

THE  
CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN.

---

No. XXIV.—DECEMBER, 1880.

---

A PLEA FOR THE HIGHER EDUCATION  
OF WOMEN.

IN the August number of *The Catholic Presbyterian*, there appeared an article under the heading, "Higher Education of Women." In it the writer deals with a most important question, that of woman's work and position in the world,—one not to be settled, it seems to us, without the aid of much thought, and especially of much experience. Probably aided by that wise teacher, our ancestors must have at some remote period worked out this problem which we are now trying to solve ; for we find that, for many ages, men and women have had their special occupations allotted to them. For example, the callings or professions in which rough weather had to be faced, fighting undertaken, long journeys entered on, or much oratory practised, have been left almost entirely to the male sex, and their training and education were directed accordingly ; whilst there fell to the weaker sex the household cares, the ornamental work, the musical and other accomplishments, wisely cultivated for their own entertainment, and also for the solace of the leisure hours of their sterner companions. With variations (for, in the days of chivalry, women practised the healing art, and men were musicians), some general distinction of this kind has been silently acquiesced in for many generations ; and, doubtless, a similar arrangement will obtain in the future, notwithstanding the present social upheaval, and the struggle to be free from the rules and conventionalities that have governed the past. We readily agree, therefore, with the writer of the article above referred to, in saying that men have no reason to fear the rivalry of women, even should they be admitted to the learned professions, nor do we accuse them of having any such fear.

But we must not overlook the fact that our ancestors made those distinctions to suit their own time. They should not be looked upon as the laws of the Medes and Persians,—unalterable ; nor should it be regarded as sacrilege to modify them so as to meet the requirements of

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, December, 1880.]

tions, it presents the best combined picture of old and new Japan. But Kiyôto, and Ôsaka, and Nagoya, and Kanazawa, and many another home of old traditions and earnest new aspirations, might tempt us to linger over them. Then we have to resist the spell of the luxuriant plains and valleys, with their foliage surpassing in richness that of any other extra-tropical region, the Arcadian hill-slopes, the forest-clad heights, the Alpine peaks towering in weird grandeur above torrent-dinned ravines, the lines of foam-fringed headlands—all those charms of natural beauty which make Japan as fair as any dream of elfinland. Not a few defects in the national character might well be noticed, and in the combined light of these and the many points of excellence which accompany them, an attempt might be made to solve the by no means simple problem as to what is likely to be the permanent outcome of the recent advances. But space forbids. From time immemorial Japan has been known as the Land of the Rising Sun; eighteen centuries ago, its mountains were the first to catch the beams of the first Easter morn; soon may it be, from sea to sea, a land of the risen Sun of Righteousness.

WILLIAM GRAY DIXON.

---

## AMERICAN IMPRESSIONS OF THE ALLIANCE.

**I**N undertaking, at the request of my esteemed brother, the Editor of *The Catholic Presbyterian*, to gather into a brief article a few American impressions of the Alliance, I shall endeavour to keep personal convictions and conclusions in the background, so that, as far as I may be able to reflect them, our brethren in "the regions beyond" may see the impressions made by the Alliance in the land that has been honoured by its meeting. By conversation and correspondence—by as careful an examination of newspaper articles and letters as my limited time would allow—I have tried to discover the spirit that has been awakened, and the actual impressions that have been made. Several brethren, whose stand-points are prominent, whose opinions would but need the endorsement of their names, if I were at liberty to mention them, whose relations with branches of the Presbyterian Church distinct from my own, give their judgments greater significance, have very kindly and frankly given me their views on the results of the Council, as they recognise them, in the Churches with which they are prominently connected. I have also been greatly favoured by the help of a distinguished American editor, whose knowledge both of the Church and the Council gives his opinions great weight. I do not wish to make these acknowledgments a refuge from responsibility, but a ground of confidence. It is too soon to speak with assurance. The seed has scarcely taken

root. After a while, in the gladness of the golden harvest, it would be a much easier task to tell of the rich fruits that will surely be gathered. We must content ourselves with a few earnest of what is to come.

