>61</sup>

The subject of Christian union was again the subject of Schaff's paper. Schaff was an old man but he was present at the conference to read his paper called The Reunion of Christendom. In this paper he discussed the need for reunion along the lines of the federated

<sup>61</sup> Christianity Practically Applied. The Discussions of the International Christian Conference, held in Chicago, October 8-14, 1893, Vol. I. (New York: Baker and Taylor Co., 1894), p. 2.

Swiss cantons. The paper opened with the words, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." In the paper he admitted that the "Church must keep pace with civilization, adjust herself to the modern conditions of religious and political freedom, and accept the results of biblical and historical criticism, and natural science."<sup>62</sup> This paper which was read to the Parliament of Religions as well as the Evangelical Alliance conference, was printed by the Alliance in separate form. This was Schaff's last public appearance.

Bishop A. Cleveland Coxe presented to the conference the challenge of organic unity as proposed at the Lambeth Conference of 1888. He explained the Lambeth proposals which presented the historic episcopate as the best basis for union. Dr. James McCosh of Princeton spoke to the conference about a plan of Federation of Churches. His plan called for the existence of a plan of parishes along with the congregational plan of community division of America. He was not clear as to how this would be worked out in practice. These three papers were the extent of the discussion on Christian union.

The British Alliance was represented at the conference by A. J. Arnold, General Secretary in Great Britain. A few other foreign delegates presented reports of the state of Protestantism in their countries.

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<sup>62</sup> Philip Schaff, The Reunion of Christendom (New York: Evangelical Alliance, 1893), p. 31.



The remainder of the conference was given to the social gospel. By this time the experiment in house-to-house visitation had failed; therefore this subject was not discussed. Josiah Strong stated the position of the Alliance and the conference. The Evangelical Alliance for the United States has for "its supreme aim at the present time to assist the churches to see and to accomplish their social mission." Cooperation will follow as a matter of course because of the magnitude of the task.<sup>63</sup>

Dodge was not convinced that this was the supreme aim of the Alliance.

The object of the present Congress is simple and direct. We wish to reaffirm our belief in the essential unity of all believers, and repeat our assurance that they can only come closer to each other as they come closer to Christ, and to all those for whom He died.

But we are especially met to study the present position of Protestant Christendom, to learn the new conditions which are affecting the social and religious life of the world, to know the wonderful opportunities for good which are open to the Church, and which afford development for its unused power and resources--to feel more keenly our duty and responsibility, and we hope to suggest such practical methods as may enable Christians of all names to work gladly and in hearty co-operation, and this without at all interfering with their loyalty to the denomination to which they belong.<sup>64</sup>

Dodge would concede to Strong that for this conference the major emphasis would be on social concerns; but, he was reluctant to allow the Alliance to merely wait for cooperation.

<sup>63</sup> Christianity Practically Applied, p. 250.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

Strong was enthusiastic about the outcome of the conference.

He wrote in the Annual Report:

A spirit of hope and even of confidence seemed to pervade the conference, due partly, perhaps to the unwavering conviction that the principles of the gospel are fully equal to solving all existing problems before the Church, provided only those principles are applied, and partly to the belief that we are no longer feeling our way amid changed conditions, but that those principles have been already successfully applied, and that now we need only to popularize methods whose value have been demonstrated by a few.<sup>65</sup>

On this highly practical and theologically shallow note the last conference of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States was held.

#### The American Alliance Gives Way to Other Forms of Cooperation

Strong had hoped that he might reform the Alliance into an organization which would promote social betterment by the social gospel. From the Chicago conference until 1898, Strong became more and more convinced that the Evangelical Alliance would or could not accomplish his purposes. June 1, 1898, Josiah Strong resigned from his position as General Secretary for the Alliance. His "special plans for civic and religious betterment" could best be promoted by an organization formed for that purpose. He immediately formed the League for Social Service, which became the American Institute for Social Service in 1902. Strong cut himself off completely from the Alliance. In his last work, New World Religion, Strong speaks of the Alliance and house-to-house visitation.

<sup>65</sup> Twenty-sixth Annual Report, 1893, pp. 9-10.

On the part of those engaged in it, it was essentially church work and only incidentally social work,... Had the work been inspired by the aims and motives of social Christianity, it might have lived.<sup>66</sup>

Under Strong's leadership the Alliance had become so identified with the social thrust that when Strong pulled out, leaving the Alliance without a socially minded leader, the Alliance died.

Death did not come immediately to the American Alliance. L. T. Chamberlain took over the duties of Strong's position. He served only part-time and without compensation. Chamberlain's first statements in the annual report, were resignation to the will of God. "God will guide his servants to the wisest course."<sup>67</sup> The Alliance was ready to give way to other movements and organizations who were better equipped to do its purposes.

The Alliance had long been interested in any method or procedure of Christian cooperation. An interdenominational commission formed in Maine in 1890, to prevent friction among denominations, was praised by the Alliance. In 1894, the Alliance was making plans to form other interdenominational state commissions modeled after the one in Maine. They were to "afford a permanent basis for the active cooperation of home missionary societies and of churches in country communities

<sup>66</sup> Josiah Strong, New World Religion (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1915), p. 463.

<sup>67</sup> Thirty-first Annual Report of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, 1898 (New York: Evangelical Alliance, 1898), p. 5.

which will ultimately meet the needs of the destitute rural districts."<sup>68</sup>  
 The last available annual report of the Evangelical Alliance was published in 1900. This report does not give any formal notice of official disbandment. The Alliance just disappears from the picture. The American Alliance died with a smile on its face.

A word is also to be said concerning the "Federation of Churches" in New York City, and in many cities and communities throughout the country. By that means great good is being accomplished. While the Alliance has not attempted to be the medium for effecting the actual federation, it has been privileged to feel that to the movement it has contributed both suggestive inspiration and practical support.

[The Alliance] has the joy of witnessing a wide response to its Appeal and suggestions, and a large adoption of its interdenominational spirit.<sup>69</sup>

At the formation of the National Committee on Federation of Churches, Evangelical Alliance leaders were present and gave impetus to the movement. William E. Dodge became the permanent chairman of this committee. Another Alliance representative at this conference, of February 1900, was William C. Webb, Secretary of the Pennsylvania State Alliance. The following year, at the organization of the National Federation of Churches and Christian Workers at Philadelphia, the Alliances of Boston, Philadelphia, and Pennsylvania were represented. Josiah Strong had taken a leading part in the organization of the "Open

<sup>68</sup> Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, 1894 (New York: Evangelical Alliance, 1895), p. 5.

<sup>69</sup> Thirty-third Annual Report of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, 1900 (New York, Evangelical Alliance, 1900), p. 11.

and Institutional Church League," even before he gave up his position with the Evangelical Alliance. The Alliance served, in part, as an inspiration for the Federal Council of Churches which was organized in December, 1908.<sup>70</sup> The place of the Alliance in American Church life was taken over by the Federal Council.

One of the major reasons for the failure of the Alliance was that the doctrinal basis of 1846 was too narrow and confining for the liberal American spirit, and conservative Americans were not yet ready for united action. As we saw above, Strong had strayed far away from the Alliance doctrinal basis in his thought. By 1887, membership in the Alliance was automatic with a ten dollar donation and life membership cost fifty dollars.<sup>71</sup> Adherence to the doctrinal basis was no longer a requirement for membership. Anyone who said he was Christian and had ten dollars could become an Alliance member.

The American Alliance as an organization has left no impact upon the history of the American churches. Its impact is felt through the lives of men who caught a vision of Christian union through the Alliance and used this vision to promote Christian union through other means. With its extravagant social emphasis the Alliance lost its pur-

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<sup>70</sup> Elias B. Sanford, Origin and History of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America (Hartford, Conn.: S. S. Scranton Co., 1916), pp. 93, 112, 146.

<sup>71</sup> Nineteenth Annual Report, 1887, p. 32.

pose. There are many "ifs" in the history of the American branch. If the delegates to the 1846 conference had been able to avoid the subject of slavery and capture the imagination of the Americans, perhaps the story would be more cheerful. If the Alliance had found some strong leader to capitalize on the enthusiasm generated after the New York meeting, perhaps it could have been a fuller manifestation of the unity of Christians. And if the Alliance had not called the "social gospel maniac" Josiah Strong as its executive head, perhaps it would have escaped the fate of losing its true identity. The Alliance received the support of the leading philanthropists of the nineteenth century: John Sinclair, K. Van Rensselaer, J. C. Havemeyer, John Jay, James Coates, John D. Rockefeller, James Talcott, Cornelius Vanderbilt, William E. Dodge, Edward Colgate, J. A. Bostwick, and H. M. Schieffelin; it attracted leading thinkers and speakers to its platforms; but, the Alliance never attracted an adequate, inspired leadership for its objects of Christian union. As a Christian union movement the American Alliance had little effect; as a social betterment movement the Alliance had even less effect.

## CHAPTER V

## THE BRITISH EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

Results of Its Work in the Nineteenth Century

Although there were branches of the Evangelical Alliance formed, from the beginning, in several countries in Europe, Great Britain has remained the focal point of Alliance work. The British Alliance was formed just three months after the 1846 London conference. It is therefore the only branch to have a permanent and continuous existence. During the interval between Alliance meetings the British were called upon to speak for the Alliance, especially in regard to religious liberty. The Alliance in Britain served as a bond of unity between the different branches through the Universal Week of Prayer. Topics for the Week of Prayer were always issued from Britain and translated into the different languages of the countries participating. Many of the branches of the Alliance in the various countries were directly affiliated with the British organization.<sup>1</sup>

At the Paris Exposition of 1867 and 1868, the Salles Evangeliques were built and the services conducted by the British Alliance. Other times when the united voice of Protestantism was in need of being felt it was the British Alliance that spoke.

