

REPORT

OF THE

Deputation of the American Branch

OF THE

Evangelical Alliance,

APPOINTED TO MEMORIALIZE THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA
IN BEHALF OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

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THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

THE Evangelical Alliance, consisting of Christians of different nationalities and creeds, was founded in London, 1846, for the express purpose of promoting religious liberty and Christian union on the basis of that liberty. True to this object, it has on every proper occasion interceded in behalf of persecuted Christians, without regard to their faith and nationality, and has thereby contributed its share toward the recent advances of the principles of religious liberty in Italy, Spain, Sweden and Turkey. The release of the Madiari in Tuscany, of Matamoros, Carrasco, and their fellow-prisoners in Spain, whose only crime was reading the Bible and holding private meetings for devotion, the abolition of the death penalty for apostasy from Mohammedanism in the Sultan's dominion, and the abrogation of the penal laws in Sweden against Roman Catholics and Protestants not belonging to the Lutheran Confession, are due in part to the moral influence exerted by the labors of the Alliance and its deputations, composed of prominent Christian men of

different countries and denominations, and actuated by purely philanthropic and religious motives.

APPEALS FROM ABROAD.

The subject of religious persecution in Russia was first brought to the notice of the American Alliance by an appeal from SWITZERLAND, dated March, 1870, bearing the signatures of more than two hundred well-known Christian men, such as the late Count de Gasparin, Adrien de Naville, Ch. Barde, Dr. Lombard, F. de Rougemont, Count de Pourtales, Et. Schlatter, M. Zellweger, Prof. Chappuis, Dr. Güder, Prof. F. Bovet, Bovet de Muralt, Prof. Godet, and others from Geneva, Neuchatel, Lausanne, Vevey, Basel, Berne, Zurich, St. Gall, and Appenzell, describing the sufferings long endured by many thousand Protestants in the Russian Provinces of Livonia, Esthonia, and Courland, and asking for an expression of Christian sympathy and for active intercession in their behalf.

Similar appeals were received, during the last year, from members and friends of the Evangelical Alliances in Holland, France, Germany and England, as well as from other persons who, without any connection with the Alliance, looked upon this organization as the only or most efficient organ for expressing the sentiments of the Christian world on this subject. The various appeals from the Continent of Europe expressed a decided wish that the American Alliance should take the lead in this movement, since it could not be suspected of any political motives, and was most likely to make an impression upon the Russian Government because of its friendly relations to the United States.

Finally, strong petitions were sent in from American Missionaries in Turkey complaining, with other Missionaries in the East, of the religious intolerance of Russian officials in the bordering provinces of Russia, and asking that we might secure for them if possible the same freedom in missionary labor and the distribution of the Scriptures, which they now enjoy under Mohammedan rule.

PERSECUTION IN THE BALTIC PROVINCES.

The Baltic Provinces of Russia, which originally belonged to Sweden and Poland, and are mostly inhabited by Germans, Letts, and Esthonians professing the Lutheran Creed, were ceded to Russia under special guarantees that their Protestant religion, civil rights, and institutions should not be interfered with. But, under the reign of the late Emperor Nicolas, a system of "Russification" was begun, which has given rise to growing discontent and repeated remonstrances and petitions. Since 1844, many thousand (it is stated, nearly 100,000) Letts and Esthonians, mostly ignorant peasants, were by false promises and under the pressure of great public distress, seduced into the Orthodox Græco-Russian Church, and were retained there against their wish and will under threat of numerous persecutions, even penal servitude in Siberia. Many startling acts of fraud and violence against conscience are charged upon Russian priests and officials.

Moved by repeated appeals for justice and mercy, the present Emperor, Alexander II.—an enlightened and liberal-minded monarch—sent one of his aides, General Bobrinski, now Minister of Public Works, to the Baltic Provinces, to make a personal investigation. This Commissioner, in his report to the Emperor, which is dated April 18, 1864, and was first published (unofficially) by Baron von Bock, in January 1867, and repeatedly since in the Russian and other languages, fully confirms the facts of official fraud, and concludes with the following statement:—

"The facts which I have collected in my visit to the above-named parishes, and which I have taken merely and solely from my conversations with Orthodox clergymen and Orthodox peasants, I have given in the memoir here adjoined. A compilation of these facts leads me to the positive conviction, that of the number of 140,000 Orthodox, who are counted according to the official statistics in Livonia, perhaps scarcely the tenth part confess themselves really as belonging to the Orthodox Church. The others have not only never been in their hearts Orthodox, but even in their performance of external religious duties, they retain even now, as far as it is possible, the rites and ceremonies of the Lutheran Church.

Your Majesty! it has been painful to me, as a member of the Orthodox Church, as well as a Russian, to witness with my own eyes the abasement of the Russian Orthodoxy, by the open revelation of this official fraud. Not the

sincere words of these unhappy families, who address Your Majesty with the humble but fervent prayer, to accord to them the right to confess the religion which is according to the conviction of their conscience—not these sincere expressions of their feelings, have made upon me such a painful impression, as the fact that the *violence exercised against conscience, and the official fraud known to everybody, should be indissolubly chained to the idea of Russia and Orthodoxy.*” *

At the same time, Count Bobrinski told the peasants in Livonia “that the existing laws concerning orthodoxy could not be changed; that the Greek Orthodox could not return to Lutheranism; and that the children of mixed marriages must be baptized according to the Greek rite. They heard that communication with deep and unconcealed grief, but with full submission. They implored me again, on their knees, to present to your Majesty their hope of your Imperial mercy.”

THE PENAL LAWS OF RUSSIA.

This last declaration of Count Bobrinski reveals the core of the difficulty. Russia still has on her statute-book those intolerant penal laws under which not only the Lutherans and Moravians of the Baltic Provinces, but all who dissent from the Russian State Church, in any part of the immense empire, must more or less suffer. It is well known how bitterly the Roman Catholics of Poland complain of persecution under the operation of such laws. Similar laws once disgraced the statute-books of Episcopal England, Lutheran Sweden, Puritan New England, not to speak of Roman Catholic countries; but these have been swept away by the irresistible current of modern progress and a genuine Christian spirit of justice and humanity.