Before I speak of the general impressions felt in a wider circle, I wish to echo the universal feeling of the brethren and Churches of Philadelphia. With one voice the Council is proclaimed a magnificent triumph, a success that should sharpen faith and gender a fidelity fitted to bring to the kingdom of Christ great blessings. That our city should have enjoyed the sacred scenes of such a Pentecost is an honour that shall abide, and we will cherish precious memories of the power that was so manifest. Not our least pleasure was mingling with the men of God who composed the Council and came to its feast. To look into the faces and catch the fire of the fervent hearts of servants of Christ whose influence for good has circled the earth, whose labours in their own lands have made their names familiar, and whose faithful ministry in our midst has deepened our regard, was a high privilege and a helpful communion. Not counting the valuable papers that were read, or the able sermons that were preached, the influence of which in our community cannot be calculated, we were blessed beyond measure by the presence and companionship of our brethren who came from far and near to this memorable feast. Upon our Churches, the impressions made were deeper than can be described. This great Presbyterian community, which in numbers and influence is so vast, has felt the thrill of a new life that cannot fail to insure us many spiritual blessings and a great increase of power. The rich Gospel feasts that were spread on the two Sabbaths, the earnest advocacy of the truth, the Catholic spirit of the Council, and to crown all, the magnificent closing meetings in our churches, all left impressions that will last, added honour to the Church of our love and choice, gave a deeper meaning to the truth we are trying to sustain, and, above and best of all, put a royal diadem on the head of our blessed Lord.

The Alliance impressed three classes of observers,—first, those belonging to the Churches which it represented; second, those belonging to Churches of other creeds and systems; and third, the large outlying mass who have no defined ecclesiastical connections, and yet observe all ecclesiastical movements with interest.

I will invert the order, and briefly dispose of the third and second classes, not because the inquiry is unimportant, but because we have naturally a greater interest in the influence of the Alliance upon the Churches of whose spirit and power and promise it was the reflection and test.

#### I. THE IMPRESSION OUTSIDE THE CHURCHES.

We are not indifferent to the world's judgment. The world is our field, and we have reason to be concerned about the impression we have made on the world in so conspicuous a Council. The press is a

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, December, 1880.]

good gauge of public opinion. Making due allowance for the spirit of enterprise that is often concerned about the circulation of a journal, regardless of the importance of the subject, we may say that the attention given to the meetings of the Council by the American newspapers, their full reports of proceedings, their editorial observations, their dignified treatment of men and measures, their generous praise and fair criticism, all indicated a deep interest and profound respect; and it will be safe to conclude that the impressions thus stamped are great and gratifying. May the Spirit of God sanctify these agencies, and encourage us with evidences of awakened interest in the great matters that concern the Council! This interest was not confined to the journals of Philadelphia. Those of New York contributed their great influence to give the proceedings to the public, and considered the significance of the meetings from their editorial chairs. Journals published in large cities, more than a thousand miles removed from the place of meeting, devoted columns to the Council. Few places in the land have failed to be reached by this important agency. It would not be possible to tell its impressions and influence for good. But the criticism called forth by the Council was more significant than this wide circulation of its doings. It was to a marked degree favourable. Of course, what is called "liberal thought" could find much to question and contradict. Some things looked too old-fashioned to those who are seeking more stylish ways; some requirements seemed too strict to those who demand large liberty; some things were found in working order that were supposed to be exploded, and their activity was met with protests. It could hardly be expected that genuine Presbyterianism should be regarded with unqualified favour when observed from the world's standpoint. But the principles assumed and advocated by the Council were criticised with a most respectful fairness; and the men who gave reasons for the faith that was in them were credited with an ability that gave them a right to be heard, and with an honesty of conviction that deserved both confidence and regard. Presbyterianism, by its own fair and able presentation of itself, obtained an attentive hearing and a good opinion; it set the world to thinking, though it failed to persuade it; it met some very positive protests in its advance, but uncovered a power and displayed a vitality that even elicited the praise of those who protested.

## II. THE IMPRESSION MADE ON OTHER CHURCHES.

Next in importance to the impression made by the Alliance upon the Churches composing it, is the impression made on other Churches, which, in their own ways, with their own beliefs and by their own chosen systems, are working side by side with us in the defence of truth, for the conversion of the world, and for the establishment of the kingdom of our common Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. The local testimony is abundant, that both ministers and people of all denominations were

greatly interested and agreeably impressed. I have heard many earnest expressions of good opinion and good-will, and the papers and periodicals of other denominations have very carefully considered, and with marked fraternity reviewed the proceedings of the Council.