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<sup>1</sup> A. J. Arnold's report in: Christianity Practically Applied, p. 234.

The British Alliance became the parent of several societies and agencies for doing Christian work. The Mildmay Conference was founded by William Pennefather, a member of the Alliance. Mildmay was an attempt at a "platform of spiritual fellowship, which while firm in its basis of truth should be high enough to rise above the hedgerows of denomination."<sup>2</sup> Another international, interdenominational retreat, Keswick owed its founding to an Honorary Secretary of the Alliance, Canon Battersby. At the suggestion of a missionary to India, the Christian Literature Society of India was formed. A Turkish Missions Aid Society to aid American missions in Turkey was another offspring of the British Alliance. The Alliance also gave birth to the Christian Evidence Society.<sup>3</sup> The journal of the Alliance, Evangelical Christendom, had a circulation of a few thousand per month.<sup>4</sup> The Alliance sometimes did specific Christian work, such as preparing for D. L. Moody's British Crusade.

#### British Alliance Work in the Early Twentieth Century

Toward the end of the nineteenth century the British Alliance began to engage in united evangelistic activities. J. D. Kilburn, F. W. Baedeker, and Adam Podin were sent into Russia to preach in jails and to

<sup>2</sup> Rouse and Neill, op. cit., p. 332.

<sup>3</sup> Christianity Practically Applied, p. 240.

<sup>4</sup> See chapter 6, p. 118.



distribute the Scriptures. Much of this work was carried on by the Volga River Mission. Following the Florence Conference, 1891, the Alliance kept the Salvini Theater for two months and held daily evangelistic meetings there.

In 1937, the Alliance cooperated in founding a Bible School in Poland to train ministers and evangelistic workers. The Alliance has worked at evangelism projects in Malta, Spain, Portugal, and Greece. Needless to say, much of the effort of these missions has been to proselyte from the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>5</sup>

The British Alliance has remained on guard against any encroachments from Roman or Anglo Catholicism upon the "true Christian faith." This was especially true during the attempts to revise the Prayer Book in the 1920's. The Alliance believed that the revisions which were proposed tended to weaken the Protestant character of the Anglican Church. Protest meetings were staged in 1923 and 1925 by the Alliance. These meetings undoubtedly assisted in the defeat of the Revised Prayer Book in Parliament.<sup>6</sup>

Occasional Alliance sponsored public meetings were held in support of or protest against a variety of contemporary issues and events. Anniversaries never went unnoticed, whether they were the

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<sup>5</sup> John W. Ewing, Goodly Fellowship: A Centenary Tribute to the Life and Work of the World's Evangelical Alliance, 1846-1946 (London: Marshal, Morgan & Scott, Ltd., 1946), pp. 41-48.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

King's coronation or the Augsburg Confession.

The British organization made a decisive move in 1912, when the Basis was shortened and the Alliance was incorporated. Acceptance of the shortened and simplified basis would be sufficient qualification for general Alliance membership. Members of the Executive Council were still required to sign the 1846 basis. The shortened statement is as follows:

All are welcomed as members of the World's Evangelical Alliance (British Organization) who, acknowledging the Divine Inspiration, Authority and Sufficiency of the Holy Scripture, believe in one God--the Father; the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ our God and Saviour, who died for our sins and rose again; and the Holy Spirit, by whom they desire to have fellowship with all who form the one Body of Christ.<sup>7</sup>

It is not known whether or not this shortened form is still permissible. It would appear that the British Alliance's entry into the World Evangelical Fellowship would make it necessary to require submission to the longer, 1846, form.

The Alliance had some contact with the International Christian Missionary Society at the Tambaram conference in 1938. The conference was included in the topics for the Week of Prayer for that year. The Alliance sent warm greetings to the conference and received a reply from John R. Mott. The reply stated that the message had added a sense of world-wide fellowship to the conference.<sup>8</sup> The Alliance continues to

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 129.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 105.

report the dates of meetings connected with the World Council of Churches.

#### Modern Revival of the British Evangelical Alliance

By the time of World War II, the Alliance in Britain "was merely perpetuating itself on its endowments and its traditions. There was little activity save for the promotion of the Universal Week of Prayer."<sup>9</sup> In the early post-war years, it enjoyed an infusion of new life largely through its sponsorship of Billy Graham's Crusades in 1954 and 1955. About this time the Council of the Alliance decided that it would be more true to the facts to drop the title "World's Evangelical Alliance," which had been adopted in the early twentieth century, and revert to the original designation, "Evangelical Alliance." For several years the Alliance had had little or no influence outside of Britain. Since 1951, the Evangelical Alliance has been a member of the World Evangelical Fellowship.<sup>10</sup>

The modern Evangelical Alliance has a number of auxiliary projects which it sponsors. The Evangelical Radio Alliance is described as "a voluntary association of evangelical groups actively associated with missionary radio."<sup>11</sup> The Radio Alliance is composed of allied

<sup>9</sup> James DeForest Murch, Cooperation Without Compromise (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), p. 178.

<sup>10</sup> See chapter 7, p. 125 ff.

<sup>11</sup> Evangelical Alliance Annual Report, Autumn, 1962, p. 8.

groups; it operates through its independent council. There are some fifteen societies linked with this part of Alliance work.

One of the Alliance's most strategic ministries is the organization of Ministers' Conferences. Every year hundreds of ministers of all denominations join in both residential and one-day conferences in different parts of the country.<sup>12</sup>

The British Alliance publishes a large volume of literature for distribution throughout the world through its publishing agent, Crusade magazine. This magazine has the character of the early Alliance journals, with articles on such subjects as

immigration control, the Common Market, nuclear disarmament, Christian social work, medical matters, the history and present role of the different denominations in Britain, Christian song, the Old Testament prophets, and . . . , a regular supply of devotional teaching and news items.<sup>13</sup>

The Alliance publishes a full range of Christian literature, textbooks, organizational aids, etc. A line of audio-visuals, tape recordings and films, are produced and distributed by the Alliance.

In 1958, the Alliance gave birth to the Evangelical Missionary Alliance, an alliance of Missionary Societies and Bible Training Colleges. The societies are mostly "Faith Missions," but there are three Church of England Societies, one Baptist, one Presbyterian and two Pentecostal societies. The Missionary Alliance highlights its year with

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

the Mission Boards' Conference held annually. A list of literature on missions is published for the Missionary Alliance. Missionary information courses are offered at the Bible Colleges. Another child of the Alliance working closely with the Missionary Alliance is the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade. The Evangelical Alliance Refugee Fund has allocated three thousand pounds to relief and evangelistic work amongst refugees.<sup>14</sup>

The Alliance maintains some hostels for retreats and regular accommodations throughout England. The Alliance Club in London holds family worship services on Sunday and monthly lectures on Christian doctrines. Members of all denominations and all religions are welcome to stay with the Alliance. The hostels are aimed at students who are visiting London.

The Alliance has taken as its new slogan, "Spiritual Unity in Action." This is the aim and objective of its multiple agencies. The Alliance has been stimulated by the return to orthodoxy of the mid-twentieth century. It has a conservative basis, a long tradition and is heavily endowed; with the leadership of G. W. Kirby, it has a forward-looking program of Christian work.

#### The Alliance in Other Countries

We must not overlook the fact that the Alliance was organized

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 10-11.

in other nations, and is still carrying on in some of them. At the peak of its influence, in 1896, the Alliance listed branches in: Great Britain, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Netherlands, Denmark, Italy, Spain, Greece, Turkey, Syria, South Africa, Japan, China, New South Wales, and the United States. In time many of these Alliances "petered out" and in some cases strayed from the doctrinal basis. Nevertheless, at the Annual Conference of the European Evangelical Alliance held in 1962, in Berlin, there were nine European countries represented. The Alliance has the support of the Anglican church in Australia and in New Zealand. The Archbishop of Sydney and Primate of Australia is the president of the Australian branch. Evangelical Fellowships in various countries and the National Association of Evangelicals in the United States are related to the Alliance through the World Evangelical Fellowship.

The future of the Evangelical Alliance is the future of the World Evangelical Fellowship.

## CHAPTER VI

## THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

Ruth Rouse lists five major contributions of the Evangelical Alliance to the life of the Church. "It stimulated united prayer." "Its international conferences were something new in Church history." "It was a powerful instrument of international Christian education through its journals in different countries." "It was a powerful advocate of Missions." "It had one distinctive, strong, and continuous practical activity--the defence of religious liberty."<sup>1</sup> We shall consider each of these areas in turn.

The Universal Week of Prayer

For centuries the Church has prayed for unity in truth. Wherever the Roman rite is used, daily prayer is made that our Lord will grant to his Church "that peace and unity which is according to his will." All other liturgies contain prayers for the unity and peace of the Church. Aside from these liturgical prayers, organized groups to promote prayer for unity have sprung up in the Church. Therefore, the Alliance was not entering new ground when it appealed for united prayer. The Liverpool meeting and the London conference had both requested that members join together on Mondays for prayer for the unity of the Church.

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<sup>1</sup> Rouse and Neill, op. cit., pp. 321-322.

Other stated times for united prayer by the members of the Alliance were also urged. The Week of Prayer, for which the Alliance is famous was one of these stated times that was specified at the 1846 London Conference.

