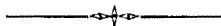


thetic) with teachers, parents, and scholars. Practically, he or she is more honoured, perhaps more warmly welcomed, in the homes of the parents, and possesses more actual power in the Sunday-school than the Rector. It is even possible that occasionally the superintendent rather plumes himself on his importance, and fails to realize, as he certainly ought, his position as the incumbent's representative and subordinate. Some men are sufficiently large-minded to rejoice if their people benefit, even though they get none of the credit of it. They have also sufficient foresight to recognise that with proper attention in the transition stage, children, loyal and devoted to teacher and school, will become men and women equally loyal to Church and clergy. Consequently, they overlook or put up with inevitable defects incidental to the working of a system which yields such magnificent results as a whole.

There is one remedy for the decline of Sunday-schools open to all. Let them be remembered at the throne of grace, at family prayer, in secret, in congregational prayer-meetings where such are held. Let the needs of teachers, children, and parents be earnestly pleaded before Him who said: "Suffer the little children to be brought unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

M. A. DIBDIN.



ART. VII.—EVANGELICALS AT THE CHURCH CONGRESS.

THE programme of the Church Congress, which meets this month at Brighton, is distinguished by its array of names more or less distinctly associated with Evangelical Churchmanship. The fact is interesting because Chichester is hardly, perhaps, a diocese in which one would expect a Church Congress programme to bestow on Evangelical Churchmen unusual favours. The extremes to which pronounced Anglicanism has been carried in Brighton may also have produced an impression that any Congress held there would reflect the type of Churchmanship most often associated with its name. But any such anticipations have been falsified. And in the face of the prominence given to Evangelicals on the programme of this year's Congress, it is not surprising that people should ask whether the time is not come for all Evangelical Churchmen frankly to accept the Congress as a useful feature in Church life, and to support it, where possible, as members. At present they cannot all bring themselves to this view, with the result that the Evangelical membership

and the representation of Evangelical views on the platform are nearly always less complete than they should be.

The antipathy to the Congress which has so long persisted found expression from the very first. Mr. Eugene Stock, in his "History of the C.M.S.," explains the fact as a natural outcome of past experience on the part of Evangelical Churchmen. "In the earlier part of the century they were so completely excluded from the Church life of the period—such as it was—that they had become accustomed to meet only by themselves; and when, in the middle of the century, their position was more recognised, they naturally and unconsciously continued their wonted habit. Then, when modern plans for united conference and united action in the Church began, started mainly by men more alive than themselves to the importance of external development alongside spiritual growth, they were not prepared for such combination, and doubted its expediency."¹ Probably, too, although Mr. Stock does not go further than a hint, the objection to "such combination" was due to the strong feeling against the rising tide of Ritualism. That objection has survived in some quarters until the present day. Ought it any longer to exist?

In seeking an answer to this question we are bound to look at the facts. It will be agreed that the Congress has never been a party organization. Any distinctive character which it may have is due always to the President for the year and to the labours of the Subjects Committee which helps him. But, as we should expect, so strenuously fair have the authorities sought to be that it has again and again happened that where the surroundings are those of Higher Anglicanism the Evangelical School has been well represented; and where Low Churchmen have been in the majority, High Churchmen have dominated the programme. Nor has there ever been, so far as I am aware, any attempt to limit the representation of Evangelical or Protestant views. Father Ignatius has been excluded from the platform; Mr. Kensit was admitted to it.

Let it be noted, also, that Evangelical leaders were amongst those who helped to found the Congress. The first Congress, held in the hall of King's College, Cambridge, in 1861, was rather a local than a general gathering. There is no exact record of the number of its members, but they were estimated at 300, and several distinguished Evangelicals (including the Rev. W. Cadman) were amongst them. When the Congress met at Oxford in the following year, the Rev. W. Cadman and the Rev. E. A. Litton were on the list of speakers. On this occasion, as Mr. Stock points out,² Foreign Missions,

¹ Vol. ii. pp. 357, 358.

² *Ibid.*, p. 359.

perhaps the best-loved topic of Evangelical Churchmen, claimed attention. At the third Congress, held at Manchester, the list of readers and speakers included the names of Bishop Perry, Canon Stowell, and Canon McNeill. It is clear, therefore, that the foundation of the Church Congress owed something to Evangelical Churchmen, and that men whose championship of Reformation principles was an outstanding feature in the Church life of their day saw no reason for avoiding the new organization.