In Russia no one can be legally converted except to the Orthodox Eastern or Greek Church. Hence, other Confessions have no right to engage in missionary labor and to propagate their faith. What is allowed to the Greek Church

* As the authenticity of this report has been boldly denied by a high Russian official in the United States, it is but proper to state that the same report was alluded to in the presence of the Emperor at an audience in June, 1870, and in the presence of Prince Gortschakoff in July, 1871, without a word of doubt or remonstrance on their part. Prince Gortschakoff read aloud before the Deputation of the Alliance that very passage of the American Memorial which refers to Count Bobrinski's report, and declared the passage to be “unobjectionable.”

as her exclusive right, is denounced and forbidden, under the name of propagandism, to all others. Secession from the Græco-Russian Church is strictly prohibited, and punished by confiscation of property, forfeiture of social rank, imprisonment, corporal punishment, and even transportation for life to Siberia; while conversion to that church is officially encouraged and often rewarded. Children of mixed marriages, when one parent belongs to the Greek Church, must be baptized and brought up in that Church, though it should have to be done by force, as has been frequently the case. (Recently, however, by order of the present Emperor, the law about mixed marriages has been suspended for the Baltic Provinces.) The Russian Government, indeed, supports Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches, and on that account claims to be tolerant; and it is freely admitted that the Greek Church in Russia is free from tribunals of Inquisition and bloody persecutions which disgrace the history of some other countries. Nevertheless, according to the Russian code of laws, it is even to-day a punishable crime for any Russian subject who is a member of the Greek Church, to become a Protestant or a Roman Catholic. The whole civilized world calls this a violation of the sacred rights of conscience.

We quote a few of these intolerant laws from the Criminal Code of Russia, Vol. XV.:

ARTICLE 207.—Whoever endeavors, by preaching or writing, to seduce members of the Orthodox Church to join any other Christian community, will be punished, the first time, with the loss of some of his special rights, and imprisonment for one or two years in a house of correction; the second time with imprisonment in a fortress from four to six years; the third time with the loss of all his personal and social civil rights and status, and transportation for life to Tobolsk or Tomsk (Siberia), with imprisonment of one to two years.

ARTICLE 208.—Parents, who are bound by law to bring up their children in the doctrines of the Orthodox Church, but who have them baptized according to the rite of another Christian Church, or the other sacraments administered to them, will be condemned to imprisonment of one to two years.

ARTICLE 209.—Those who place obstacles in the way of persons who, by their own free will, are desirous of joining the Orthodox Church, will be condemned to imprisonment of three to six months.

ARTICLE 210.—Whosoever knows that his wife or children intend to secede from the Orthodox Confession, and does not endeavor to prevent them from carrying out their intention by taking legal steps, will be condemned to imprisonment of three days to three months.

The true and radical remedy, therefore, for the Baltic difficulty is the abrogation of these penal laws, and the legal establishment of full religious liberty throughout the whole empire of Russia. Liberty for all denominations is the best guarantee of liberty for every one. Mere toleration is not sufficient; for this implies censure, or may arise from indifference, and may at any time give way to persecution. What is wanted is liberty of conscience, including the liberty of public worship, as an inalienable right of every man, which the civil government is bound to recognize and to protect as much as the right of property and the lives of its subjects. This, of course, does not justify the *abuse* of liberty, for which the guilty is responsible to his God and the laws of the land.

APPOINTMENT OF A DEPUTATION TO RUSSIA.

It was at first proposed to bring the subject of Russian persecution before the General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance which was to be held in the City of New York, in September and October, 1870. A preparatory deputation of Dr. G. Monod, Dr. Pressensé, and other Christians from Paris, waited on the Emperor of Russia, while on a visit at Stuttgart in June, 1870, and memorialized him on this subject. (See Appendix IV.) But the great war between France and Germany, which broke out a few weeks afterwards, led to an indefinite postponement of the General Conference, which, it now appears will not be held before the year 1873.

The brethren from Europe then urged the appointment of a deputation of influential American citizens who should join with similar deputations from the various foreign branches of the Alliance and lay the matter directly before his Imperial Majesty as soon as convenient.

The Executive Committee appointed such a commission,

with power to add to their number. It consists of the following gentlemen :

THE REV. WILLIAM ADAMS, D.D., LL.D.
 THE HON. NATHAN BISHOP, LL.D.
 JOHN CROSSBY BROWN, Esq.
 SALMON P. CHASE, CHIEF-JUSTICE OF THE UNITED STATES.
 THE HON. WILLIAM E. DODGE.
 CYRUS W. FIELD, Esq.
 THE RT. REV. CHARLES P. McILVAINE, D.D., D.C.L.
 PROF. SAMUEL F. B. MORSE, LL.D.
 THE HON. PETER PARKER, M.D.
 PROF. PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D.
 THE REV. NOAH HUNT SCHENCK, D.D.
 BISHOP MATTHEW SIMPSON, D.D., LL.D.
 THE REV. EDWARD A. WASHBURN, D.D.
 NORMAN WHITE, Esq.

The Rev. Dr. STORRS, of Brooklyn, now absent in Europe, was also invited to join the Deputation, but was obliged to decline by reason of ill health.

Professor Morse was elected Chairman, and Dr. Schaff Secretary, of the Deputation. By order of the Executive Committee, the deputies were furnished with a letter of instruction, in which the object of their mission is thus stated :

“The immediate object of the Mission to Russia is to secure, if possible, the enjoyment of religious freedom to the persecuted Lutherans (nominally and reluctantly members of the Greek Church) in the Baltic Provinces.

But this urgent case should be made the basis of, and occasion for, a plea in behalf of religious liberty for *all Christian denominations and sects* in that immense empire, where the Greek Church now claims and enjoys the exclusive privileges of an established religion, and where all other churches are at best merely tolerated.

In support of such a plea, the delegation may confidently appeal to the genius of Christianity, which is spiritual in its nature and succeeds best by spiritual means ; to the example of Christ and the apostles, who would rather suffer martyrdom than resort to carnal weapons ; to the inborn rights of conscience, which demand an outward expression in freedom of public worship ; to the spirit of modern civilization, which everywhere favors religious liberty ; and to our American experience, which has abundantly proved to the world that both the State and the Church are the gainers by the full recognition and enjoyment of religious liberty, as the most sacred and valuable of all liberties. Our system of a peaceful separation of the two powers allows each to manage its own affairs in its own way without inter-

ference from the other, and yet secures to religion the legal protection of the government, and to the State the incalculable benefit of the moral influence of religion, as the main pillar of public and private virtue and happiness. The same system seems to be destined ultimately to prevail in the whole Christian world. The Evangelical Alliance intends to promote Christian union on the basis of religious liberty.

By a proclamation of religious freedom throughout his dominions, stretching over two Continents, the Czar of Russia would bestow one of the greatest blessings to his people, relieve his government of a heavy load of responsibility, give a powerful impulse to religious activity, and earn the gratitude of Christians in all other countries. It would be the crowning glory of his reign, made already illustrious by acts of such far-seeing statesmanship and enlightened generosity as the emancipation of twenty-three millions of serfs. It would animate the courage and strengthen the hands of Protestant missionaries in Turkey, and all those who labor for the revival of pure, primitive Christianity in the lands consecrated by the memories of our blessed Lord and Saviour."