And that it be further recommended, that the week beginning with the first Lord's Day in January in each year, be observed by the Members and Friends of the Alliance throughout the World, as a season for concert in prayer on behalf of the Great Objects contemplated by the Alliance.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, from its beginning the Alliance set aside the first full week of January as a week of special and united prayer. This appeal did not receive much support; therefore, at the Paris Conference of the Evangelical Alliance, in 1855, the plan for united prayer was commended to all of the branches of the Alliance. The Alliance program of united prayer received an added boost from a group of American missionaries in Lodianna, India. In 1859, they inaugurated a week of prayer for missions during the second week of the year. The Lodianna missionaries were joined in their appeal by a mission conference held in Liverpool in 1860. The Alliance was asked to support this appeal and to "take advantage of all the means at their command to circulate the invitation through all parts of the world." This appeal for prayer was coupled with the already existent Alliance week of prayer and the Universal Week of Prayer was born.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Proceedings..., p. 348.

<sup>3</sup> A. J. Arnold's report in: Christianity Practically Applied, p. 241.



The American Alliance gave the Week of Prayer its enthusiastic support. Materials for use during the week were sent to any church requesting them. From 1890, the offerings were one means of support for the American branch. In 1897, 124 churches sent in their offerings from Week of Prayer services.<sup>4</sup> The opening of the twentieth century caused a spurt of interest in the subject of prayer. The material for 1901 was widely circulated. The week of prayer was extended to include the first Sunday in December which would be set aside as a time for united prayer "given to earnest consideration of the great need and to faithful request for God's great blessing." A watch-night prayer service for New Year's Eve was also suggested. During the week of prayer, itself, all believers were invited "to devote this first week of the New Year and the new century, to special prayer for one another, for the Church Universal, and for the unsaved world." Suggested topics for prayer for each day of the week were included.<sup>5</sup> In the mid 1940's the promotion of united prayer in the United States was taken over by the Federal Council of Churches. The American promotion is now in the hands of the National Association of Evangelicals.

The Alliance Week of Prayer services have undoubtedly had an effect upon the relations of Christians of differing denominations. In many countries this is the only time of the year when mutual recognition

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<sup>4</sup> Twenty-eighth Annual Report, 1895, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Thirty-third Annual Report, 1900, pp. 3-7.

is made between Christians. A. J. Arnold, in his summary of Alliance work, says that the Week of Universal Prayer has furnished reports from distant lands "constantly telling of revivals of religion and increased spiritual life following the observance."<sup>6</sup>

The Universal Week of Prayer continues to be one of the most significant of the activities of the Evangelical Alliance. Due to confusion between the Week of Prayer for Christian unity, sponsored by the World Council of Churches, and the Universal Week of Prayer, the Council of the Evangelical Alliance has moved the observance of their week of prayer to the week immediately prior to Whitsuntide. Both observances are held in the month of January and there has been some confusion on the local level where both weeks are observed. The change in date, officially, affects only the observance in Britain; but, it is hoped by both bodies that the change will be made in other countries as well. The change came about after discussion with World Council leaders and through "prolonged and prayerful thought and discussion" on the part of the Alliance. The change became effective in 1963. "It was recognized, however, that in some areas strong local preference would be expressed for continuing to observe the traditional date." Topics and materials were ready for those who wished to use them in January.<sup>7</sup>

For many years the Alliance in Britain had made a special

<sup>6</sup> A. J. Arnold, op. cit., p. 49.

<sup>7</sup> Evangelical Alliance Annual Report, Autumn, 1962, p. 7.

appeal for united prayer in preparation for Whitsuntide. Therefore, the choice of the week immediately prior to Whitsuntide as the new time for observing the Universal Week of Prayer is more easily understood. The festival of Pentecost had been seen by the Alliance as an ideal time to call on God for a new work of the Holy Spirit in Church and nation. The Whitsuntide call to Prayer had received the endorsement of the Archbishops and Bishops of the Anglican Church, heads of Free Churches, and Christian laymen.<sup>8</sup> The new move will surely increase interest in the periods of united prayer conducted by both the World Council and the Evangelical Alliance.

The 1963 topics place "stress upon prayer for spiritual revival since that is clearly the most urgent need of the Church the world over." An interesting feature of the topics for 1963 is that each day prayer is requested for Christian work in a certain part of the world.<sup>9</sup> It is impossible to practically assess the value of spiritual activity such as this.

#### The International Conferences

The international conferences of the Evangelical Alliance, through their size, character, and representative nature, were of the greatest importance in stimulating a

<sup>8</sup> John W. Ewing, Goodly Fellowship: A Centenary Tribute to the Life and Work of the World's Evangelical Alliance, 1846-1946 (London: Marshal, Morgan & Scott, Ltd., 1946), p. 39.

<sup>9</sup> Evangelical Alliance Annual Report, Autumn, 1962, p. 7.

sense of unity amongst Christians of different nations and Churches.<sup>10</sup>

The Alliance held eleven important international conferences in different parts of the world from 1851 to 1907. The conferences were usually planned to coincide with a major world event of that year. The first conference after the organizing convention of 1846, was held in London at the time of the first International Exposition in that city in 1851. Dr. Baird represented the American Alliance at this time, although several Americans were barred because of the slaveholding issue.<sup>11</sup>

The first of the international conferences to be held outside of England was the Paris conference of 1855. The conference, like most of those held outside of England, was in the hands of the British Alliance. The conference, therefore, had very little French character. Another interesting aspect of this conference was that it was the first of two Alliance conferences to be held in predominantly Roman Catholic countries.

Two years later, the British Alliance planned an international conference to meet in Berlin. This conference met with opposition from the extreme conservative wing of the German Church. Dr. John Cairns of Berwick wrote of the Berlin Conference:

It was substantially a protest against a narrow and bigoted confessionism, which puts a clergy-church, Popish

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<sup>10</sup> Rouse and Neill, op. cit., p. 321.

<sup>11</sup> See chapter 4, p. 47.

or Lutheran, in place of the Bible and the universal priesthood of Christians; .... It undoubtedly helped, and that in no small degree, the downfall of the Stahl-Hengstenberg party, and the extrication of the Kirchentag from their influence, and the liberal career of the present Prussian ecclesiastical administration, of which the best fruit is the institution of lay eldership in the Eastern provinces.<sup>12</sup>

The conference overcame this opposition with the aid of King Frederick William IV of Prussia who put his weight behind the Alliance. He entertained the delegates at Potsdam and sent his son, the Crown Prince William, to the conference meetings. The conference was a demonstration that fellowship could be held with members of the free church without compromise of the position of the conservative confessional groups. The conference also served as a stimulus to the Sunday School movement which was beginning to be introduced into Germany at this time.<sup>13</sup>

Geneva was the site chosen for the next Alliance conference. Aside from Geneva being the home of Calvin, the Alliance hoped that it would be able to witness to the truth of its doctrinal basis in this former citadel of Reformed faith which had become infiltrated with a rationalistic spirit. While the Alliance had been attacked by the conservative elements in Germany, the opposition to the Alliance came from the extreme liberal side at Geneva. "A very sharp war of pamphlets was carried on," when the Alliance asked for the approval of the Church of

<sup>12</sup> Gavin Carlyle (ed.), Proceedings of the Geneva Conference of the Evangelical Alliance, held in September, 1861 (London: Hamilton Adams and Company, 1862), p. xii.

<sup>13</sup> A. J. Arnold, op. cit., p. 50.

Geneva for its conference. One pamphlet sharply criticizes the Alliance for its position on the Trinity.

It calls to its conference all those who are united with it in faith in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost--the living and true God. It invites, then, only the supporters of the doctrine according to which there exists one God in three persons. Such an invitation is not addressed to all Protestants. It excludes distinctly those who do not believe in the doctrine of the Trinity, and this exclusion is so much the more marked, since the Alliance pretends to unite Evangelical Christians of all countries and every denomination. There is in this, we are forced to say, a sad forgetfulness of the spirit of Protestantism and of that of the Reformation, this forgetfulness, which is to be regretted everywhere, is particularly out of place at Geneva, because it is opposed to our habits of toleration, and to the constitutional principles of our Church.<sup>14</sup>

(One wonders whether or not the author of this document ever heard of Servetus.) The Evangelicals finally gained enough support to hold the conference in Geneva. The conference was one of the larger of the international conferences, as a result of controversial publicity; there were eighteen-hundred-eighty-seven registered male members. Nearly one-third of the delegation was from Geneva with the remaining delegates from England, France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Italy, United States, Canada, India, and the Cape of Good Hope. The conference was mostly French in character and served as a reminder of the strength of French Protestantism. The bitter battle preceding the conference served to unite the delegates so that the "celebration of the Lord's Supper was probably the most remarkable in the history of the

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. vii.

Alliance."<sup>15</sup> The conference encouraged its members to set up branch Alliances in their home countries that would make wide use of pamphlets and periodicals. The committees of the Evangelical Alliance throughout the world were asked to be alert for any breakdown of religious liberty, especially in Protestant countries. Protests were sent to Spain on behalf of persecuted Protestants and sympathy was expressed for the victims of a Massacre in Syria, in 1860. A note of sympathy and encouragement was sent to the American brethren in their efforts to suppress slavery; the conference invited all Christians to join the United States in a day of humiliation and prayer on September 26, 1861. As a result of the Geneva conference the "International Federation for the Observance of the Lord's Day" was formed as an added stimulus to the better observance of the Lord's Day. The Geneva conference was seen by the Alliance as a strong defense of evangelical truth.

