# CHRISTIANITY TRIUMPHANT: ITS DEFENSIVE AND AGGRESSIVE VICTORIES

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Christianity Triumphant: Its Defensive and Aggressive Victories by John P. Newman

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# JOHN P. NEWMAN

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### VICTORIES.

JOHN P. NEWMAN, D.D., LL.D. 1826-1-29.

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## CHRISTIANITY TRIUMPHANT.

### CHAPTER I.

### ACHIEVEMENTS OF CHRISTIANTTY.

NEVER before in the history of the Church have the assaults upon Christianity been more learned, more persistent, more malignant, than in the last decade. And these assaults were without apology. They had not the poor apology of the French atheists, whose atheism was a reaction from the corruption and tyranny of Roman-They were without the excuse of the English deists, whose deism was the outcome of the immoralities of the Church and the State in the reign of Charles II. Ten years ago, when Christianity was filling Christian lands with her divine beneficence; when the clergy were pious, learned, and zealous; when the laity were devout, liberal, and abundant in their charities—then, without a reasonable provocation, but from sheer hatred of the truth and malignity against Christ and His Church, the infidels of Europe and America combined to overthrow the most intelligent and benevolent religion known to mankind. But these assaults have been as impotent and unsuccessful as would be an attempt to dam Niagara with a straw, or to check the march of a cyclone with a thread of gossamer. Out of the smoke and fire of the terrible battle the Church has emerged in triumph, and to-day she appears fairer, stronger, and more determined than ever in the past.

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Let us recount her glorious victories.

She has achieved the triumph of a brilliant and successful defence. Had the assault upon Fort Sumter continued to the present time, and had the defence been equal to the attack, could not the Government of the United States, in the face of Europe and of all the world, rightfully claim a substantial victory? It has been even so with the Church of Jesus Christ. Fort Sumter remains untaken, and the flag of the Cross floats victoriously from her parapets. This bold and brazen attack upon Christianity has caused no apparent disaffection in the Church, and no perceptible secession from her ranks. Churches have not been sold, nor closed, nor abandoned; but, instead, houses of worship have been erected, at the rate of nine per day, during all these terrible years; and little less than 28,000 temples of piety have been consecrated to Christian worship in the United States during the last decade. This is more than a defence; it is a glorious advance.

The attendance on the preaching of the Gospel is larger now than ever before. A recent canvass of the churches in St. Louis on a bright Sabbath morning, and a corresponding canvass of the beer-gardens, theatres, and other places of amusement on that day, developed this astounding fact: that while only 8000 persons were found in all those places of amusement, not less than 92,000 attended the house of God. This extraordinary and gratifying fact is certified to by one of the leading journals of the Queen City of the West, whose editor instituted the investigation. Twice during the past season, when it was my fortune to preach at Saratoga, that

summer city of Fashion, on each occasion the place of worship was filled to overflowing; and other beloved clergymen who officiated in that city were similarly favored with crowded congregations. When at the Katterskill, on the majestic mountains of the Hudson, out of three hundred guests at the hotel, two hundred and fifty attended morning service. At Ocean Grove, not less than ten thousand persons were present at divine service at each meeting during the series of ten days. The demand for new churches was never greater than at the present time. Of this fact our own Metropolitan City furnishes ample proof. The American people everywhere are more zealous and liberal than ever in rearing altars to the worship of the true and living God, and all this notwithstanding the violent assaults by the infidel foe.

The people of this country continue to express their faith in the lessons of wisdom, the examples of purity, and the deeds of charity, embraced in Christianity, by sending their children to the Sabbath-school. The childhood of the Republic is taught to receive the Bible as the Word of God. Nine millions of children, under the instruction of over a million of officers and teachers, compose the strength of the Sunday-school in America. Parents thus express an abiding confidence in the religion of our Lord, and demand for their offspring a relig-They have been heedless of the bitter ious education. tirade of objection, of misrepresentation, and of abuse on the part of the foes of our holy religion. parentage of our country is on the side of Christ; and, whether true or false, the Christian religion is the foundation of their faith and practice.

Never before were Christian ministers in greater demand. There is no surplus. The common complaint is

that ministers are scarce. The people are more than willing to employ men to teach them the precepts of Jesus. Eighty thousand Christian teachers are thus employed by the American people; and, if the average salary were five hundred dollars each, the aggregate sum of forty millions of dollars is strongly expressive of the faith and willingness of those who employ them. While it is true that some of them are inefficient, from lack of natural endowments, or acquirements, or devotion, and that not a few of them might be more successful in other employments, yet the rank and file of the ministry are godly, devoted, and learned men; and all this notwithstanding the infidel cry that elergymen are hirelings and the priests of superstition and error. But the churchgoing people of this land are not thus convinced.

More religious journals are published and read than ever before, and more religious books are now sold than at any previous period. The publications of one religious house, in the year 1881, aggregated in amount more than a million of dollars. In the last thirteen years that publishing establishment issued more than seven millions of volumes, and received over half a million of dollars for periodicals. The receipts of our religious publication houses in ten years—1870-80—were nearly fortythree millions of dollars. One Sunday-school paperthe Teacher's Journal—has an annual subscription of 123,000 copies, and the Sunday-School Advocate can boast of 200,000 subscribers. The demand is for books -for religious books. A people must be judged by its literature, and by this judgment we are willing that the present status of Christianity shall be adjudged. All the power of science, of literature, of eloquence, of poetry, and of philosophy, has been brought to bear against the Book of books. The Bible has been the objective point