PREPARATORY LABORS.

The Russian Deputation held, during the early months of this year, a number of meetings in the Rooms of the Alliance. The proceedings are duly recorded in the Minute Book of the Executive Committee. The commissioners investigated the facts on which their mission was based, matured and signed a respectful Memorial to the Czar, and agreed to meet June 27th, in London, and July 4th, at Berlin, on their way to St. Petersburg. The Memorial was printed in three languages for private circulation.

The brethren in Europe wished us to leave in the midst of winter so as to meet the Czar in his capital before the festival of Easter, when he is accustomed to admit to his presence petitioners for acts of imperial condescension and benevolence. But this, in view of pressing public duties and the great distance, was simply impossible; and the European friends were requested to act without regard to the convenience of the American delegation. They preferred, however, to wait for our arrival.

MEETINGS IN LONDON AND STUTTGART.

At the appointed day in June, most of the American deputies met at the Alliance Office in London, and conferred with

the British Council on the subject of their mission. A Swiss gentleman who, from repeated visits to the Baltic Provinces, is intimately acquainted with the state of affairs, and has devoted much time and disinterested zeal to the relief of the suffering brethren in those Provinces, was also present, and took a prominent part in the deliberations. Information being received that the Emperor of Russia was in Ems and would soon leave for Stuttgart and Friedrichshafen, it was resolved that the deputies of the different countries should be invited to assemble at Stuttgart, instead of Berlin, on Monday the 10th of July. The Secretary of the American Branch, however, proceeded to Berlin, and conferred on the 4th of July with several Continental gentlemen intimately acquainted with, and interested in, the condition of things in the Baltic Provinces.

On Sunday evening—July 9th—the Delegates convened at Stuttgart for prayer and devotional exercises in the vestry of the venerable *Stifts-Kirche*, the use of which was kindly granted by Prelate Dr. Kapff.

On the following Monday they met in the same place, and organized by electing Dr. SCHAFF, President, and Dr. SCHMETTAU, of England, Baron VON GÖELER, of Germany, and Mr. AGENOR DE BOISSIER, of Geneva, Secretaries. The following thirty-seven gentlemen from the Protestant Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational, Lutheran, German Reformed, Dutch Reformed, Methodist, and Baptist Churches, were present, and enrolled as deputies:

FROM THE UNITED STATES OF NORTH AMERICA.

—The Rev. WILLIAM ADAMS, D.D., LL.D.—The Hon. NATHAN BISHOP, LL.D.—The Hon. W. E. DODGE.—CYRUS W. FIELD, Esq.—The Rt. Rev. C. P. McILVAINE, D.D., D.C.L.—Prof. PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D.—The Rev. NOAH HUNT SCHENCK, D.D.—The Rev. EDWARD A. WASHBURN, D.D.

(The other members of the American deputation who had taken an active part in the preliminary proceedings and signed the Memorial, were unavoidably prevented from attending.)

GREAT BRITAIN.—JOHN FINCH, Esq., *Treasurer of the British Branch of the Evangelical Alliance.*—The Rev. S. D. HARFORD BATTERSBY, M.A., *Honorary Canon of Carlisle Cathedral.*—SAMUEL GURNEY, Esq.—JOHN HALL GLADSTONE, Ph. D., F.R.S.—The Rev. Dr. STEANE, *Honorary Secretary of the British Branch of the Evangelical Alliance.*—The Rev. Dr. SCHMETTAU, and Rev. JAMES DAVIS, *Secretaries of the British Branch of the Evangelical Alliance.*—The Rev. ROBERT JOHNSTON.—JABEZ JOHNSON, Esq., J.P.—RICHARD MULLINGS, Esq.

(Sir HARRY VERNEY, Bart, M.P., Dr. BLACKWOOD, and other influential gentlemen from England had been announced, but could not leave home at the time appointed.)

SWEDEN—Baron HANS VON ESSEN.—The Rev. J. ERIK NYSTROEM, Ph. D.—THOMAS H. ODENCRANTZ, *Judge.*—Captain JOHANN CHRISTIAN BERGER.

DENMARK—CHEVALIER L. A. BRANDT.

HOLLAND—The Rev. Dr. VAN OOSTERZEE, *Professor of Theology at Utrecht.*—The Rev. COHEN STUART, *Pasteur at Rotterdam and Secretary of the Dutch Branch of the Alliance.*

BELGIUM.—Pasteur LEONARD ANET, *President of the Committee of the Alliance at Brussels.*

GERMANY.—COUNT CONSTANTIN VON DER RECKE VOLLMERSTEIN, *of Breslau.*—Baron VON GÄLER, *of Baden.*—Baron Dr. VON TISCHENDORF, *Professor of Theology at Leipzig.*—The Hon. T. H. SIEVEKING, LL.D., *of Hamburg.*

(Baron VON DIERGARD, *of Bonn*, and Dr. FABRI, *of Barmen*, intended to come, but were prevented.)

HUNGARY—Baron GABRIEL PRONAY, *Privy Counsellor and Inspector of the Evangelical Church, Augsburg Confession, Hungary.*

SWITZERLAND.—M. BOVET DE MURALT, *President of the Committee of the Neuchatel Branch of the Evangelical Alliance.*—The Rev. Dr. F. COULIN, *Vice-President of the Geneva Branch and Moderator of the Venerable Company of Pastors in Geneva.*—M. AGENOR DE BOISSIER, *of Geneva.*—Colonel VON BUREN, *of Berne.*—Colonel VON WURSTEMBERGER VON BACH, *of Berne.*

France was not represented, partly on account of her present disturbed condition, partly because she had already sent a deputation to the Emperor a year previous in behalf of the same subject, with which the French Alliance is in most cordial sympathy.

Besides the regular delegates, Prelate Kapff, D.D., Prelate Grüneisen, D.D., and other prominent clerical and lay gentlemen of Stuttgart attended the meetings, and were invited to take part in the deliberations. The Convention met three times daily, on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Every session was opened and closed with prayer. The discussions were alternately conducted, and the Minutes reported by the three Secretaries, in the English, German, and French languages.

Two Memorials to the Czar, handsomely engrossed on parchment, the one drawn up in New York and previously signed by all the members of the American deputation; the other prepared in London and signed in Stuttgart by the English and Continental brethren present, were read, discussed, and adopted.

