

exercised over the people beyond the very narrow circle of each church.

The necessity of acting on the masses is so urgent that a meeting of the Free Churches of Paris was called for discussing the subject, and a report was read. Strange indeed to the earnest Christian was the discouragement manifested, and yet not strange when he saw the fallacies on which hopes had been building. The report passed in review the various grand epochs of Christianity: first its establishment by Jesus Christ and His apostles; everything favoured its reception, the Jewish nation was prepared by long hearing the prophets and living in religious atmosphere, and preaching was rendered easy by full freedom to meet together under a genial climate. On the Pagans, the Christian life of virtue and family union, together with teaching, had a preparative influence also. Three centuries later, when the empire had received Christianity outwardly, the action to be borne upon it was that of the catechumenate, the pulpit, and the pen. At the Reformation there was a connexion with the Roman Catholic Church never snapped. Luther was and remained Professor in the University; all was ready, and when his theses and writings appeared, they flew like wildfire throughout the masses. In each case a prepared people responded to words or deeds of power. Now at the present time, we in France in the midst of a Roman Catholic population, have two great national Protestant Churches, and six small independent ones.

GERMANY—BERLIN.—You are aware that an Association for Building Churches was formed here last year. Dr. Kögel, one of the chaplains to the King, started it by drawing the attention of Christians to the great disproportion of the numbers of inhabitants in the city to the places of worship. The society has no means to build large churches. It only wishes to remedy the immediate need by erecting temporary chapels, in which congregations may be gathered. This voluntary effort of Christians is a living testimony to the value they attach to the blessings of the Gospel, and will, I hope, aid in opening the eyes of those whose duty it is to help, and who have the means to do so. The first of these temporary chapels was opened on Sunday, the 1st of October. Crowds came to the opening service, so that though I was there before it commenced, I, in common with many others, was unable to obtain admission. The Lord has already visibly blessed the new congregation, and it was a great pleasure to see the crowd of happy children flocking there last Sunday, as the new Sunday-school connected with it was opened.

ITALY—I have lately been perusing with deep interest the printed official copy of the new Civil Code, which comes into operation on the 1st January next. When the annexations of Tuscany, Lombardy, Emilia, and the southern provinces were effected, many delicate questions arose in the administration of the law, owing to the diversities in the civil and criminal codes of these different duchies and kingdoms. A parliamentary committee was appointed four years ago to bring order out of this confusion, and the result is now before us in a document, already approved of by both

houses of Parliament, and signed by the King, which places the young kingdom of Italy at least on a level with Western nations. The bearing of this magnificent piece of legislation on religion is that which will most interest your readers. It is the heaviest blow yet dealt to the Papacy in the land of its former sovereign sway. From the beginning of next year men of every creed are left at liberty to call in the services of their religious teachers on all solemn occasions in the lives of citizens; but that which gives validity to the various acts connected with the birth or baptism, the marriage or interment of an Italian subject, from the Alps to Mount Etna, is the registration at the *Comunità*, or the presence of the civil servant of the Crown on these interesting occasions. In this way the power of the priest is greatly shorn. So complicated have been the questions, especially in relation to marriage, not only as among native Evangelicals, but also between Italian and British Protestants, such trouble have these difficulties given to the friends of evangelization resident here, that now that the new law speaks so clearly and advantageously, the Claudian Press has issued in a cheap and portable form that part of the Civil Code referring to marriage, accompanied by explanations from the pen of Dr. de Sanctis, in order that the scattered Evangelicals may be made thoroughly aware of their privileges.

Without entering into particulars, which it would be premature to mention, and which it is impossible to relate so as to satisfy the various parties, I am happy to say that a growing feeling towards brotherly kindness and united effort prevails among all the ranks of Italian Evangelicals. I have already noticed, in former letters, as evidences of this, the meeting at Bologna of the Free Italian Brethren, the Milan Committee, and the movement of Signor Gavazzi. To these may now be added an attempt at a better understanding among the Christians in Florence, the address of all the Evangelists maintained by the Methodists to the Wesleyan Committee, and a pamphlet on "A True Evangelical Alliance," by a Milaresc Evangelical. In referring to these things I am far from saying that anything has as yet been accomplished. Nevertheless, it is of itself a great advance that, all over the country, the need is felt of organisation, fellowship, and union.

RUSSIA.—A new step on the path of religious toleration has just been taken by the Government of this country. A series of reforms, aiming at the amelioration of the lot of the Jews in Poland, and in the other western parts of the Russian empire, is in course of execution. Up to the present day the Israelitish population of these countries, which amounts to more than a million and a half, has been as it were relegated within a few hours, and shackled in its religious and other kinds of development. This situation has in part been happily modified by various measures. In particular an imperial ukaze, recently published, concedes to all Jews occupied in any industrial pursuits the right of travelling and settling in all parts of the Russian empire. It is hoped that the liberty allowed to these classes will soon be extended to all their co-religionists.