

Editorial.

LEAGUE OF CHRISTIANS.

The Evangelical Alliance has had several interesting and important annual conferences, such as those of Geneva and Berlin, but we doubt if any of its conferences have equalled in importance that recently held in New York. The New York gathering owes its success partly to the energy of Dr. Shaff, partly to the increasing desire among the educated classes of Europe to see America, but chiefly to the conviction gaining ground among Christians, that Evangelical Protestants must henceforward present a more united front to the enemies of Christ.

That great good ought to come from such an Association is very manifest. Oppressed and persecuted Christians from remote parts of the world have invoked the friendly intercession of the Executive Council of the Alliance, and often with success. But lately, intercession through the Alliance was made with the Shah of Persia in behalf of persecuted Christians in his kingdom. Such an Association, further, elevates to a broader platform the sentiments of the different denominations. Every citizen of our Canadian Dominion has been raised to a higher platform in his patriotic sentiment by the Confederation of the British American Provinces. Each loves his own Province and feels proud of its progress and history, but it is a higher and more ennobling sentiment to feel that the whole country is his from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the Great Lakes to the frozen Ocean. It is well for a man to feel that he is a Baptist, or a Presbyterian, or a Methodist, or an Episcopalian, and it is right that his special interest should be in that branch through which he obtained a knowledge of the way of Salvation, but it enlarges a man's heart also, to feel that the whole church of Christ is his, and that the prosperity of

one branch of the Holy Catholic Church is the prosperity, in its highest sense, of his branch and of every branch thereof. It is no small good, still further secured by the Alliance, that eminent Christian thinkers should be annually brought together for the discussion of some of the living questions of the day. Scientific men have their Congresses for the discussion of Scientific and Social questions, and it is of great benefit to the higher interests of society that Christian workers and thinkers should meet occasionally to exchange thoughts on the best way of doing their Master's work. Meeting together in this way, prejudices will slowly die out, as the two neighbours were glad to shake hands, who seemed to each other in the mist, nothing less than outlandish things that could to one another bode no good; meeting in this way, the fire of thought and feeling will burn hotter, and higher, and brighter, as one and then another throws his contribution on the common hearth; and men must leave these gatherings with increased zeal to work for Christ, each in his sphere.

While these benefits, and others too, come to the Church of Christ from the Evangelical Alliance, it must be admitted that in this form Christian union has not yet risen to the height of our Master's great ideal, "that they may be one even as we are one," before which the world will stand silenced and overawed. They are two things, unity and uniformity. A mere formal, mechanical uniformity of ecclesiastical machinery is not worth contending for if it be without the Spirit of Christ, which is the vital germ of all true Christian union. That it would neither silence nor overawe the world is plain from the little influence the iron uniformity of Rome has to-day on the sceptical spirit of Europe. But a unity of living and loving brotherhood in Christ, amidst and in spite of minor differences, de-