Baron von Essen, of Sweden, who had personally visited the Baltic Provinces, on his way to Berlin and Stuttgart, brought with him a Memorial drawn up by prominent Lutheran pastors in the Baltic Provinces, expressing their thanks for the leniency shown by the Government of the Czar during the preceding months, yet asking for a repeal of certain obnoxious laws which might at any time be executed. This important and interesting document, coming from the scene of persecution, was ordered to be recorded on the Minutes.

A Memorial from a Deputation of the Society of Friends in behalf of religious liberty, was also laid before the meeting; and it was recommended that the Friends should present it separately to the Emperor.

It was resolved to send a preparatory deputation to Friedrichshafen, on the Lake of Constance, where the Emperor of Russia had in the meantime arrived on a visit to their Majesties King William of Württemberg and Queen Olga (the Em-

peror's sister). This deputation consisted of the Rev. Dr. Adams and Mr. Cyrus W. Field, of America; the Rev. Dr. Steane, of England; Baron von Tischendorf, of Germany; and Colonel von Wurtemberg, of Switzerland. They were instructed to acquaint the Emperor, through his Aid-de-Camp, Count Schuwaloff, of the desire of the deputation, and to communicate by telegraph with their brethren at Stuttgart.

While the main body of the united Deputations were waiting for information from Friedrichshafen, they took into consideration some general questions relating to the Evangelical Alliance.

It was unanimously resolved, on motion of the Rev. Cohen Stuart, to hold the next *General Conference of the Alliance* in the city of New York, in the autumn of 1873.

Preparatory steps were also taken for the formation of an *international Society for the defense of the Christian religion against the attacks of modern infidelity*. The Rev. Dr. van Oosterzee, who originated the idea, was requested to correspond with leading divines in various countries on this important subject, and to mature a plan for final action at the next General Conference in New York.

These meetings in the pleasant capital of Württemberg will ever be remembered with pleasure by those who took part in them. They were, on a small scale, a general conference of the Evangelical Alliance. Christian men from various countries and nations, and representing nearly every section of Protestant Christendom in both hemispheres, united in prayer and praise, and in earnest deliberation on the great subject of religious liberty, and other questions of vital importance. Differences of language, nationality, and creed were forgotten in the common faith in Christ, and in active efforts to secure the sacred rights of conscience for persecuted brethren in a distant land, whom they had never seen. The world is governed by ideas, and the ideas of Christian liberty and Christian union are among the purest and noblest of the age, and must sooner or later be actualized.

THE AUDIENCE AT FRIEDRICHSHAFEN.

The preparatory deputation were informed by the Emperor, through Count Schuwaloff, of his readiness to give a hearing to the united deputations. Accordingly, by express command of his Majesty, Prince GORTSCHAKOFF, his Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Russian Empire, who in the meantime had likewise arrived at Friedrichshafen, and through whom all important business of the Imperial Government must be transacted, appointed Friday, the 14th of July, at 10 A.M., for an official interview.

As soon as the deputies received this intelligence, they left Stuttgart in the express train on Thursday morning, and arrived in the afternoon at Friedrichshafen, during the celebration of a family festival—the silver wedding of the King and Queen of Wurtemberg. The town was illuminated, and gave unmistakable evidence of loyal attachment to its sovereigns. The American deputation sent their congratulations to their Majesties in a brief address, which was graciously received.

On the following morning, Friday, the 14th of July, the deputies, after a short meeting for prayer and consultation, proceeded in a body to the appointed place of the interview, the Villa Taubenheim, and were most courteously received by the Prime Minister of Russia.

Dr. Schaff, after presenting to His Highness the members of the deputation by name, introduced, on their behalf, the specific object of their mission. He expressed the great respect entertained by the Evangelical Alliance for the person of his Imperial Majesty, and their gratitude for his liberal and enlightened policy to his subjects, especially in the emancipation of twenty-three millions of serfs, in permitting the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, and in ameliorating the religious condition of Protestants in the Baltic Provinces, since the deputation from the Paris Branch of the Alliance had waited on His Majesty last year with a memorial on the subject. The deputations, which had now come across the

Atlantic and from different parts of Europe, had neither political nor ecclesiastical objects to serve; their motive was simply a Christian one, in the cause of religious liberty. They were desired by their co-religionists of various nations and creeds to approach his Imperial Majesty with a respectful petition that those laws of his Empire which forbid secession from the Greek Church or which otherwise interfere with the rights of conscience, might be abolished or so altered as to give protection to his Majesty's subjects in the profession of their religious faith, and to secure, equally to all, freedom of worship. They believed that such an act of liberality would strengthen the loyalty of all classes and make them better citizens; while compulsion in matters of religion tended to create discontent, hypocrisy and infidelity, and to undermine the foundations of government. Dr. Schaff concluded by saying: "May God bless his Imperial Majesty and give him wisdom and courage to proclaim religious liberty throughout his vast empire. Such a noble act will crown his illustrious reign, and secure for him the applause of the Christian world, and the gratitude of millions yet unborn."

In the course of debate which followed, the Rev. Dr. Steane, of England, explained the manner in which, in his opinion, liberty of conscience must be understood, viz., as the sacred right of every one not only to cherish but also to profess and to propagate the religious convictions which he has freely and without constraint embraced, so long as the propagation of them does not militate against social order or public morality.

The object of the deputation was further advocated by the Rev. Dr. Coulin, the Rev. Dr. Adams, Bishop McIlvaine, the Hon. W. E. Dodge, Baron von Tischendorf, the Rev. Dr. van Oosterzee, Colonel von Wurtemberg, von Bach, and others. The last named gentleman assured the Prince that the present movement did not proceed from the disaffected Provinces in Russia, but from Christian philanthropists in Switzerland, who could have no political object in view.

PRINCE GORTSCHAKOFF'S REPLY

In reply to the opening speech and in the course of debate Prince Gortschakoff was pleased fully and frankly to communicate his opinions, which he did with a courtesy and ability becoming his high position and long experience as a statesman.

He expressed his gratification at the respectful manner in which this delicate subject had been brought before his attention by the deputation, and his own as well as his Majesty's sympathy with the cause of religious liberty. He had no doubt of the purity of their intentions, and their freedom from political aims. He assured them that the Emperor desired that every one throughout his Empire should have liberty of worship in the Church to which he belonged; that Russia was a country in which all religions were tolerated, and that gentlemen present had only to visit St. Petersburg to see Lutheran, Reformed, and other churches adorning the principal street (Newski-Prospect), in order to be convinced that religious liberty was fully granted. But, whilst persecution was not allowed, neither was propagandism. He remarked that the policy of the Russian government had been to put down the sects which inculcated immoral tenets, and "as for the rest," said the Prince (putting his hand before his eyes and looking through his fingers), "we deal thus with them."