The next international conference was held in Amsterdam in connection with a large missionary meeting at Vogelensang, in August, 1867. In addition to a natural missionary concern, the conference was occupied with the challenge to Christianity from developments in critical theology and from society.<sup>16</sup>

The New York Conference of 1873 was the largest and most

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. x.

<sup>16</sup> S. Irenaeus Prime, An Account of the Ten Days Conference of the Evangelical Alliance, at Amsterdam, Holland, August, 1867 (New York: Evangelical Alliance, 1867).

enthusiastically received of the international conferences. Coming so soon after the Civil War it tended to further unite the American Church.<sup>17</sup>

German Switzerland was the scene of the 1879 international conference at Basel. The distinctive note of the Basel conference was an emphasis upon prayer and an increase in the observance of the Universal Week of Prayer. The usual reports of the religious conditions in various countries were heard; and a remonstrance was sent to Francis Joseph, Emperor of Austria, concerning religious persecution in Austria.<sup>18</sup>

The only Alliance conference to be held in a Scandinavian country was held in Copenhagen, in 1884, at the suggestion of Dr. Schaff. The Alliance had not received much support from Scandinavia because of its out-spoken support in defense of the Scandinavian dissenters. The British Alliance, again, took charge of the arrangements. With the attendance of the Danish Royalty, the meeting was successful.

By 1891, the Alliance decided that the time had come to make a united witness to Protestantism in Italy, itself. The meeting was held away from Rome to avoid open conflict; but, close enough to demonstrate to Roman Catholics, the unity of the Protestant Church. Florence was

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<sup>17</sup> See section on New York Conference in chapter 4, p. 52 ff.

<sup>18</sup> D. D. Whedon (ed.), Methodist Quarterly Review, Vol. LXII (New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1880), pp. 261 ff.



the site of a Waldenese seminary and it seemed a logical choice because it was the home of an early anti-Papal movement, that of Savonarola. The Waldenese churches were not large enough to accommodate the meetings so they were held in the Salvini theatre. This conference attempted to establish a committee to handle Alliance business during the interim between conferences. Although the necessary constitutional changes were made, the resolutions were not binding on the branches and this attempt to solidify the Alliance on a world level failed.<sup>19</sup>

The fiftieth anniversary of the Evangelical Alliance was observed with a conference in London. The conference was held jointly with the Mildmay Conference at the Mildmay meeting hall. This conference was second in size only to the New York conference. The theme of the conference was the "true unity of the Church which is the body of Christ." The conference was distinctly British in character; only three hundred foreign delegates were present with twenty-one listed from the United States. The Alliance in the United States had, by this time, lost its character and become a social reform organization. The German and French speaking churchmen always had difficulty at conferences held in Britain because the entirety of the sessions would be conducted in English. They frequently complained that language barriers kept them from participating in the discussions. Like all of the other Alliance conferences, the jubilee conference closed with a united Communion ser-

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<sup>19</sup> R. A. Redford (ed.), op. cit., p. 311.

vice. For all intents and purposes this was the last of the international conferences of the Evangelical Alliance.

In 1907, the Alliance made one final attempt to hold an international conference. The British Alliance was the only branch with enough strength left to stage a conference. The title given to the discussions of this conference is indicative of the problem facing the Alliance. The report is called, Maintaining the Unity. The meetings were held in King's Hall, Holborn. The conference received greetings from the Archbishop of Canterbury and King Edward VII and the Dean of Canterbury, Henry Wace, delivered a paper. Several pleas for membership in the Alliance were made from the platform. There was a continual stress upon firm adherence to the doctrinal basis of 1846. Apparently pressure was being exerted upon the Alliance from the "New Theology." On this rather pathetic note the last Alliance international conference ended.

The international conferences have proven to be important demonstrations that Christians from differing traditions can occupy the same platform without compromise or bitter quarrel. The Alliance taught the Church that such conferences were possible and practical. An important contribution of these conferences, from an historian's point of view, is the reports on the state of religion in the various countries. These reports are usually in detail and contain information not readily available from usual sources.

### Aid to the Cause of Mission

The international conferences are responsible for another of the major contributions of the Alliance. Ruth Rouse says that it is difficult to exaggerate the services of the Alliance to the cause of missions. At each conference, at least one session was devoted to a discussion of missionary interests. Throughout the New York Conference, the speakers on missions appealed to the Alliance to aid in stopping denominational and creedal rivalries on the mission fields. The Alliance supported a system of comity agreements. Prof. Christlieb's report at the Basel conference occupies one-hundred-sixty-four pages of the report. In the missionary discussions, "an advanced and forward-looking policy is often advocated on questions of self-support, the indigenous Church, and, in general, on missionary comity."<sup>20</sup>

### Ecumenical Religious Journalism

In the days before large scale, ecumenical religious press services, the journals of the Evangelical Alliance served as informative agents to Christians of news from all of the religious world. The newspaper, Evangelical Christendom, was launched immediately after the British branch was constituted, in 1846. The paper continued under this title until 1860, when it became known as The Monthly Intelligencer, and The Evangelical Alliance Intelligencer from 1861 to 1868. The present

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<sup>20</sup> Rouse and Neill, op. cit., p. 322.

official organ of the Evangelical Alliance for Britain is the Evangelical Broadsheet. Each new branch began its work with the publication of a periodical: The United States branch with Robert Baird's Christian Union, and the Canadian branch with The Canada Protestant Herald. Outside of Britain these journals failed after a short time. The present Alliance journal is far more limited in its news coverage than its predecessors. The Evangelical Broadsheet covers only the area of Alliance activity or that of its associated evangelical fellowships.

#### Religious Liberty

The ardent work of the Alliance for the cause of religious liberty has been alluded to several times. This is considered by many Alliance members as its chief practical work. The Alliance's interest in religious freedom stems from the conviction that Christian union and religious liberty are inseparably connected. It is impossible to recognize a member of another denomination as a Christian and at the same time deny him the right to worship according to his convictions. Even if a group should be considered in error according to the Alliance, they should be granted complete freedom to practice their religion. The Alliance feared that the encroachment upon the religious liberty of any sect would lead to further measures of intolerance. It must be remembered also that the Alliance membership was predominately "free" church. It is only natural that those who have been persecuted themselves will be opponents of persecution.

The cause of religious liberty came to the Alliance rather unexpectedly. Very soon after its formation the Alliance was appealed to by an American missionary in Upper Egypt for aid. The Alliance rapidly gained a reputation of effectively and discreetly handling cases of religious persecution. The Alliance worked privately with the ranking persecuting officials through delegations and memorials. Only after these efforts failed did the Alliance make public appeals and censures. Most of the cases which came to the attention of the Alliance were swiftly handled with the utmost secrecy in order not to embarrass the government involved. Not only did the Alliance intercede for Protestants; but, also, for Roman Catholics who were being persecuted in Protestant lands and for Jews under persecution anywhere. Persecution of Armenians and Nestorians in Syria and Turkey was also protested by the Alliance. At the 1907 conference in London the Alliance passed a resolution that states their position in regard to religious liberty.

That Protestant Christians in all non-Protestant countries should enjoy the same freedom as is extended to Roman Catholics and others in Protestant lands; and that for it not to be so in any case is alike unjust and contrary to every principle of Christian truth. The Evangelical Alliance feels that attention should be widely and emphatically called to the fact that it is not so, and that many of their fellow-<sup>21</sup> Christians suffer greatly in various lands as a consequence.

The British branch has been the recognized leader of these efforts for religious liberty. While the American branch was functioning

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<sup>21</sup> Maintaining the Unity, p. 371.

it did most of its work in this area in conjunction with the British.

The Turkish empire was one of the major areas of persecution that demanded the attention of the Alliance. The Alliance worked incessantly to aid Christians who were being forced to yield to Islam or Orthodoxy in the Ottoman Empire. In America the National Armenian Relief Committee was formed to keep a watch on the situation and to assist the Red Cross in administering aid to the victims. Letters were sent to the Sultan, the British and American governments were asked to intervene, and public protests were made. This work was only temporarily successful.<sup>22</sup>

Russia was another target for the Alliance. In 1871, Dr. Schaff headed a delegation from European branches of the Alliance to the Czar on behalf of Protestants in Russia. Although they received promises of action from the Czar, there were no results. At the Florence conference, the Alliance admitted that their efforts in Russia appeared fruitless and sent a message of sympathy to the persecuted Russians.

There was always an appeal from some evangelical who had been arrested in either Spain or in one of her colonies. The Alliance usually managed to secure the release of such men. In Protestant countries, the Alliance came to the aid of Methodists in Saxony and Roman Catholics in Sweden.

Efforts on behalf of religious liberty have their weak side, ecumenically speaking. It does not always make for good-will from the

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<sup>22</sup> Twenty-eighth Annual Report, 1895, p. 7.

Established Church to defend the sects which are troubling it. Ruth Rouse states that the "Alliance was always prone, sometimes perhaps uncritically, to defend the small body or sect against the national Church."<sup>23</sup> This is probably a fair judgment. The Evangelical Alliance did not like religious bigotry in any form. As an organization it held to a rather rigid doctrinal position but it did not deem it necessary to defend it by force.

Although the Alliance has never disassociated itself from the cause of religious liberty, this phase of its activity is rather limited at the present.

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<sup>23</sup> Rouse and Neill, op. cit., p. 323.

