

WORK FOR SOCIAL REFORM

Campaign of the Evangelical Alliance in Pennsylvania Mining Towns.

REPORT OF DR. JOSIAH STRONG

He Hopes to Enlist the Christian Endeavorers in the Movement to Circulate Literature Among Non-Church-Going Foreigners.

Under the auspices of the Evangelical Alliance for the United States, a campaign in behalf of social reform has been begun in the mining communities and towns of Pennsylvania by the Rev. Dr. Josiah Strong. After working two months Dr. Strong is now on his way to San Francisco to present the scheme before the convention of Christian Endeavorers.

Dr. Strong visited Phoenixville, Pottstown, Reading, Shenandoah, Oliphant, Carbondale, Nanticoke, Middletown, Gettysburg, and Harrisburg. In some places visited, varying in population from 10,000 to 18,000, he found that foreigners formed from one-half to two-thirds of the communities. In the town of Shenandoah, having a population of about 15,000, he found that eighteen languages are spoken, and in some regions he found that the English language is almost unspoken.

"The purpose of the scheme is to form local associations in all cities and towns," he said, "in order that the especial needs of any particular community in the way of reform may be met intelligently. It is not expected that the burden of this work will fall on the pastors of the churches, who, too frequently, have more than they can attend to in ministering to their flocks, but upon the young people. It will consist chiefly in the distribution of literature which the Evangelical Alliance will prepare for their circulation."

He spoke of the possibilities of house-to-house distribution of literature by the 4,000,000 members of the various young people's societies. "Suppose the members of these societies be made the bearers of the truth, each community could be districted and each district assigned to some young person. To deliver a leaflet once a month at each house in a district, containing, say, a dozen families, would not be a great undertaking. The bicycle would make it entirely feasible to reach the scattered houses of country districts, and if only one in ten of these young people engaged in the work, they would scatter throughout the land nearly 60,000,000 leaflets in a single year, at least one-half of which would reach families who never attend church, take no religious paper, and who, presumably, see no reform literature."

With the opening of the Autumn the Evangelical Alliance will take up the matter of preparing the various leaflets for distribution in the interest of good citizenship and social reform. For this work the services of able writers will be engaged. In communities where the foreign population predominates, or is unusually strong, leaflets will be distributed on such subjects as "The Meaning and Value of Naturalization," "Rights of the Naturalized Citizen," "Duties of the Naturalized," "Fundamental Principles of American Institutions," &c. These, in turn, will be translated into every foreign language spoken by the people in the community under consideration.

Dr. Strong said that the proposed associations will be wholly undenominational, and that all will work in the interest of education, good government, and American patriotism.