

**DOCUMENT VI. REPORT OF THE  
DEPUTATION OF THE AMERICAN  
BRANCH OF THE EVANGELICAL  
ALLIANCE, APPOINTED TO  
MEMORIALIZE THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA  
IN BEHALF OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649198900

Document VI. Report of the Deputation of the American Branch of the Evangelical Alliance,  
Appointed to Memorialize the Emperor of Russia in Behalf of Religious Liberty by Various

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

# **VARIOUS**

**DOCUMENT VI. REPORT OF THE  
DEPUTATION OF THE AMERICAN  
BRANCH OF THE EVANGELICAL  
ALLIANCE, APPOINTED TO  
MEMORIALIZE THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA  
IN BEHALF OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY**



DOCUMENT VI.

# REPORT

OF THE

Deputation of the American Branch

OF THE

Evangelical Alliance,

APPOINTED TO MEMORIALIZE THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA  
IN BEHALF OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

---

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

---

New York :  
OFFICE OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE,  
No. 38 BIBLE HOUSE.  
1871.

## CONTENTS.

---

	PAGE
The Evangelical Alliance and Religious Liberty . . . . .	1
Appeals from Abroad . . . . .	4
Persecution in the Baltic Provinces . . . . .	5
The Penal Laws of Russia . . . . .	6
Appointment of a Deputation to Russia . . . . .	8
Preparatory Labors . . . . .	10
Meetings in London and Stuttgart . . . . .	10
The Audience at Friedrichshafen . . . . .	15
Prince Gortschakoff's Reply . . . . .	15
Presentation of the Memorials . . . . .	18
Final Promise of the Prime Minister . . . . .	19
The Result . . . . .	20

### APPENDIX.

I. Prince Gortschakoff's Report to the Emperor of Russia . . . . .	23
II. The American Memorial . . . . .	25
III. The European Memorial . . . . .	27
IV. The Interview of the French Deputation with the Emperor of Russia . . . . .	39

REPORT  
OF THE  
Deputation of the American Branch  
OF THE  
EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE,  
APPOINTED TO MEMORIALIZE  
THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA IN BEHALF OF  
RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

---

THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

THE Evangelical Alliance, consisting of Christians of different nationalities and creeds, was founded in London, 1846, for the express purpose of promoting religious liberty and Christian union on the basis of that liberty. True to this object, it has on every proper occasion interceded in behalf of persecuted Christians, without regard to their faith and nationality, and has thereby contributed its share toward the recent advances of the principles of religious liberty in Italy, Spain, Sweden and Turkey. The release of the Madiari in Tuscany, of Matamoros, Carrasco, and their fellow-prisoners in Spain, whose only crime was reading the Bible and holding private meetings for devotion, the abolition of the death penalty for apostasy from Mohammedanism in the Sultan's dominion, and the abrogation of the penal laws in Sweden against Roman Catholics and Protestants not belonging to the Lutheran Confession, are due in part to the moral influence exerted by the labors of the Alliance and its deputations, composed of prominent Christian men of

different countries and denominations, and actuated by purely philanthropic and religious motives.

#### APPEALS FROM ABROAD.

The subject of religious persecution in Russia was first brought to the notice of the American Alliance by an appeal from SWITZERLAND, dated March, 1870, bearing the signatures of more than two hundred well-known Christian men, such as the late Count de Gasparin, Adrien de Naville, Ch. Bards, Dr. Lombard, F. de Rougemont, Count de Pourtales, Et. Schlatter, M. Zellweger, Prof. Chappuis, Dr. Güder, Prof. F. Bovet, Bovet de Muralt, Prof. Godet, and others from Geneva, Neuchâtel, Lausanne, Vevey, Basel, Berne, Zurich, St. Gall, and Appenzell, describing the sufferings long endured by many thousand Protestants in the Russian Provinces of Livonia, Esthonia, and Courland, and asking for an expression of Christian sympathy and for active intercession in their behalf.

Similar appeals were received, during the last year, from members and friends of the Evangelical Alliances in Holland, France, Germany and England, as well as from other persons who, without any connection with the Alliance, looked upon this organization as the only or most efficient organ for expressing the sentiments of the Christian world on this subject. The various appeals from the Continent of Europe expressed a decided wish that the American Alliance should take the lead in this movement, since it could not be suspected of any political motives, and was most likely to make an impression upon the Russian Government because of its friendly relations to the United States.

Finally, strong petitions were sent in from American Missionaries in Turkey complaining, with other Missionaries in the East, of the religious intolerance of Russian officials in the bordering provinces of Russia, and asking that we might secure for them if possible the same freedom in missionary labor and the distribution of the Scriptures, which they now enjoy under Mohammedan rule.



## PERSECUTION IN THE BALTIC PROVINCES.

The Baltic Provinces of Russia, which originally belonged to Sweden and Poland, and are mostly inhabited by Germans, Letts, and Esthonians professing the Lutheran Creed, were ceded to Russia under special guarantees that their Protestant religion, civil rights, and institutions should not be interfered with. But, under the reign of the late Emperor Nicolas, a system of "Russification" was begun, which has given rise to growing discontent and repeated remonstrances and petitions. Since 1844, many thousand (it is stated, nearly 100,000) Letts and Esthonians, mostly ignorant peasants, were by false promises and under the pressure of great public distress, seduced into the Orthodox Græco-Russian Church, and were retained there against their wish and will under threat of numerous persecutions, even penal servitude in Siberia. Many startling acts of fraud and violence against conscience are charged upon Russian priests and officials.