## CHAPTER VII

## THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE AND MODERN ECUMENISM

The Evangelical Alliance was doomed never to become a world-wide organization, after it failed to find harmony in settling the question of slaveholding. In the years between 1907 and 1948 there was little Alliance activity except for the Universal Week of Prayer. The British Alliance and a few European branches managed to maintain a semblance of organization and consistency throughout this period. It is significant to note that it was during this period of inactivity on the part of the Alliance that the embryonic beginnings of the World Council of Churches were taking place. This was also the period of bitter theological controversy between conservative and liberal Christians. Of course, the tumultuous condition of the political world would not prove helpful to an organization composed of individuals, such as the Alliance.

The National Association of Evangelicals in the United States

In America, the Federal Council of Churches met with extended opposition from all shades of conservative Christians. The American Alliance adopted wholeheartedly the social and non-theological position of the Federal Council. During World War II, many conservative Christians, who could not accept the liberal position of the Federal Council, felt the need for a unified, constructive and dynamic program with like-minded Christians. This interest culminated in the formation



of the National Association of Evangelicals. In many ways this organization may be considered the "new" Evangelical Alliance for America. The new organization was to be composed of organized church bodies and societies, who could annually subscribe to the following statement of faith.

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative word of God.

2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.

4. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful man regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.

5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.

6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

The National Association of Evangelicals approximates the Alliance position that a wide degree of doctrinal agreement is necessary before any Christian action may be undertaken. Members of the Association of Evangelicals are largely those denominations which are normally

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<sup>1</sup> James D. Murch, op. cit., pp. 65-66.

called sect groups. They are headquartered in Wheaton, Illinois. They oppose both the American Council of Churches, for their obstinate stand and the National Council of Churches for its "apostasy" from the Protestant faith through liberalism and friendly approaches to Roman Catholics.

#### The World Evangelical Fellowship

The National Association of Evangelicals has played an important role in revitalizing the British Alliance, by serving as an example and stimulus to it. The centennial of the Alliance was the occasion of a visit from Dr. J. Elwin Wright of the N.A.E. to London. Conversations at this time resulted in a proposal to hold an unofficial meeting of evangelicals at Clarens, Switzerland, in 1948 "to consider prayerfully the establishment of a world fellowship."<sup>2</sup> The Clarens Conference met August 7-10 and decided that national fellowships should precede the formation of a world organization. The following guide was given for the formation of national associations of evangelicals:

The Association ... aims at coordinating the efforts of the various churches and organizations and doing what individual churches and other organizations can not do separately, in:

1. Creating unity among the believers.
2. Serving as a center of information and coordination of evangelical activity.
3. Representing evangelicals before Governments,

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 179.

especially evangelical minority groups whose religious liberty is threatened.

4. Informing the N.A.E. in America of real needs in Europe.

5. Advising as to the equitable distribution of funds which may be sent from America for relief and other forms of evangelical united action such as: (1) Evangelization; (2) Printing and distributing evangelical literature; (3) Training Christian workers in Europe for places in other parts of the world where there is need for evangelical workers speaking European languages.<sup>3</sup>

There was little enthusiasm from the evangelical world. Lt. General Sir Arthur Smith and Mr. Roy Cattell of the Evangelical Alliance began to inspire a new zeal into the British Alliance. Accordingly the Evangelical Alliance called an International Conference for March, 1950. A similar meeting was held in the United States at the same time. These meetings resulted in the decision to form a world evangelical fellowship. The Constitutional Convention was set for Woudschoten, in the Netherlands, for August, 1951. Conservative Christians had come to realize that spiritual isolationism was a sin against God and Christian brethren. The times called for immediate, united Christian action. This conference was disappointed with the World Council of Churches because it failed to "adopt as a basis of fellowship the absolute minimum of fundamental evangelical Christian doctrine." The leadership of the World Council was believed to be in the hands of liberals who gave evangelicals no voice. In the preamble to its Constitution, the World

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 180.

Evangelical Fellowship declared its purpose to be:

1. Honoring God and His Word.
2. The furtherance of the Gospel.
3. The defense and confirmation of the Gospel.
4. Fellowship in the Gospel.<sup>4</sup>

The newly formed World Evangelical Fellowship, accordingly, established a statement of faith to which all member groups would be required to subscribe annually.

I. The Holy Scripture, as originally given by God, divinely inspired, infallible, entirely trustworthy; and the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct,

II. One God, eternally existent in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

III. Our Lord Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, His virgin birth, His sinless human life, His divine miracles, His vicarious and atoning death, His bodily resurrection, His ascension, His mediatorial work, and His personal return in power and glory.

IV. The salvation of lost and sinful man through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ by faith apart from works, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

V. The Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the believer is enabled to live a holy life, to witness and work for the Lord Jesus Christ.

VI. Unity in the Spirit of all true believers, the Church, Body of Christ.

VII. The resurrection of both the saved and the lost:

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 186.

they that are saved unto the resurrection of life, and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.<sup>5</sup>

At the first convention under the constitution at Clarens, the Fellowship took into full membership national organizations from the following countries: Singapore, Hawaii, Switzerland, Germany, France, Holland, Evangelical Fellowship of Ceylon, Gospel Workers Fellowship of Cyprus, Evangelical Alliance of Great Britain, Evangelical Fellowship of India, Japanese Association of Evangelicals, Taiwan (Formosa) Evangelical Fellowship, and the National Association of Evangelicals (USA). The terms of membership were enlarged to include individual members. Four permanent commissions were established: a Commission on Evangelism, Commission on Christian Action, Commission on Missionary Cooperation, and Commission on Literature.<sup>6</sup>

The Fellowship met again at Barrington, U.S.A. in 1956, and at Hong Kong in 1962. At Hong Kong it was decided that the International Office of the World Evangelical Fellowship would be in London in the British Evangelical Alliance office. The ties between the W.E.F. and the Alliance were further strengthened with the election of Gilbert W. Kirby, Secretary of the Alliance, as General Secretary of the Fellowship. Another Alliance man, Dr. Everett L. Cattell, replaced Lt. General Arthur F. Smith, President of the British Alliance, as President of the W.E.F.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 190.

The members of the World Evangelical Fellowship believe that in the W.E.F. they have found an organization which solves their need for spiritual fellowship. Many sincere Christians when faced with the choice of membership in the World Council of Churches felt that they were being torn between two alternatives: "ecumenical bigness, superficiality and heterodoxy on the one hand and of continuing fragmentation, individualism and self-righteousness on the other."<sup>7</sup> The attitude of the W.E.F. toward the World Council of Churches is not yet solidified. Some are of the conviction that they can cooperate through their official church bodies with it, while others are vehemently opposed to the "apostasy" of the leadership of the Council. There would seem to be a place for both types of organizations, one with a somewhat narrow conservative Protestant attempt to express a kind of spiritual unity, the other with a more comprehensive outlook, including all Christians in its concern.

#### The Nineteenth Century Alliance Approach

The conservative idea of Christian unity as expressed by the Evangelical Alliance since 1846, and by the present-day World Evangelical Fellowship, is essentially an attempt to express the unity already present in Christ. Evangelicals do not believe that denominational

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<sup>7</sup> World Evangelical Fellowship Bulletin, No. 1, 1962/1963. In Evangelical Broadsheet, Winter, 1962-3, p. 5.

structures, as such, are barriers to this type of fellowship. It is cooperation which they seek, not organic union. There is much emphasis upon spiritual fellowship and waiting for the Holy Spirit to move to bring to culmination God's plan for the union of all believers.

Philip Schaff, in Reunion of Christendom, sums up the position of the Alliance in the nineteenth century. He says that Christian union as an organic union under one government is impossible, because union with Rome is impossible. He advocates a comprehensive federation much like that proposed by S. S. Schmucker.<sup>8</sup> He says, Christ promised "one flock under one shepherd, but not one fold." The united Church would be under the Federal Headship of Christ.<sup>9</sup>

Schaff gives five ways in which Christian union may be promoted. (1) Assume an ironic and evangelical-catholic spirit in approaching individual Christians of other denominations. "Assume that they are as honest and earnest as we in the pursuit of truth." (2) Talk about union is useless unless it is manifested in works of charity and philanthropy. (3) Comity arrangements should be worked out for both home and foreign missions. (4) The study of Church History from a broad perspective, with attention given to symbolic or comparative theology tends to increase understanding of other traditions. (5) The duty and privilege of prayer for Christian union is binding upon all Christians.

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<sup>8</sup> See chapter 2, p. 11 ff.

<sup>9</sup> Philip Schaff, op. cit., p. 14.

Modern evangelical efforts have not advanced much beyond these positions. In the end Schaff leaves the divisions of the Church to the healing power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>10</sup>

#### The Present Alliance Approach

The present position of the evangelicals is not as broad as that of Schaff. The intervening years have produced bitter quarrels which point up the depth of the breach in Protestantism. There is a large and rapidly growing segment of the Church that is out of fellowship with the old-line established denominations and their ecumenical movement. In recent years the Alliance has received a new zest for its work and life. This is in part a reflection of the increasing importance of the "sect groups." The Alliance has recently stated its attitude toward Christian union. Its members are happy to have fellowship with all who sincerely love our Lord Jesus Christ. They still maintain that active Christian cooperation is not possible without agreement on basic Christian truth. A unified understanding of the nature of the Gospel is thought to be a necessary prerequisite to cooperative evangelist work. The Alliance has taken a new slogan, "Spiritual Unity in Action." Evangelicals like to quote three phrases from the first chapter of Philippians as the objects which they seek. "Fellowship in the Gospel," (v. 5), "The defence and confirmation of

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 38 ff.



the Gospel," (v. 7), and "The furtherance of the Gospel." (v. 12).<sup>11</sup>

In preparation for a United Service of Holy Communion, January 10, 1963, a study group prepared a statement on the nature of the church for the Evangelical Alliance. The statement is intended to express in general terms the views of evangelicals on this subject. It goes a long way in explaining the hesitation of evangelicals to heartily endorse the contemporary ecumenical movement as expressed in the World Council of Churches.