This movement on the part of the Reformed Churches is regarded as significant and suggestive, a step towards Christian unity, and an example worthy of imitation throughout Christendom. A Methodist editorial says: "If we may venture to characterise the Presbyterians as a body, it will be by attributing to them a very high regard for learning, an uncompromising adherence to the standards, with a corresponding preponderance of doctrinal teaching, and a profound regard for order in the services of the house of God. . . . The type of Christian character which they build up is marked by reverence, fidelity in things great and small, . . . and strictness of self-examination. . . . The Presbyterian denomination is the bulwark of sound doctrine, a mighty breastwork against the muddy waves of infidelity. *There is no Church which does not derive great strength from the influence of Presbyterianism.*" This candid commendation is a fair specimen of Christian criticism, and does honour alike to the broad charity that expresses it, and to the noble catholicity that inspires it.

It is a great gain to be better understood and appreciated by other Christian denominations. We have often been more conspicuous for a few differences that separated us from others, than, as we deserved, for faithfulness in the defence of those fundamental truths that are held dear alike by all. Christendom will better understand the strength that the whole body of Christ may derive from one able and useful member. All Churches will share the conviction that Presbyterianism can be largely depended upon to conserve Christianity, to keep strong and sound the bulwarks of Bible religion, and to defend fundamental truth against the attacks of errors, old or new. Other Churches are craving this same power of consolidation, are proposing similar Councils, and learning this lesson of unity. Who can forecast the import of these significant concentrations of purpose and power? When many minor companies of Christians have massed themselves in these grander divisions, what may prevent a march, as of one mighty army, under the leadership of the great Captain, before the blast of whose trumpets the walls of the enemy will crumble, and in whose splendid victory the conquering sign of the Cross will be alone conspicuous? These dreams of devotion are not illusions, but fruits of the "faith that staggers not at the promises." The result may be far in the future yet, but it is much nearer than when this Alliance was conceived, and its two meetings have done much to hasten the happy consummation. It has persuaded us of magnificent possibilities, and prompted us to larger endeavours; but we have not kept the advantages to ourselves. Our light has shown others the way to the goal, our example has roused their purposes and hopes, and our success has encouraged them to enter the race for unity with great

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, December, 1880.]

expectations. If the Council had stamped no other impression, this would be enough to justify our "returning with songs," that we have proclaimed the unity of the Reformed Churches, encouraged the unity of Christians called by other names, and foreshadowed that larger fellowship which is to answer the prayer of the ascended Lord.

### III. THE IMPRESSIONS MADE UPON CHURCHES REPRESENTED IN THE ALLIANCE

While I am persuaded that the prevailing sentiment within is most favourable, and that the conviction is decided that the meeting of the Council was a great gain, and a greater promise, yet I admit that there is difference of opinion concerning the management of the Council, and different estimates of its results, as, indeed, might only be expected. Let me first note a few things about which all are agreed.

The papers that were prepared with so much care, and presented with such earnestness, did honour alike to their authors and to the Council, gave great satisfaction to those who were permitted to hear or read them, and cannot fail, when compiled, to be of permanent benefit. Great themes were treated with great ability, and great good must be the result. The Council and its utterances were most closely watched by two classes of extremists, yet neither could discern much ground either for assurance, or for unfavourable criticism.

There are a few who are ever dreading departures from old paths, a letting down of lifted standards, a progress that only betokens peril, a dangerous drifting that threatens disaster. Such found little chance for complaint, little encouragement for their fears. The Council had the old ring! It could have stood the tests of Reformation times. There are others who are always crying out against proscription and want of liberty, waiting for signs of what they call progress, wanting changes for the sake of change, advocating the repair and remoulding of creeds, insisting on modern adaptations, determined to dress up plain Presbyterianism in more attractive colours and more fashionable apparel, anything to get out of the ruts and make more speed on the highway. But such found neither intolerance to condemn nor indifference to console; they were neither shut up, nor set up. They who looked for the line to waver were disappointed—they saw only a solid charge. The old orthodox current was as deep and broad as ever, and swept everything that stood in its way. And yet the Council had not the appearance of a fossil, but seemed a thing of life. It was not controlled by a stubborn adherence to old things because they were old, but by an evident conviction that in new light the old doctrines were no less true, and the old system no less serviceable. It manifested a full persuasion that what had thus far done so well might bear a longer trial.