His Highness frankly admitted that there were laws which forbade any one leaving the Greek Russian Church after once becoming a member of it. About the propriety of this prohibition there might be different opinions; he had his own opinion; but such were the laws of the Empire, and they could only be changed by the Emperor. The time and manner of doing so must be left with his Majesty, who could not, for obvious reasons, suffer any appearance of foreign intervention and outward pressure; any alteration or modification of the existing laws must be done *proprio motu*. For this reason, whilst under ordinary circumstances his Majesty would have been most happy in person to receive a deputation, yet, looking to

the large number of the delegates present, their high social standing and influence in the countries from which they came, and considering the publicity which had already been given to their intentions,* it was manifest that their reception would have the appearance of foreign interference with the internal affairs of Russia, and this, in the interest of the object itself, must be avoided.

The Prince admitted that in so vast an Empire as Russia abuses of existing laws would be committed by subaltern officials contrary to the wish and will of the Emperor; but he added, His Majesty has never refused to redress an injury after it has been verified by careful investigation. In confirmation of this statement the fact of Count Bobrinski's investigation into the religious condition of the inhabitants of the Baltic Provinces in 1864 was mentioned, and the measures of relief which since that time had been adopted. The Prince took occasion to say that the Letts and Esthonians had long been kept in a state of ignorance and degradation, from which the Emperor's government was endeavoring to elevate them. The complaints of Protestant Missionaries in the East concerning the suppression and prohibition of missionary labors by Russian officials being also presented by the American deputation, the Prince professed himself ignorant of the details, but disposed to do all that was just and fair.

Prince Gortschakoff, in course of conversation, acknowledged that the good-will of the Emperor with regard to the penal code applicable to persons leaving the Orthodox Church was a precarious and uncertain guarantee, depending upon the life and disposition of one man. In illustration he reminded the deputation of the words of the Emperor Alexander I., to whom Madame de Staël once said, "Sire, you are the best constitution for the Russian Empire;" to which his Majesty replied, "Madame, I am not a constitution, I am only an accident (*Je ne suis qu'un accident*)."[†]

* The Evangelical Alliance cannot be held responsible for premature and indiscreet newspaper articles of unauthorized individuals.

† An excellent argument this for the efforts of the Alliance to secure religious liberty by law beyond the reach of accidents.

PRESENTATION OF THE MEMORIALS.

As the interview was drawing to a close, the Hon. William E. Dodge, as President of the American Branch of the Alliance, submitted to his Highness the American Memorial, with the request that it be presented to his Imperial Majesty. Prince Gortschakoff, having, as he said, made himself previously acquainted with a confidential copy, and declaring it to be respectful and unobjectionable, expressed at once his readiness to do so, and received the document.

The Rev. Dr. Coulin, of Geneva, then arose and put in his hand the European Memorial, with the same request. The Prince began to examine it, and after reading aloud a few of its sentences, he emphatically declared that, inasmuch as it contained objectionable language in the form of accusations against the Imperial Government, he could not lay this Memorial before his Majesty. This refusal created a painful surprise.

After a short pause the Prince suggested to the American delegation, whether under these circumstances they had not better withdraw their Memorial, inasmuch as the presentation of one and the rejection of the other would make an invidious distinction and put him in an embarrassing attitude. The American delegation promptly acceded to this indirect request, both in deference to the Prince and to their European brethren.*

Prince Gortschakoff, however, assured the Deputations that he would faithfully report to his Majesty the subject of their request.

FINAL PROMISE OF THE PRIME MINISTER.

In taking leave, Dr. Schaff, in behalf of the Deputies, asked the Prince whether they might expect a written reply, and whether he had any objection to their giving publicity to the views expressed by him on this occasion. To this he replied, as nearly as we can remember, in the following words:

* The important distinction which Prince Gortschakoff made between the American and European Memorials, is omitted in the published Report of the Secretaries of the British Branch, which has been widely circulated in Europe. See the Report of Prince Gortschakoff, Appendix I.

"I am now seventy-three years old, and have learned by long experience that much writing is apt to prevent acting. I put to paper as little as possible. But you are at perfect liberty to publish the proceedings of this interview, and" (he added with some emphasis, pressing the hand of the deputy) "I authorize you to inform the world that *the Emperor and myself are in full sympathy with religious liberty, and shall do all in our power to promote it.*"

THE RESULT.

Thus ended that remarkable interview which lasted over an hour and a half, and which we have briefly but faithfully reported.

It is premature to pass judgment on events which can only be fully estimated from their results. The embassy of the Alliance has accomplished all that could reasonably be expected. Gentlemen of the highest standing in Europe and best qualified to judge, concur in this statement. The delegations were fully aware of the many delicate and difficult complications of the Baltic problem and the whole subject of this mission, and never expected that the Emperor would promise them at once a change of the organic laws of his Empire. But they had a long official interview with the immediate representative of the Russian government. They have received from his own mouth, in behalf of himself and his Majesty, the unequivocal assurance of personal sympathy with the cause of religious liberty, and were given to understand that the object of their respectful petition may ultimately be granted. Reports of the interview and the memorials themselves have been extensively published in Russia, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Greece, Turkey and other countries. The whole subject of religious liberty, as distinct from mere toleration, has been brought prominently before the attention of the civilized world; and the seed sown must grow and bear fruit in due season. The Russian government can not and will not disregard the public opinion of Christendom.

We have full confidence in the liberal views and benevolent intentions of Alexander II., the Emancipator of the Serfs.

After the audience he gave to the preparatory deputation from Paris, at the Villa Berg, near Stuttgart, in June, 1870, he commanded the Russian Archbishop, Benjamin, of Riga and Mitau, to stop the persecutions of those nominal converts who wished to return to the Lutheran Church; whereupon the Archbishop issued orders to the priests to abstain from all measures against those converts, yet to retain their names on the ecclesiastical registries, that they might still be under the surveillance of the Orthodox Church. This, of course, is only a partial relief; the sword of Damocles is still suspended over those unfortunate people as long as the penal laws remain on the statute-book. But we have already indications that the Emperor's mind is meditating further improvements. Immediately after his return to Russia, from Friedrichshafen, he issued an ukase ordering the Minister of Education to see "that the study of the German language shall take the priority over the French in all public and private schools, and that more time be devoted to the study of the former than heretofore." This removes one complaint of the Baltic Provinces. More recently the Emperor is reported to have received a deputation of leading Esths, and assured them "that he had no intention whatever of restricting their political or religious rights."

