

own members should put forth their honest, zealous, God-fearing efforts for the maintenance of the church and ministry, and to extend the glory of God in the salvation of their fellow men. These were their great principles; but the question would arise—Can religion sustain itself? Has it the power to stand alone: and not only so but to confront its enemies and extend the kingdom of truth and of Christ in the world? And they were there to maintain and prove this, being provided with abundant evidences of the power of religion to sustain itself in what is called the "Voluntary Principle." He first appealed to the history of the Church of Christ, during the first three centuries of its existence, when it not only stood alone, but stood opposed to much that was then thought noble and good, yet it made its way notwithstanding, without any assistance from the secular power. He appealed to the history of Nonconformist Churches of countries which had held their noble course through seas of blood; to the Waldenses, in their long struggle in the valley of Piedmont; to the Hussites in their cruel and bloody contest in Bohemia; to those bodies which, in various parts of Europe, had worked out a great reformation of religion, and stood alone in opposition to the powers that be. He appealed to the great efforts made by the Free Church of Scotland, which had built a greater number of churches and schools and manse, and sent out a greater number of missionaries than they had before, and millions sterling had been raised by a comparatively poor people for the maintenance of what they conceived to be the cause of true religion. He appealed to the example of the Principality of Wales. Whilst London—almost the capital of the world—the great seat and centre of the wealth of the world, provided only for little more than thirty per cent. of its population, Wales provided for more than eighty per cent., and it had just been stated by a minister from Wales, that in the next few years not less than £100,000, would be expended in the erection of new chapels in the Principality. He appealed to the county in which they stood. If they wanted a monument to the Voluntary principle, let them look round. What has been done in Lancashire? Rapid and wonderful as had been the increase of population in that county, the increase in the number of places of worship and of schools had been far larger, and all that had been done on the Voluntary principle. Then he appealed to the last census, which contained the most triumphant proof that could be given of the power of the Voluntary principle. The statements of the census were open to disproof, but they had never been disproved, and ought to be regarded as authentic and conclusive. It was a fact, then, that from 1801 to 1851, while the sittings in the Established Churches had increased from four millions to five millions, or one-fifth, the sittings in the chapels of the other denominations had increased from one million to five millions, or five hundred fold. But even that was not the whole strength of the case, for by far the greatest part of what was done in the Establishment was done upon the voluntary principle. Churchmen had copied the example of Dissenters, and in many cases carried out the Voluntary principle with a noble and exemplary zeal. The fact was patent to the world that out of the five millions of sittings added to the churches and chapels in the half century no less than ninety-six per cent. were provided upon the Voluntary principle, and only four per cent. provided by any grant of public money. The Mission Churches, in all parts of the world were sustained by the voluntary principle; and missions themselves were carried on by the same means, and it was on this principle alone that we could hope for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom over the entire globe. Chevalier Bünsen, one of the greatest of European philosophers, in his "Signs of the Times," had declared that the Voluntary principle had, in less than twenty years, achieved the erection of more new churches and chapels, with congregations of earnest worshippers, than all the Governments of Europe, and all the clergy had been able to erect during the last four centuries. Such, then, was the evidence of the power of religion to sustain itself.

The Annual Conference of the EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE, always a season of pleasure and profit, was held this year at Nottingham, and was attended by some of the foremost men of all denominations. Notwithstanding the attack of the secular press and the lukewarm sympathy of a large portion of