The trumpet gave its most certain sound when it proclaimed the infallibility of the Word of God, and Atonement, and Salvation by the cross

[CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, December, 1880.]

of Christ alone. The most marked and solemn impression of the Council was made at the session during which the "vicarious sacrifice of Christ" was presented. Men were moved to tears when Christ was "lifted up." The place seemed fragrant with the incense of the sacrifice, and radiant with the light of the cross. It will be well for us if we tune our hearts and our work by this keynote that was so clearly struck, and make the defence and proclamation of this central, all-essential doctrine the highest purpose of Presbyterianism and the true measure of success.

It could be no surprise that the subject of Foreign Missions should be only second in importance to the consideration of the cross that makes their success possible. No subject more deeply stirred the enthusiasm of the Council. The promise of Christ gave confidence. This linking together of the cross and the conversion of the world was an impressive exposition of the Saviour's declaration, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." The Council created the expectation of a determined advance in this most important work of the Church, and plans of co-operation were plainly intimated that deserve prompt attention and faithful execution. The great work of reclaiming Papal France stood out with significant prominence; Britain and America, with Canada, so deeply interested, should press promptly into these "white fields" and reap them for Christ.

Not the least gratification to American Presbyterians was the sign of the healing of unhappy divisions at home. The war that inflicted so many other wounds and left so many other sorrows, occasioned a distressing division in our largest Presbyterian family. All these years we have waited and prayed for a fraternity that would bring unity. The Council has brought us the fraternity. It is the universal conviction that this result has been attained. Communion has succeeded where negotiation failed. There may be a few personal protests, or a few men unwilling to admit the facts, but a tide towards unity has begun to rise, and it will sweep away whatever may resist it. Only they who have known the grief of this division can know the joy and blessedness of its healing. No impression of the Council gives more gladness to the hearts of American Presbyterians.

The discussion awakened by the application of the Cumberland Church for admission into the Alliance should suggest the propriety and necessity of announcing plain terms and conditions of membership. It was very difficult for the Committee, to which the application was referred, to make plain the informality of the application without provoking a discussion of the merits of the case itself. It rests with the Church that makes the application, and not with the Council, to show that the grounds of admission are sufficient. The Council may have no written creed of its own, but surely it does not follow that it can fit into itself the creed of any Church that may honour it with an application for admission, or express a desire for recognition. The Alliance should

CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN, December, 1880.]

have some sort of spirit-level by which it might determine whether what is offered will fit.

The plan by which presiding officers were selected, and so quickly rotated, was universally disapproved. The different Churches should be able to designate *tried men*, and fewer changes would give much greater efficiency. But experience and practice will cure these slight disorders.

I wish I could close this article without one other allusion, but I would conceal what I believe to be one of the most decided American impressions if I failed to say that the treatment of the subject of praise in the Council was not calculated to give satisfaction or promote harmony. I will not dwell on this matter, especially as others may have adverted to it in your columns. But I must note another exceptional point. •

It was the wonder of all observers that the Lord's table was not spread in the midst of the brethren. Many were grieved by this omission. If the Master whom we met to crown was not grieved to find His dying wish unheeded, very many who love Him are sadly mistaken. It was a grand Council, a meeting to be remembered, but there was a life that it failed to show, a devotion whose absence was marked ; and many were persuaded that what it needed was the soft touch of the sacrament to awaken its love. If there are more Presbyterians in this Alliance than can gather about one sacramental table, it can spare numbers better than it can longer spare the spirit and life of "the communion of the body and blood of Christ." Other Christians and the world are surprised at the anomaly of a Council composed of those who contend for the same truths, and hold the same faith, but who cannot commune together in the sacrament that expresses the last wish of the Lord whose love they share and whose glory they seek.

I am well aware that I have expressed opinions which some will not approve, and noted impressions that some will dispute ; but, in the light in which I stand, I have given the impressions which I believe to be most largely prevalent, and in doing so I hope that I have given no offence to those whose opinions contradict my own.

The splendour of the picture almost concealed its blemishes. It was a blessed season of fraternal feasting. It was a sorrow to part with those whose presence was such a pleasure, and, in the shadows of the silent graves that were continually reminding us of the men of God whose presence would have been such gain, whose absence was such a loss, we were also reminded that the brethren present would never meet again on earth. But the reapers went to their fields assured of another meeting, when the sheaves should be gathered with joy, in "the city of the living God, in the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven."

CHARLES A. DICKEY.