The Church of God consists of His elect in every age who have been united to Christ by His grace through faith, and are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. This union with Christ, signified by baptism though not created by it, finds visible expression where believers meet together for worship and the ministry of the Word, and at the Lord's Table.

This spiritual unity is further expressed when Christians of varying traditions participate together in the Lord's Supper, unhindered by differences on secondary matters. The existence of this God-given unity does not, however, absolve Christians from endeavouring to understand the differing viewpoints held on these secondary matters, such as forms of worship, systems of government, and orders of ministry.

Nevertheless, there are certain essential doctrines on which no compromise is possible, such as the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the deity of Christ; the sole sufficiency of His atoning work for the salvation of men; the supreme authority of Holy Scripture in all matters of faith and practice; the justification of the sinner by the grace of God through faith alone, and the priesthood of the whole Church whereby every believer has direct access to God the Father through the one Mediator, Jesus Christ. To the extent to which churches (whether in the World Council of Churches or not) fail to express these truths, to that extent they

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<sup>11</sup> Evangelical Broadsheet, Winter, 1962/1963, p. 1.

fall short of being churches in the New Testament sense, though individuals within them may be true believers.<sup>12</sup>

Evangelicals stress the point that they are not in competition with the World Council of Churches. Their groups are not being formed in opposition to existing groups, but seek to serve Christ in a way that other groups can not do. It would seem that the purpose of the Evangelical Alliance today is the same as when it was founded, to witness to evangelical truth. Historical criticism and liberalism have caused the evangelical fellowships to explain the authority of the Scriptures and the divinity of Christ in a more detailed way than was necessary for their nineteenth century forebears.

#### Analysis of the Evangelical Alliance

Ruth Rouse lists several reasons for the failure of the Evangelical Alliance to capture the enthusiasm of the Christian world with its program of Christian unity. She says that the Alliance ignored the relations of Churches to each other in being an organization of individual Christians. This is true to a certain extent; but, by being an organization of individuals the Alliance was enabled to comprehend in its fellowship a far wider scope of Christianity than if it had to rely upon the official recognition of church before it could fellowship with individuals within that church. At the time that the Alliance was

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<sup>12</sup> Evangelical Alliance Annual Report, Autumn, 1962, p. 14.

formed it would have been impossible to form any kind of cooperative association for Christian union embracing both the Church of England, as a whole, and the free churches. The modern evangelical fellowships have overcome this objection by encouraging membership from organized bodies, while still keeping the door open for individual membership.<sup>13</sup>

The second criticism which Rouse gives of the Alliance is that the doctrinal basis was too narrow.<sup>14</sup> This is a valid criticism if one wishes to include in Christian union all who claim the name Christian. It would seem that in the twentieth century as well as the nineteenth there are many groups who call themselves Christian, but who by honest comparison with Biblical and historic Christianity can not be considered Christian. The Alliance doctrinal basis was seen as a witness to truth and not as a creedal statement. It was open to wide variations of interpretation. This was one of the major points of attack by nineteenth century critics. The basis of the new Evangelical Fellowship with its qualifying clauses would seem to be more liable to this kind of criticism.

It can not be denied that the narrowness of the basis has been one of the major causes for the failure of the Alliance to come to the fore. It would seem that here it offers hope of providing a means of widening the horizons of those Christians who in good conscience can not

<sup>13</sup> Rouse and Neill, op. cit., p. 323.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

associate with Christians who do not maintain "essential evangelical views." There is a growing body of Christians who can not be represented in the World Council of Churches because of theological problems. This group needs to be in vital contact with other Christians. The evangelical fellowships can serve this need.

One of the more practical reasons for the failure of the Alliance is well stated by Rouse. The Alliance lacked any central leadership and organization. There was no strong leader who would vigorously take up the cause of Christian union in the nineteenth century. The real reason for the failure to provide for a central organization goes back to the London Conference of 1846 and the slaveholding question. The Alliance failed when this issue was introduced. When this issue was no longer a reality, the Alliance had established itself in the pattern of independent national organizations.<sup>15</sup>

Rouse lists a lack of forward looking programs as another criticism. The Alliance arrived on the scene too late to secure for itself an important practical object. Individuals who are agreed on major points of doctrine can enjoy the sublime heights of spiritual unity for only a short period of time. The American Alliance tried to establish a program, only to have the program destroy it. On an international level the Alliance discovered the promotion of a week of prayer and defense of religious liberty to be its only practical purposes. The Week of Prayer

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

did not need extended preparation and appeals for help in religious persecutions were rather sporadic. Some of the practical objects which might have been taken up by the Alliance were channeled to its offsprings, such as the International Sabbath Association. It is difficult to understand how an organization for the promotion of Christian union can find a practical object. Is not Christian union a sufficiently practical object?

The modern British Alliance can not be charged with this criticism. It has engaged in an extended program of practical activity, as described above.

Ruth Rouse does not understand the Alliance when she says that its objectives were incompatible.<sup>16</sup> She can not understand how brotherly love and hatred of Popery and Puseyism can be combined. The Alliance made a strong anti-Papal stand. It was opposed to all efforts to extend the Roman Catholic system. But, the Alliance members saw a difference between the system and those under the system. The Alliance expressed its concern for Roman Catholics in a very practical way when it protested on their behalf in Sweden. The Alliance made it very clear that while it was absolutely against the presuppositions of Roman Catholicism, it could feel Christian love for individuals within the system who had been touched by the Lord and who were sincere believers in Him.

The Evangelical Alliance has never been a voice in the modern

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

movement for Christian union for another reason in addition to those listed by Ruth Rouse. It was in a period of inactivity and near death when the contemporary movement was beginning. Thus, the Evangelical Alliance has been completely forgotten by historians of the ecumenical movement. In its resurrected form it is clothed in new garments with its essential position unchanged. Its appeal for Christian union is not now as novel as it was in 1846. The Alliance needs to be studied and understood by the modern ecumenical movement. Its conferences were forerunners of all modern Protestant inter-denominational, international conventions. The influence of its Week of Prayer can not be adequately assessed. During its early years the Alliance was, almost completely, the only means of Christian fellowship beyond the limits of nation and denomination. The Evangelical Alliance is a significant pioneer in Christian union.

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APPENDIXES

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## APPENDIX A

REPORT OF THE LIVERPOOL CONFERENCE<sup>1</sup>

That as the Conference rejoice in the substantial agreement which exists among the people of God, so they are deeply impressed with a sense of the importance of exhibiting and carrying out that agreement; believing as they do, that the alienation of Christians from one another, on account of lesser differences, has been one of the greatest evils in the Church of Christ, and one main hindrance to the progress of the Gospel; and that the aspect of affairs, in a religious view, both at home and abroad is, such as is to present the strongest motive to union and co-operation.

That this meeting desires to express its humiliation before God and his Church, for all the divisions of the Christian Church, and especially for everything which we ourselves may have aforesaid spoken, in theological and ecclesiastical discussions, contrary to speaking the truth in love; and would earnestly and affectionately recommend to each other in our own conduct; and particularly in our use of the press, carefully to abstain from, and to put away, all bitterness and wrath, and anger and clamour, and evil speaking, with all malice; and in things in which we may yet differ from each other, still to seek to be kind, tenderhearted, forbearing one another in love, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us; in everything seeking to be followers of God as dear children, and to walk in love, as Christ also has loved us.

That as the Christian union which this Conference desires to promote can only be attained through the blessed energy of the Holy Spirit, the Conference unanimously recommends the members present, and absent brethren, to make this matter the subject of simultaneous weekly petition at the Throne of Grace in their closets and families; and suggests the forenoon of Monday as the time for that purpose.

That the Conference records with delight and heartfelt thanksgiving to God, that, after the most frank and unreserved expression of their sentiments by brethren of various denominations present, there has been found, not only a general and warm desire for extended Christian union, but ample ground of common truth, on a cordial belief in which the assembled brethren could themselves unite, for many important

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<sup>1</sup> Christian Observer, Vol. 45, pp. 729 ff.

objects, and also invite the adhesion of all evangelical Christians; so that, cheered by these auspicious commencements, the Conference would go forward with its great object, depending on continued help from the Divine Head of the Church; and now determines that a more extensive meeting shall be convened in London, in the summer of next year to which Christians from various parts of the world shall be invited.

That the Conference postponing the preparation of a full and formal document on the subject, deem it sufficient for the present to intimate that the parties who shall be invited to the future meeting shall be such persons as hold and maintain what are usually understood to be evangelical views in regard to such important matters of doctrine as the following, viz.

1. The Divine inspiration, authority, and sufficiency of Holy Scripture.
2. The unity of the Godhead, and the Trinity of persons therein.
3. The utter depravity of human nature, in consequence of the fall.
4. The incarnation of the Son of God, and his work of atonement for sinners of mankind.
5. The justification of the sinner by faith alone.
6. The work of the Holy Spirit in the conversion and sanctification of the sinner.
7. The right and duty of private judgment in the interpretation of Holy Scripture.
8. The Divine institution of the Christian ministry, and the authority and perpetuity of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

That it be recommended to the future meeting in connection with the promotion of Christian union, that they form an institution, whose name shall be The Evangelical Alliance.

