

Jackson their full concurrence, and having heard from that gentleman his views of the way in which the Alliance may be most efficiently promoted throughout the provinces, cannot but anticipate, under the Divine blessing, the happiest results from his appointment as travelling secretary. They trust that this appointment will be duly appreciated by the constituency of the Alliance in every portion of the Kingdom, and earnestly recommended to the Council the early and vigorous adoption of such measures as to them may seem best, with a view to members, and others interested in Christian union, resident in the same locality, being brought together, and a public meeting being held at least once in the course of the year in every such locality for the exposition and enforcement of the principles of the Alliance."

That the Conference, while they thus instruct the Council, desire also to enforce upon every member of the Organization the importance of such a meeting being held at least once a year in his district, and the responsibility resting upon him individually to promote it by applying for assistance to the official secretary.

The Rev. E. MORLEY moved, and the Rev. J. BLISS seconded a resolution authorising the appointment of a committee, which was nominated by the Chairman, to select fit persons to serve on the executive council.

• The resolution passed *nem. con.*

#### UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

Dr. STEAKE read the resolution relating to the recent University Bill:—

"That this Conference have heard with much satisfaction of the intention which is entertained by a number of Christian gentlemen to avail themselves of the recent act of Parliament reforming the University of Oxford, to found a hall in that University, in which a sound education may be imparted, free from ecclesiastical peculiarities, and based on the one generous and broad view of Protestant Christianity, which is held in common by Evangelical Christians, and with great respect for the brethren engaged in the undertaking cordially commend it to the blessing of God."

The CHAIRMAN, before the resolution was moved, said the present act relating to the University was, to some extent, a piece of patchwork. Attempts had been made to dissuade Mr. Heywood from putting forward such an impracticable element as that introduced by the honourable member, fearing it would damage the whole bill. All the arrangements in the act had been made with reference to the continuation of the exclusiveness of the University; the very provision for the formation of halls were founded upon the anticipation that its benefits would in future be confined to members of one body, so much so, that when the act came into operation a subsidiary act would no doubt be almost immediately required. On the passing of the present act it struck him (Sir C. Eardly) and several of his friends that it might be turned to the glory of God. There was a large class of Christian parents who shrank with something approaching to terror from the idea of sending their sons to our public schools and Universities, believing that there were not those guarantees for proper conduct and judicious discipline which a Christian parent ought to desire; and it was felt, that if a Christian atmosphere were extended to Oxford, the same effect might be produced elsewhere. It was also a fact, that Dissenters are now admissible to the University of Oxford; and many were anxious to take time by the forelock, and give a right direction to the new feature of the University system. He believed he spoke the feelings of every Dissenting member of the Alliance in saying, that they would deprecate the formation of a hall for any peculiar sect; yet there was nothing to prevent any number of gentlemen, entertaining views of Independency or Congrega-

tionalism, getting a member of Convocation to open a hall for them, where philosophical, classical, and mathematical instruction should be provided, and in connection with which there should be given by another agency that religious teaching which their consciences required. But he (Sir C. Eardly) most exceedingly desired, that if Dissenters were indeed to use that splendid seat of learning, they should use it in a Catholic spirit, in combination with their brethren of the Church of England. Again, there were two aspects in the opening of the University of Oxford to Dissenters. One was a very gratifying aspect to every member of the Alliance—that the benefits of the University would no longer be restricted to persons who held, or who nominally held, one set of religious opinions; but they should not disguise from themselves, that by ceasing to have a test Oxford had virtually ceased to be a place holding up a religious standard to Christendom. (Hear, hear.) The Alliance itself had taught them the lesson, that God's truth was opposed to latitudinarianism as much as to bigotry; and he was convinced that unless some religious element were introduced into the University of Oxford, it would sink to a level with the Universities of Germany and other parts of the Continent. Under the present act the examination of all persons on the Thirty-nine Articles would be found impracticable. Those who had the management of the University were certainly now placed in a very difficult position; but from conversations he had held with leading persons in colleges, he was convinced that a mutual and noble generosity would solve an infinity of problems, (Hear, hear.) Now, the old colleges of Oxford had been built on the principle that they should be exclusively Anglican; and he would recommend those who did not agree with the whole circle of Anglican doctrine and system not to force themselves upon the old colleges, but to combine with many who did so agree, to form a new institution in the University. He was not without hope, from the generous reception he had met with, that such would ultimately be the case. An additional motive for exertion in the matter arose from the fact, that throughout the history of England, Oxford had been more or less a type of the state of the whole country; and any great movement generated in Oxford was likely to produce, more or less, a corresponding effect throughout the land. He could not conceive anything more calculated to promote the Protestant interests of Britain, than that Oxford, its centre, he believed, in point of scholarship, should have established within it an institution such as he had referred to. He had been in communication with leading men in late University Commission, and from them he had received the most positive assurance of the fact that there was nothing in the law to prevent a clergyman or member of the Church of England, and therefore, in the University, being a member of Convocation, associating with himself as joint instructor in a new Hall at Oxford a person who was not a member of the Church of England, and not a member of the Convocation. Many suggestions had been made as to the best mode of carrying out the present design—whether, for instance, it would be better, instead of commencing a new institution, to build upon something that already exists; but having heard the various objections raised, he was inclined to fall back upon the former proposition. It had been urged that the necessity of the University of Oxford for Dissenters had now been superseded, on account of the existence of several colleges used by Dissenters for the education of their sons; and a clergyman present at the Conference had used the argument, "How can you, with consistency, have fought for one or two generations for the opening of the University, and then declare that you mean to make no use of it?" Possibly it might be said in reply, "We continued to fight for the opening because it was a badge of inferiority that it should be closed against us. He would not say a word against