A survey of the programmes for the first ten Congresses shows that, although the propriety of Evangelicals taking part in such gatherings was repeatedly discussed, the Congress was never banned. I have spoken of the three first meetings. At Bristol, in 1864, Lord Harrowby and Mr. R. Baxter spoke. At Norwich, in 1865, Lord A. C. Hervey, Lord Harrowby, the Rev. T. R. Birks, the Rev. Daniel Moore, the Rev. J. C. Ryle, and Sir Joseph Napier were heard. In 1866, at York, the Rev. E. Garbett, the Rev. W. Cadman, the Rev. Joseph Bardsley, and Lord Harrowby were on the programme. At the Wolverhampton Congress of 1867 the names of the Rev. C. Marson and the Rev. H. B. Tristram appear for the first time. Mr. Tristram, Mr. Ryle, and Sir Joseph Napier were again prominent at Dublin in 1868. At Liverpool, in 1869—the Congress at which there was a formal protest against the admission of Mr. Mackonochie to the platform on the ground that he was defying the law—Bishop Ryan, the Rev. W. Saumarez Smith, the Rev. E. Garbett, “Rob Roy” Macgregor, the Rev. Dr. Blakeney, and the Rev. J. Bardsley were all on the programme. At Southampton, in 1870, the Rev. J. C. Ryle, the Rev. E. Garbett, and the Rev. A. W. Thorold were speakers. Thus the first ten Congresses show that Evangelical men, and especially those associated with a very definite Protestantism, were ready to help the young organization.

Since that date the proportion of Evangelical speakers has increased, and no charge of unfairness in the choice of subjects, or the selection of the speakers, or the conduct of the debates could be alleged. Moreover, a survey of the reports shows that the principles distinctive of Evangelical Churchmanship have in no way suffered in the course of debate. Some causes more especially identified with it—such, for example, as foreign missions—have always received the fullest attention.

Surely, then, the time is come for laying aside any suspicion of the Church Congress, and regarding it frankly as a useful feature in Church life. The policy of refraining from attendance at the Church Congress, like that of standing aloof

from all diocesan organizations, cannot be advantageous. It is true that principles are often stated on the Church Congress platforms from which Evangelical Churchmen must dissent; but whether Low Churchmen attend or stay away, those principles will be championed. Is it not better that men should be there to challenge those things, to refute them (if they can), to present the other side with as much force as possible? And if men already attend who can do this, ought not those who feel with them to be present in person in order that any who stand forth to state or defend their side of the question may be well supported in the audience? Evangelical Churchmen have no reason to dread criticism of their position nor discussion of its details. Why should not the minority who view the Church Congress with hesitation or alarm and refrain from its membership lay aside their hostility, and unite with others to secure that the cause of loyal and sober Churchmanship shall always have their watchful and judicious aid at the sessions of the Church Congress?

A. R. BUCKLAND.

The Month.

THE article with which the Bishop-designate of Durham opens the new series of the CHURCHMAN is in the nature of a warning and a plea. It is a warning, for no school of thought can long flourish which is not supported by some measure of learning, and of the learning which is set before the public. If young authors are not coming forward on the side of Evangelical and moderate Churchmen, the principles held by them will assuredly lose ground. It is also a plea—a plea for more accurate and careful study, but also inferentially a plea for more encouragement of learning and authorship. We very much hope that this latter aspect will not be overlooked.

The November number of the CHURCHMAN will contain an article by the Rev. N. Dimock on "Conscience and the Gospel."

Early numbers of the CHURCHMAN will contain three articles by Dr. Wace on "Protestant Theology in the Sixteenth Century," and Dr. Henry Gee will write on "The Elizabethan Communion-Table."

Dr. Monle's appointment to the See of Durham was received with very unusual unanimity. But the accession of a third Cambridge Professor to the diocese of Lightfoot and Westcott produced from the *Guardian* a curiously ill-timed protest against the policy of choosing a Low Churchman for Durham. The theory of the *Guardian* apparently is that representatives of the three schools of thought should be sent in regular succession everywhere. The assumption that the theology of Dr. Moule is much the same thing as the theology of Dr. Westcott will come as a surprise to most people. Moreover, it can scarcely be a secret that in the latter part of his life Dr. Westcott so far yielded to High Church influences as to give that party advantages which were received by many other