That in the prosecution of the present attempt, the Conference are clearly and unanimously of opinion, that no compromise of their own views, or sanction of those of others, on the points on which they differ, ought to be either required or expected on the part of anyone who concurs in it; but that all should be held, as free as before, to maintain and advocate their views, with all due forbearance and brotherly love. Farther, that any union or alliance to be formed,

should be understood to be an alliance of individual Christians, and not of denominations or branches of the Church; and the design of this alliance shall be to exhibit, as far as practicable, the essential unity of the Church of Christ, and at the same time to cherish and manifest; in its various branches, the spirit of brotherly love, to pen and maintain, by correspondence and otherwise fraternal intercourse between all parts of the Christian world,--and, by the press, and by such scriptural means as, in the progress of this alliance, may be deemed expedient, to resist not only the efforts of Popery, but every form of superstition and infidelity, and to promote our Common Protestant faith in our own and other countries.

That in the judgment of this Conference, one of the most important objects which the contemplated alliance ought to have in view, is, the promotion of sound views on the subject of the sanctity of the Lord's day....

## APPENDIX B

AMERICAN MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE IN 1846<sup>1</sup>

Rev. Gorham D. Abbott, New York, Pres.  
 Rev. John Adams, Mass., Cong.  
 Rev. Emerson Andrews, Reading, Pa., Baptist  
 Rev. Samuel Ashmead, Phil., MEC  
 Rev. Robert Baird, N. Y., Pres.  
 H. Bange, Esq., Newark, N. J., Pres.  
 Rev. Lyman Beecher, Cincinnati, O., Pres.  
 John Bevridge, Esq., Newburgh, U.S. Ass. Ref. Ch.  
 Rev. T. Brainerd, Phil., Pres.  
 Rev. H. N. Brinsman, Newark, N. J., Pres.  
 Rev. F. G. Brown, New Bedford, Baptist  
 Rev. W. Brown, New York, Pres.  
 W. D. Buch, Esq., M.D., Cong.  
 Charles Butler, Esq., N. Y., Pres.  
 Prof. Merritt Caldwell, Carlisle, MEC  
 Robert Carter, Esq., New York, Pres.  
 Rev. Pharcellus Church, Rochester, Baptist  
 Rev. M. M. Clark, AMEC  
 J. W. Corson, Esq., M.D., New York, MEC  
 Rev. S. H. Cox, New York, Pres.  
 Rev. J. Dempster, Vermont, MEC  
 Rev. T. DeWitt, New York, Dut. Ref. Ch.  
 Rev. J. Durker, Utica, Am. Episcopal Ch.  
 Rev. Romeo Elton, New Haven, Gen. Baptist  
 Rev. Brown Emerson, Salem, Cong.  
 Rev. President Robert Emory, MEC  
 Rev. G. G. Exall, Virginia, U.S. Baptist  
 Rev. J. Forsyth, Newburgh, New York, Pres.  
 Rev. Charles Galpin, Michigan, Pres.  
 Rev. G. W. Gowdy, Xenia, O., Pres.  
 Rev. Oscar H. Gregory, West Troy, Dut. Ref. Ch.  
 R. T. Haines, Esq., Elizabeth Town, N. J., Pres.  
 J. Harper, New York, MEC  
 E. R. Hill, Esq., Wadsworth, O., MEC  
 Rev. Joshue Vaughn Himes, Boston, Advent Ch.  
 Prof. M. B. Hope, Princeton, Pres.  
 Rev. Asa T. Hopkins, Buffalo, Pres.

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Proceedings..., Appendix C.

W. S. Huggins, Esq., Yale College, Cong.  
 Rev. E. P. Humphrey, Louisville, Pres.  
 Willard Ives, Esq., Watertown, New York, MEC  
 Rev. Pardon T. Kenney, New Bedford, MEC  
 Rev. E. N. Kirk, Boston, Cong.  
 Rev. Benjamin Kurtz, Baltimore, Ev. Luth.  
 Rev. W. Livesey, Rhode Island, MEC  
 Rev. John Marsh, New York, Cong.  
 Rev. Erskine Mason, New York, Pres.  
 Rev. J. B. Merwin, Poughkeepsie, N. Y., MEC  
 Rev. J. G. Morris, Baltimore, Luth.  
 Sidney E. Morse, Esq., New York, Cong.  
 R. D. Mussey, Esq., M.D., U.S. Pres.  
 Rev. D. J. Noyes, Concord, N. H., Cong.  
 Rev. Stephen Olin, Middleton, MEC  
 Rev. H. S. Osborn, Phil., Pres.  
 Rev. W. H. Passavent, Pittsburgh, Ev. Luth.  
 Rev. W. Patton, New York, Pres.  
 Rev. L. H. Pease, Albany, N. Y., Pres.  
 Rev. G. Peck, New York, MEC  
 Rev. Abraham Polhemus, New York, Dut. Ref. Ch.  
 Rev. S. L. Pomroy, Bangor, Me., Cong.  
 Rev. J. T. Pressley, Alleghany, Pres.  
 Rev. A. Reid, Salem, Mass., Pres.  
 Rev. Adam Reid, Salisbury, Conn., Cong.  
 Daniel Safford, Esq., Cong.  
 T. C. Safford, Esq., Boston, Cong.  
 Rev. S. S. Schmucker, Gettysburg, Pa., Luth.  
 Rev. O. Scott, New York  
 Rev. T. H. Skinner, New York, Pres.  
 Rev. T. Smyth, Charleston, S. C., Pres.  
 Rev. S. Spicer, Lansingburgh, N. Y., MEC  
 Rev. Tobias Spicer, New York, MEC  
 Rev. John B. Urwin, Poughkeepsie, MEC  
 Rev. A. B. Van Zandt, Newburgh, N. Y., Dut. Ref. Ch.  
 Rev. G. Webber, Kent's Hill, Me., MEC  
 Rev. Alonzo Wheelock, New York, Bapt.  
 Rev. H. R. Wilson, Phil., Pres.

## APPENDIX C

GENERAL ORGANIZATION<sup>1</sup>

That,--whereas Brethren, from the Continents of Europe and America, as well as in this Country, are unable, without consultation with their countrymen to settle all the arrangements for their respective Countries,--it is expedient to defer the final and complete arrangement of the details of the Evangelical Alliance, of which the foundation has now been laid, till another General Conference.

That the Alliance consist of all such Members of this Conference, and Members and Corresponding Members of the Divisions of the Provisional Committee, as shall adhere to the principles and objects of the Alliance. Persons may be admitted to membership of the Alliance, by consent of all the District Organizations, or by a vote of a General Conference; and to membership of any District Organization, by such mode as each District Organization may determine.

That the Members of the Alliance be recommended to form District Organizations, in such manner as shall be most in accordance with the peculiar circumstances of each District. Provided, however,

First,--That neither the Alliance, nor the respective District Organizations, shall be held responsible for the proceedings of any District Organization;

Secondly,--That, whenever a District Organization shall be formed, the Members of the Alliance, within that District, shall act collectively in its formation.

That,--In furtherance of the above plan, it be recommended, for the present, that a District Organization be formed in each of the following Districts, viz.: --

1. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.
2. The United States of America.
3. France; Belgium; and French Switzerland.

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Proceedings..., p. 503.



4. The North of Germany.
5. The South of Germany; and German Switzerland.
6. British North America.
7. The West Indies.

And that additional District Organizations be, from time to time, recognized as such, by the concurrence of any three previously-existing Organizations.

That an official correspondence be maintained between the several District Organizations, and that Reports of their proceedings be interchanged, with a view to cooperation and encouragement in their common object.

That a General Conference be held, at such time and place, and consist of such Members of the Alliance, as, by correspondence between the District Organizations, and under the guidance of Divine Providence, shall hereafter be determined by their unanimous concurrence. Provided,

First,--That any Member of the Alliance, who was entitled to attend this Conference, and shall retain his membership, shall be entitled to attend the next also;

And, Secondly,--That all questions relating to the convening of it shall be determined by such Members only of the District Organizations, as shall also be Members of the Alliance.

A Conference of any two, or more, of the District Organizations may be held by mutual agreement.

3. The Unity of the Godhead, and Trinity of the persons therein.
4. The utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall.
5. The incarnation of the Son of God, his work of atonement for sins of mankind, and his mediatorial intercession and reign.
6. The justification of the sinner by faith alone.
7. The work of the Holy Spirit in the conversion and sanctification of the sinner.
8. The immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the judgment of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, with the eternal blessedness of the righteous, and the eternal punishment of the wicked.
9. The divine institution of the Christian ministry, and the obligation and perpetuity of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

It being, however, distinctly declared, that this brief summary is not to be regarded in any formal or ecclesiastical sense, as a creed or confession, nor the adoption of it as involving an assumption of the right authoritatively to define the limits of Christian brotherhood, but simply as an indication of the class of persons whom it is desirable to embrace within the Alliance.

## APPENDIX E

CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE<sup>1</sup>  
 [Adopted January 1867]

## ARTICLE I

This Organization shall be known as the Evangelical Alliance for the United States of America.