Moved by repeated appeals for justice and mercy, the present Emperor, Alexander II.—an enlightened and liberal-minded monarch—sent one of his aides, General Bobrinski, now Minister of Public Works, to the Baltic Provinces, to make a personal investigation. This Commissioner, in his report to the Emperor, which is dated April 18, 1864, and was first published (unofficially) by Baron von Bock, in January 1867, and repeatedly since in the Russian and other languages, fully confirms the facts of official fraud, and concludes with the following statement:—

"The facts which I have collected in my visit to the above-named parishes, and which I have taken merely and solely from my conversations with Orthodox clergymen and Orthodox peasants, I have given in the memoir here adjoined. A compilation of these facts leads me to the positive conviction, that of the number of 140,000 Orthodox, who are counted according to the official statistics in Livonia, perhaps scarcely the tenth part confess themselves really as belonging to the Orthodox Church. The others have not only never been in their hearts Orthodox, but even in their performance of external religious duties, they retain even now, as far as it is possible, the rites and ceremonies of the Lutheran Church.

Your Majesty! it has been painful to me, as a member of the Orthodox Church, as well as a Russian, to witness with my own eyes the abuse of the Russian Orthodoxy, by the open revelation of this official fraud. Not the

sincere words of these unhappy families, who address Your Majesty with the humble but fervent prayer, to accord to them the right to confess the religion which is according to the conviction of their conscience—not these sincere expressions of their feelings, have made upon me such a painful impression, as the fact that the *violence exercised against conscience, and the official fraud known to everybody, should be indissolubly chained to the idea of Russia and Orthodoxy.*” \*

At the same time, Count Bobrinski told the peasants in Livonia “that the existing laws concerning orthodoxy could not be changed; that the Greek Orthodox could not return to Lutheranism; and that the children of mixed marriages must be baptized according to the Greek rite. They heard that communication with deep and unconcealed grief, but with full submission. They implored me again, on their knees, to present to your Majesty their hope of your Imperial mercy.”

#### THE PENAL LAWS OF RUSSIA.

This last declaration of Count Bobrinski reveals the core of the difficulty. Russia still has on her statute-book those intolerant penal laws under which not only the Lutherans and Moravians of the Baltic Provinces, but all who dissent from the Russian State Church, in any part of the immense empire, must more or less suffer. It is well known how bitterly the Roman Catholics of Poland complain of persecution under the operation of such laws. Similar laws once disgraced the statute-books of Episcopal England, Lutheran Sweden, Puritan New England, not to speak of Roman Catholic countries; but these have been swept away by the irresistible current of modern progress and a genuine Christian spirit of justice and humanity.

In Russia no one can be legally converted except to the Orthodox Eastern or Greek Church. Hence, other Confessions have no right to engage in missionary labor and to propagate their faith. What is allowed to the Greek Church

---

\* As the authenticity of this report has been boldly denied by a high Russian official in the United States, it is but proper to state that the same report was alluded to in the presence of the Emperor at an audience in June, 1870, and in the presence of Prince Gortschakoff in July, 1871, without a word of doubt or remonstrance on their part. Prince Gortschakoff read aloud before the Deputation of the Alliance that very passage of the American Memorial which refers to Count Bobrinski's report, and declared the passage to be “unobjectionable.”

as her exclusive right, is denounced and forbidden, under the name of propagandism, to all others. Secession from the Græco-Russian Church is strictly prohibited, and punished by confiscation of property, forfeiture of social rank, imprisonment, corporal punishment, and even transportation for life to Siberia; while conversion to that church is officially encouraged and often rewarded. Children of mixed marriages, when one parent belongs to the Greek Church, must be baptized and brought up in that Church, though it should have to be done by force, as has been frequently the case. (Recently, however, by order of the present Emperor, the law about mixed marriages has been suspended for the Baltic Provinces.) The Russian Government, indeed, supports Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches, and on that account claims to be tolerant; and it is freely admitted that the Greek Church in Russia is free from tribunals of Inquisition and bloody persecutions which disgrace the history of some other countries. Nevertheless, according to the Russian code of laws, it is even to-day a punishable crime for any Russian subject who is a member of the Greek Church, to become a Protestant or a Roman Catholic. The whole civilized world calls this a violation of the sacred rights of conscience.

We quote a few of these intolerant laws from the Criminal Code of Russia, Vol. XV. :

ARTICLE 207.—Whoever endeavors, by preaching or writing, to seduce members of the Orthodox Church to join any other Christian community, will be punished, the first time, with the loss of some of his special rights, and imprisonment for one or two years in a house of correction; the second time with imprisonment in a fortress from four to six years; the third time with the loss of all his personal and social civil rights and status, and transportation for life to Tobolsk or Tomsk (Siberia), with imprisonment of one to two years.

ARTICLE 208.—Parents, who are bound by law to bring up their children in the doctrines of the Orthodox Church, but who have them baptized according to the rite of another Christian Church, or the other sacraments administered to them, will be condemned to imprisonment of one to two years.

ARTICLE 209.—Those who place obstacles in the way of persons who, by their own free will, are desirous of joining the Orthodox Church, will be condemned to imprisonment of three to six months.