We await the further development of this movement, not doubting the sincerity of the good words and promises made at Friedrichshafen. We hope that the united Alliances of Evangelical Christendom, at their General Conference in 1873, will be able to send to the Czar of all the Russias—not a petition for a redress of grievances—but an address of congratulation and thanks for having granted *proprio motu*, and in a manner that seems best to him, not only to the suffering brethren in the Baltic Provinces, but to all his subjects, the most sacred of all rights, the right to worship God according to the dictates of His Word and of their own consciences.

Having now fulfilled our mission to the best of our ability and without expense to the Alliance, we return our trust to the Executive Committee.

Respectfully submitted, in behalf of the deputation,

38 BIBLE HOUSE, NEW YORK, } SAMUEL F. B. MORSE, PRESIDENT,
November 13, 1871. } PHILIP SCHAFF, SECRETARY.

APPENDIX.

Since Prince Gortschakoff has published, in the official organs of the Russian Government, a report to the Emperor, which has been copied into the leading papers of Europe and America, it is but proper that we should add it to our Report, together with the two Memorials to which he refers. The reader will thus be in possession of all the facts and documents. We are happy to find that the Report of the Prime Minister, even though evidently made with an eye to the Russian press, substantially agrees with our own in the statement of facts. We only regret the tone of a few sentences, in striking contrast with that courtesy of both parties, which the Prince himself so emphatically acknowledges. Of the correctness of the translation we are assured by a Russian gentleman who read the original report in the *Golos*. The translations into German, French and English, were probably prepared by authority.

I.

THE REPORT OF PRINCE GORTSCHAKOFF.

FRIEDRICHSHAFEN, July 4th (16), 1871.

A deputation, composed of representatives from different evangelical communities, came to Friedrichshafen for the purpose of petitioning your Imperial Majesty for freedom of conscience, which, it was supposed, was violated in Russia, especially in the case of the Esthonians and Livonians of our Baltic Provinces.

This deputation your Majesty was pleased to order me to receive. It came to me on the 2d (14th) of July. The deputation consisted of thirty-seven persons. Our interview lasted for upward of two hours. Many of these gentlemen made long speeches, and I considered myself bound in courtesy to hear them all with inexhaustible patience.* I do not venture to expose your Majesty to the same infliction, and ask permission to report shortly the general contents of what was said to me, and what I answered.

By all, without exception, expression was given of deep respect for your Imperial Majesty, and of confidence inspired by the magnanimity of your character.

* [Prince Gortschakoff spoke much longer than any of the deputies, but they were all happy to listen to his remarks on so important a subject. The French copy says simply, "avec patience;" the German copy, "mit unerschütterlicher Geduld."]

The gentlemen laid especial stress on this, that their present petition had no political hue whatever, and that the step which they had ventured to take towards your Majesty was prompted solely by general philanthropic ends. In conclusion they requested me to ask an audience from your Majesty for them for the purpose of handing to your Majesty the addresses presented by them.

Of these addresses there were three: one from the American Evangelical Society [Alliance], one from the (if I may so express myself) European Evangelical Society [Alliances], the text of which was written in London: finally, a third from some Quakers.

I said to the gentlemen that the principles of toleration and freedom of conscience were convictions of your Majesty, and that you had been pleased to always remain faithful to the example of your predecessors, whose convictions on this point were impressed on all the leaves of Russia's history; that the history of my country in this respect presented an appearance the like of which we would find it hard to discover in the same period in the annals of other countries; finally, that this was one of the glorious prerogatives of Russia, which we wished to maintain. Besides, I said, the confidence unanimously expressed by them in the qualities of your Majesty was a sufficient guarantee, and that I was not in a condition to offer any but this. I added that compliance with the requests put forward by them would entail the abrogation of some laws of the empire; that we in this matter could permit no foreign intervention whatever; that though this declaration, that they had no political ends in view, was of great weight—and I would give full credence to the complete frankness of this declaration—the admission to your Majesty of a deputation consisting of representatives of many nationalities, and the objects of which had become completely public, had the appearance of an intervention in our internal affairs, but that we could not tolerate the shadow of intervention, from whatever side it came. This declaration was received with deep regret, which, however, was expressed in respectful terms.

The American Deputation then requested me to accept their address, with the contents of which I had already made myself privately acquainted, and as it contained only general observa-

tions* I answered that I was ready to lay it before your Imperial Majesty.

The Deputy from Geneva thereupon got up and said that those who had commissioned him were in hopes that I would also receive their address, which, in consideration of its numerous signatures, might be called a European one. This address was, as has been mentioned above, written in London. I requested to have a look at it first. On looking through it I remarked that it contained passages which looked like a bill of indictment. Without hesitation I declared that the references to the religious belief and condition of the Esthonians and Livonians rested partly on erroneous, partly on insufficient, data; and it appeared to me, I openly said to them, that these data were derived from partial sources, whose authenticity it was allowable to doubt.

I refused to accept the address, and expressed it as my opinion that it would be better to abstain altogether from the presentation of any address, since the acceptance of the American address alone would wear an appearance which might be offensive to the whole deputation. After consultation among themselves they agreed to my proposal.

A last attempt was then made to induce me to give a written statement of everything that had been said. I answered that I was, as a rule, an enemy of all useless written dissertations; that I considered what I had said of the convictions and fundamental principles of your Imperial Majesty to be sufficient; that, if they had found any want of clearness in this respect, since, on account of their differences of nationality, I had by turns to make use of the French, English and German languages, I was ready once more to declare our intentions. They answered that they had completely understood all these. "In that case," said I, "it will be for you to report to your constituents on our interview."

So we parted. I observed no sign of irritation, although a recognition of a complete want of success was visible, and I do not think I am in error if I assert that the frankness and courtesy of my words met with their respect.

The next day I met four members of the deputation in one of

* [Not "only," but as the basis for two specific requests. See the Memorial, page 26.]

the adjacent avenues of the castle—two of them English, two American. Those gentlemen expressed with warmth their gratitude for the reception that had been given them, and said that they had immediately telegraphed to the London *Times*, concerning the impression and confidence with which they had been inspired by the high qualities of Your Imperial Majesty.*

II.

THE AMERICAN MEMORIAL.

To His Imperial Majesty Alexander II. Emperor of all the Russias:

The undersigned, citizens of the United States of America, and delegates of the American Branch of the Evangelical Alliance, which is an organization composed of Protestant Christians of different denominations and countries, beg leave most respectfully to explain the circumstances which have prompted this appeal to your Imperial Majesty.

By increased facilities of intercommunication, the unity of the human family becomes more and more a practical reality. National acts of justice and philanthropy exert a direct influence beyond the boundaries of the countries in which they originate. The benevolent decrees of your Imperial Majesty in reference to the Serfs commanded the admiration of all the friends of humanity in our own land, and throughout the world, and had a favorable effect upon our own government in bringing about, shortly afterwards, the emancipation of four millions of slaves.