## ARTICLE II

The objects of this Association are: to promote evangelical union, with a view to greater success in Christian activity; to maintain and exhibit the essential unity of the Church of Christ; to counteract the influence of infidelity and superstition, especially in their organized forms; to assist the cause of religious freedom everywhere; to hold up the supreme authority of the word of God; to urge the observance of the Lord's day; and to correct the immoral habits of society. And to accomplish these ends, it proposes to act as a Bureau of Correspondence and Information, obtaining facts and diffusing them, with such suggestions as may seem pertinent, always avoiding a dogmatic or legislative style, and "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

## ARTICLE III

Any person may be introduced as a member of this Alliance, on his own application, by signing the Constitution, and assenting to the principles, the basis, and the objects of this Association.

## ARTICLE IV

The officers of this Alliance shall be a President, Vice-Presidents, Corresponding and Recording Secretaries, and a Treasurer.

## ARTICLE V

The business of the Alliance shall be conducted by a Board of Councillors, including the executive officers and the Vice-Presidents--

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<sup>1</sup> Third Annual Report, 1871, pp. 13-14.

who shall be members ex officio--any ten of whom shall constitute a quorum of a meeting when regularly convened; and all the officers and councillors shall be elected annually by the Alliance, shall be accountable to it, and subject to its instructions and shall hold their places until the election of the successors. The members of the Board are empowered to fill their own vacancies; and shall meet by the appointment of the Society, or on their own adjournment, or at the call of the President, by the request or with the consent of any five councillors; provided, in the case of every special meeting, due notice shall be given for ten days through the press.

#### ARTICLE VI

There shall be an Executive Committee elected annually by the Board of Councillors, consisting, as nearly as possible of one member from each denomination of Christians represented in the Alliance, and the executive officers of the Board; and any five of this Committee shall constitute a quorum when regularly convened.

#### ARTICLE VII

The Alliance shall meet annually, at such time and place as the Board may appoint.

#### ARTICLE VIII

Local organizations in the United States, adopting the principles of this Alliance, may become connected with it by a vote of the Board of Councillors, their members thus becoming individually members of this Alliance.

#### ARTICLE IX

This Constitution may be altered only at an annual meeting, and by a vote of two-thirds of the members present, provided notice of the amendment be given at a previous annual meeting; unless the alteration be recommended by twenty of the Board of Councillors.

REVISED CONSTITUTION OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE FOR THE UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA<sup>1</sup>

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 Adopted January, 1867. Amended January, 1874; June, 1885; December,  
 1886; March and June, 1887; January, 1889, and January, 1890.  
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ARTICLE I  
 NAME AND INCORPORATION

This organization shall be known as the EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE  
 FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

It was organized in January, 1867, and incorporated in June,  
 1885, under Chapter 319 of the Laws of 1848 of the State of New York,  
 and Amendments thereto, including Chapter 446 of the Laws of 1883.

ARTICLE II  
 OBJECT

The object of this Association shall be the furtherance of re-  
 ligious opinion with the intent to manifest and strengthen Christian  
 unity, and to promote religious liberty and co-operation in Christian  
 work, without interfering with the internal affairs of the different de-  
 nominations.

ARTICLE III  
 MANAGEMENT

The Board of Managers named in the certificate of incorpora-  
 tion shall control the affairs of the Association for the first year,  
 and be eligible to re-election, and shall fill its own vacancies and  
 make by-laws, rules and regulations for the management of the affairs of  
 the incorporation, not inconsistent with this Constitution or the laws  
 of the State of New York. In the interval of the meetings of the Board  
 of Managers, an Executive Committee, appointed by the President with the  
 approval of the Board, shall have authority to conduct the affairs of  
 the Alliance, subject to such rules and regulations as the Board may  
 from time to time prescribe.

The Alliance shall meet annually on the Friday after the second  
 Sunday of January, at such hour and place as the Board of Managers shall  
 appoint, at which meetings Managers shall be elected.

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<sup>1</sup> Twenty-second Annual Report, pp. 18-19.

ARTICLE IV  
CLASSIFICATION AND ELECTION OF BOARD OF MANAGERS

At the first meeting of the Board of Managers under this Constitution, the Managers named in the certificate of incorporation shall be classified by lot into four classes, one of which shall hold office for the current year, another for two years, another for three years, and another for four years.

The members of the Alliance who are entitled under this Constitution to vote for managers, shall annually elect ten managers to fill the class of those whose terms of office first expire, who shall hold office for four years.

ARTICLE V  
OFFICERS

The officers of this Alliance shall be a President, Vice-Presidents, Honorary Secretaries, Corresponding and Recording Secretaries, a General Secretary, a Field Secretary, and a Treasurer, who shall be elected by the Board of Managers, and who shall be subject to removal by the Board.

ARTICLE VI  
CLASSIFICATION AND ELECTION OF MEMBERS

Of the members there shall be two classes: 1st, Contributing members; 2d, Honorary members. All persons elected officers or managers of the Alliance shall be taken from the roll of members of either class, and all such members can serve on special committees appointed by the President or the Board of Managers, without being members of that board.

The payment of \$10 shall constitute the donor a member of the Alliance for one year, and the payment of \$50 at one time shall constitute the donor a life-member of the Alliance; and all contributing members shall be entitled to the publications of the Alliance issued during the period of their membership.

All members who adhere to the basis of principles heretofore adopted shall be entitled to vote for managers.

ARTICLE VII  
LOCAL AND STATE ORGANIZATIONS

State and local organizations of the United States composed of evangelical Christians, in sympathy with the object of this Alliance as set forth in Article II of the Constitution, may become connected with it by a vote of the Board of Managers on compliance with the rules or conditions that may be established by the Board in that behalf.

## ARTICLE VIII

This Constitution may be amended at any annual or special meeting of the Alliance, called for that purpose at ten days' notice, provided the proposed Amendments shall have been first submitted to and recommended by the Board of Managers, and the same shall be approved by two-thirds of the members of the Alliance entitled to vote for managers and present at the meeting.

## APPENDIX F

METHODS OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE<sup>1</sup>

## METHOD I

An alliance adopting this method is as simple as possible. It is composed of the pastors of the evangelical churches of the community, together with a few active and representative laymen of each church, selected as the church may see fit; or membership may be enlarged by making eligible to it every member of any evangelical church who is interested in the objects of the Alliance. These objects are:

1. To afford a point of contact for the churches, to bring them into closer relations and to cultivate their fellowship. The lack of fellowship and confidence, so far as it exists, is due almost wholly to a lack of acquaintance.

2. To cultivate a broader idea of the mission of the church in its relations to the entire life of the community, and to enable churches to discuss together their common interests and whatever requires their co-operation.

One great weakness of the church is due to a too narrow interpretation of her commission. The Gospel was intended not only to bring men into right relations with God, but also to rectify all human relationships; to save not only the individual, but also institutions--the family, the community, the state; to purify politics, to reconcile capital and labor, to perfect life, whether physical, intellectual, moral or spiritual.

The local Alliance is concerned with everything that Christianity was intended to do for the community in which it is organized. It is a Sabbath alliance; it is a temperance alliance; it is an alliance to enforce law and order; it is an alliance for tenement-house reform and for every other reform which is related to human welfare; it is an alliance of the good for the purpose of overcoming the evil.

3. To afford a means of crystallizing, and a medium of expressing, the public sentiment of the churches as occasion may require.

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<sup>1</sup> Methods of the Evangelical Alliance. (No information. Published about 1890.)



## METHOD II

An Alliance adopting this method is composed like the former. It has also the same objects, but, in addition, undertakes an annual canvass of the community, which it makes through the churches or otherwise.

A canvass is by no means as valuable as sustained visitation, but when it is well done and faithfully followed up, it is very fruitful of good. It shows where the new comers are, who are the non-church goers and what are their church preferences. It finds many unused church letters. It better acquaints the churches with the condition of the masses and brings them into closer relations. It affords an opportunity to furnish the city with the Scriptures and other religious reading, to gather the children into the Sabbath Schools and to invite the whole population to attend the church of their preference.

The knowledge gained by a canvass is of little value unless it is used. Every co-operating church will find that it needs a committee of visitors to assist their pastor in attaching to their church all the newly discovered families who express a preference for it.

Alliances of the first and second class meet once a month, or once in two months, or once in three, as often as they see fit.

## METHOD III

An Alliance adopting the third method has the same general objects as those already described, but is distinguished by its work of systematic visitation. There is an important distinction between the canvasser and the visitor. The one is a stranger (in all cities), the other becomes a friend. The primary object of the former is information, that of the latter is influence. The latter accomplishes all that the former does and much more. The visitor makes the several families assigned to him (or her) a study, and special objects of prayer. He seeks to gain their confidence, to do them good in every possible way, and then uses the influence thus acquired to win them to Christ and his church, which of course requires time and patience.

Alliances of this class undertake the work of visitation on what is called the district plan, the essential features of which may be stated as follows:

1. The churches of the 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 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 this 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. If the visitors undertake the work under the impression that its chief object is to obtain information, they will be indisposed to make a second visit.

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.

This method of work makes a happy application of two fundamental principles which must be adopted before the church can effectively reach the masses with the gospel; first, that of personal effort, or personal contact, which is no other than the principle of the leaven mingled with the meal, and, second, that of co-operation, which enters into all the great movements of modern times.

#### METHOD IV

Alliances adopting this method have the same objects as the preceding. They undertake systematic house-to-house visitation, but on what is known as the community plan. This plan is less simple than the preceding and the organization of Alliances of this sort beyond the reach of personal supervision from the New York office is not recommended. Particulars concerning this class may be had by corresponding with the New York office, No. 117 Bible House.