Confidence in the well-known benevolence of your Imperial Majesty emboldens us to express the profound sympathy felt by multitudes in our own country with a large number of your Imperial Majesty's subjects in the Baltic Provinces, whose condition is so graphically described in the Report made to your Imperial Majesty by Count Bobrinski in April, 1864, and who by existing laws are prevented from openly returning to the faith of their Lutheran ancestors.

As Americans we venture to refer to the results of our national experience, as illustrating the effects of religious liberty on the welfare of individuals and the stability of government.

* [As Prince Gortschakoff does not state what he said at this private meeting, it may be added, on the authority of one of the delegates present, that he expressed his gratification with the official interview; "that it had been conducted in a purely Christian spirit, and that the delegates might congratulate themselves on the result of their embassy."]

By religious liberty we do not intend freedom from all authority; much less that all opinions are equally good: but simply the right of every individual to believe and worship according to his own free conscience, responsible only to the authority of God, as revealed in His Holy Word. In the United States all religious denominations and forms of worship are equal before the law, which, supporting none, protects all, and never interferes with their internal affairs. The Orthodox Greek Church though, with us, the smallest as to numbers, enjoys in every respect the same liberty as the largest denomination. It may build churches, propagate its opinions, extend its influence as freely in the United States as in the Empire of Russia.

This religious freedom we have found not only a relief to the State from agitations and cares, but the surest pledge of social order and national unity, by promoting mutual respect and charity among the different denominations, and by imparting a sense of security to all in the common enjoyment of their most sacred rights.

In view of these considerations, we respectfully unite our request with that of our brethren in Europe in behalf of your Imperial Majesty's subjects in the Baltic Provinces, that they may be permitted to worship God and to educate their children according to the faith of their fathers, and the free preferences of their own conscience.

Still farther in behalf of American Missionaries, distinguished by intelligence, piety, and scholarship, who have labored long and successfully among Armenians, Nestorians, and other Christians under Mohammedan rule in Turkey, and on the borders of the Russian Dominion, we beg leave to ask that your Imperial Majesty's Christian Government may be induced to grant, within the limits of its jurisdiction, among all subjects not belonging to the Orthodox Greek Church, liberty of worship and religious instruction, including the free circulation of the Holy Scriptures.

In support of the memorial, which we now earnestly and respectfully present, we appeal to the genius of Christianity, which, being spiritual in its nature, requires moral influences and motives; to the sacred rights of conscience, which demand an outward expression in freedom of public worship; to the spirit of modern civilization, which favors religious liberty, and seems to anticipate its universal prevalence; and to the precepts

of Jesus Christ, whose kingdom is not of this world, and who is "the Head over all things to the Church."

In the sincere hope that your Imperial Majesty may have the high satisfaction of adding another to those great acts of benevolence which have inspired the gratitude of mankind, and devoutly invoking upon your Imperial Majesty and upon all Russia the blessing of Almighty God, by whom Kings reign and Princes decree Justice,

We subscribe ourselves, with profound respect, your Imperial Majesty's most obedient servants,

SAMUEL F. B. MORSE, Chairman; WILLIAM ADAMS; NATHAN BISHOP; JOHN CROSBY BROWN; SALMON P. CHASE; WILLIAM E. DODGE; CYRUS W. FIELD; CHARLES P. McILVAINE; PETER PARKER; NOAH HUNT SCHENCK; MATTHEW SIMPSON; EDWARD A. WASHBURN; NORMAN WHITE; PHILIP SCHAFF, Secretary.

NEW YORK, May, 1871.

III.

THE EUROPEAN MEMORIAL.

To His Imperial Majesty Alexander II., Emperor of all the Russias:

May it please your Imperial Highness,—

The Memorials which we are deputed to present to your Majesty, and to which we most respectfully beg your Majesty's condescending and considerate attention, proceed from Evangelical Christians of many denominations and many churches in both hemispheres of the world, united by the bonds of the Common Faith in the Evangelical Alliance, or acting in concert with it.

This Institution has labored from the time of its formation in the year 1846, in the defence of Christians of all countries and communions, who have suffered under any of the forms of religious intolerance; and it has been instrumental, under the blessing of God, in arresting the progress of persecution in many cases, and in procuring the liberation of those who were imprisoned on account of their religion.

We have heard with feelings of profound sympathy and regret of the sufferings of large numbers of your Imperial Majesty's subjects in the Baltic Provinces, occasioned by the Orthodox Greek Church, in ways which we are persuaded can

not have your Majesty's approval, and by the imposition of laws to which they were not originally subjected. The report of these things has spread through Christendom, and fills the minds of thoughtful and religious men with indignation* and distress.

Your Imperial Majesty, we are sure, is not unacquainted with the circumstances to which we refer; and the well-known benevolence of your Majesty, as well as that love of justice which is one of the brightest gems in the crown of Sovereigns, induce us to believe that, now they are with profound deference pressed upon your notice, they will certainly meet with speedy redress.

What we request of your Imperial Majesty is, that your Lutheran subjects in the Baltic Provinces may be permitted to worship God, to educate their children, and to exercise all their religious observances without molestation, under the protection of your Imperial Majesty and the ancient laws of the Provinces. And also that such persons as nominally belong to the Greek Church, but wish to leave it and to be received into the Evangelical communion, may have the right granted to them to do this publicly in a solemn and official manner, and to be thenceforth legally acknowledged as Protestants.

The same religious liberty we also trust your Imperial Majesty will be influenced by Christian motives to extend to all other persons in the Russian Empire; whether natives, or foreigners, or Christian missionaries from other lands, who do not belong to the Communion of the Greek Church.

This religious freedom we thus solicit stands in perfect harmony with civil obedience to constituted authorities, and wherever it exists is found to be one of the strongest bulwarks of Government. While it is essentially Christian it is also essentially just, and only where it is conceded can men conscientiously and with love yield an enlightened obedience either to God or to their Sovereign.

In conformity with it, and with every other principle of natural equity, and of Revealed Religion, as well as by the courteous reception given by your Imperial Majesty to the deputation of our French brethren of the Evangelical Alliance last year, we are, in conclusion, emboldened to represent to your Imperial Majesty the Christian necessity which exists for annulling

* [Other copies read "consternation." This was the passage to which Prince Gortschakoff took exception.]

of those penal laws which treat as criminals all who quit the Orthodox Greek Church, or propagate a different faith, and inflict upon them heavy and ruinous punishments.

In presenting this Memorial we beg to assure your Imperial Majesty of the sentiments of high respect which we unanimously entertain for your Majesty's personal virtues, and of the sincere admiration with which we reflect on those acts of your Majesty's Government by which so many millions of the subjects of the Russian Empire were raised from serfdom and invested with the rights and liberties of men. These splendid and never-to-be-forgotten deeds of your royal clemency have filled the hearts of free men with thankfulness and joy; and they inspire us with the hope that we shall not be permitted to plead in vain for those, who, through our mediation, lift their imploring eyes to your royal compassion.

May your Imperial Majesty long be preserved to reign in righteousness over a united and prosperous Empire, and to experience in your royal person, and throughout your vast dominions, the rich and abundant blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is "the Saviour of all men" and "the Prince of the kings of the earth."

IV.

REPORT OF THE INTERVIEW GRANTED BY HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS, TO THE DEPUTATION FROM THE FRENCH BRANCH OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE,

Messrs. WILLIAM MONOD, *Pastor, President.*
EDMUND DE PRESSENSE, *Pastor.*
PROFESSOR RUSSEUW DE ST. HILAIRE.
AGENOR BOISSIER, *Deputy from Geneva.*

IN THE ROYAL CHATEAU OF BERG, NEAR STUTTGART, JUNE 23, 1870, AT NOON.

(Translated from the French.)

The Emperor to Mr. Monod: You are a Calvinist?

Mr. Monod: Yes, Sire, of the Reformed Church.

The Emperor: Gentlemen, permit me, at the outset, to assure you of my goodwill toward all religions in my empire; and I wish that not one of them should be disturbed in its exercise. Only I cannot allow propagandism.

Mr. Monod: Sire, we have blessed God, and we thank your

Serene Majesty for the favor granted us of presenting ourselves before you. We believe that we owe this favor (and this makes it the more precious to us), to the piety of the motives which have urged us to solicit it, and to the purely religious character of the Evangelical Alliance, whose representatives we are. At the same time, we feel strengthened amidst our own weakness by the assurance, which we have received beforehand from your Majesty, as to a part of the petition which we have to offer on behalf of our Lutheran brethren in the Russian Provinces on the Baltic; so that, before making any request, we must pay a debt of gratitude. We know, indeed, that some years ago your Majesty, moved by the complaints which had reached you, sent a confidential person, charged with an investigation into the true state of things. The Count Bobrinski, with a generous and Christian frankness which honored at once the Sovereign he addressed and the ambassador, acknowledged and affirmed this sad fact, that the greater part of the Lutherans of Livonia, who had renounced the communion of their fathers, had done so without cordial assent, and ardently desired permission to return, and to educate their children according to their own convictions. We know that your Majesty gave orders designed to remedy this sore distress and great moral disorder. Allow us, Sire, to repeat how deeply we are touched, and persuaded of the sincerity of the kind sentiments which move your Majesty on behalf of our brethren.

But, Sire, suffer us to say also—and deign to receive our Christian language as a proof of our respect for your Majesty, yet at the same time of our respect for our God, and for the Saviour, whose precious Name we invoke—we believe that we know by authentic information, by groans that have reached even to us, that the purposes of your justice and your humanity are not yet wholly fulfilled; that there are still bleeding wounds, which wait for the powerful and paternal hand, whereby God may heal them. We know your sentiments, Sire, and we lay on your heart our own anxiety for these men, our brethren, to whom God has given you as their Sovereign, and who revere in you the authority with which God has clothed you. This authority, Sire, you have used to free more than 20 millions of your subjects from serfdom, thus nobly perfecting the work begun by your fathers in this same Livonia, of which we have taken the liberty to speak to your

Majesty, and thrilling with joy the Christian world. We are moved at finding ourselves in the presence of a monarch to whom God has granted this undying glory. He will pardon us if we dare hope that he will complete his task of emancipation in favor of our Protestant brethren in Livonia, giving them at last the most precious of liberties, that which all nations have so long misunderstood, and which seems reserved as the glorious conquest of our age and of modern civilization—the liberty of conscience, consisting for the Christian in the free and full agreement of his worship with his heart and his faith in the Saviour. In the name of this Saviour, we have dared address your Majesty, and from the bottom of our hearts we invoke His benediction on you and your people.

The Emperor replied, not without some emotion: I assure you, Sir, that I have been much touched by the words you have spoken, and the sentiment which has prompted them. It is true that there have been, for some years past, certain ill-disposed persons (and you know that there are such everywhere, who do evil for their own worldly interest) who have mingled in these intrigues, and I acknowledge with you, Sir, that this movement was not sincere.

But we have a law which prohibits any, who has once embraced the Greek religion, from deserting it, although we pay the least attention we can to those who go back. As to children, it is certain that their parents have made them converts to the Greek rite when they had no freedom of choice, and we do not wish to retain them.

M. Monod: Permit me, Sire, to cite to you a fact which I have from one of your subjects belonging to the Baltic Provinces. He told me that some Lutheran women whom they had forced into abjuration, seeing the impossibility of returning to their communion, had committed suicide in despair. He added that his father had published a pamphlet to call the attention of the government to what was passing, and that he had been threatened with prosecution, and owed his safety, do you know to whom, Sire?—to yourself, before you had become Emperor.

The Emperor: It is possible that some such facts may be brought forward. However, as to the condition of Protestants, you have only to go into the main street of St. Petersburg. You will see first the Dutch Church, then the Swiss, then the Luther-

an; and this is proof enough of the liberty which Protestants enjoy in my dominions.

M. de Pressensé: Permit me, Sire, while uttering to your Majesty our deep thankfulness for your kind reception, to tell you how happy I should be to announce, the next autumn, at New York, where the Evangelical Alliance will hold its great Conference, in what gracious disposition we have found your Majesty toward our Lutheran brethren in the Baltic Provinces. It would be indeed a favor if I may bear the hopes which your Majesty has deigned to give us, into an assembly where all that touches liberty of conscience has so powerful an echo.

The Emperor rejoined, in a familiar way: An American has lately joined the Greek rite at Petersburg, and we cannot prevent any from coming into our Church. Besides, I ought to say, gentlemen, that I do not like change of religion. When one has been bred in a Church, it is not well to leave it.

M. Monod replied: Unless, Sire, one leaves it conscientiously.

The Emperor rejoined: Clearly; but what I do not like are these changes in mass.

The Emperor, who had received us standing, then approached, and kindly gave his hand to each of the deputies. The audience was over; it had lasted about twenty minutes.

We add that M. the Pastor Monod asked permission of the Emperor to leave an address which we had prepared as a memorial of the interview he had so kindly granted. The Emperor graciously consented, and took the address with his own hands.