

How to Advance Our Evangelical Principles.—II.

BY THE VERY REV. THE DEAN OF ST. DAVID'S.

3. **L**ET us go with the times as far as we can. I am by no means arguing for every new-fangled fashion or fresh phase that may be in vogue with some; but I am earnestly contending that, in our ministry generally, we should not be behind the times. Perhaps a good illustration may be the rule I have heard given for a Christian lady's dress—that she should not be the first to take up any new fashion, nor make herself conspicuous by sticking to any old, antiquated style. The Oxford movement has undoubtedly done great good in the Church, yes, and to us Evangelicals, by impressing the importance of externals as an index and expression of what is spiritual and unseen. However strongly we may hold, as I do most emphatically, that the outward is nothing compared to the inward, I am certain that we cannot neglect the outward and do our duty faithfully as ministers of Christ. We are all impressed through the outward senses of sight and hearing, and certainly most men do not abandon these impressions in matters of religion. First and foremost, the Parish Church, both inside and outside, should be a pattern of neatness, in thorough repair, well kept, scrupulously clean, with such tasteful, chaste decoration and ornamentation as shall impress a visitor with the belief that the Incumbent honours the whole place as set apart for the worship of Almighty God. Then reverence should characterize everything connected with Divine worship from the time the bell begins till the last worshipper has left. The dress, attitude, manner and tone of the officiating clergy, the dress, behaviour, walk and attitude of the choir both in the vestry and in the Church, and also of the organist, the bearing of the Church officials and of the Church servants, the collecting of the offertories, and especially the whole administration of the Lord's Supper may all combine to help or to hinder true spiritual worship. The expression "a bright service," may, I

know, bear an unfavourable meaning—but anything that is dull, heavy and monotonous cannot help spiritual worship.

The pace at which the prayers are said, and the reading of the lessons have far further influences than many imagine.

When all have some education, and many read a great deal, long, dry, sermons with high flown language and a stilted manner are manifestly altogether behind the times.

Well conducted lantern services, except where the population is wholly upper class, are very helpful. As to the parochial machinery, it is a reproach when Evangelical men are behind hand in necessary church extension, and our spheres should surely be patterns of thorough equipment and efficiency.

I have no time to give details, except to urge the great importance of looking well after our young men. Unless the Church provides some healthy attraction for them in the evening what wonder if they get into mischief. I have found a good billiard-table to work admirably. I have never allowed playing for money or cards.

4. Let us be distinctly loyal to the Church of England. It may seem surprising that I should urge this, but in my humble judgment some Evangelical men are apt to forget that they are Churchmen, and any disloyalty to the Church of England by Evangelical men does great harm to the whole cause. It is quite true that there are practices and teaching in the Church of England to-day which every Evangelical man must heartily deplore, and it is also true that on some points of doctrine and belief we are nearer to those outside our pale than to some within the Church. But at any rate, so long as we remain in the Church, hold the Church's office, and eat the Church's bread, do let us avowedly and distinctly show that we are in the Church from conviction, and that we remain in her fold as affording the best opportunity in this imperfect world of advancing God's truth. The Bishop of Manchester has said: "We have in our Church an organization more perfect and complete than that of any other communion," and I firmly believe it. Then Church principles and Church organization are more to the fore, are

more thought of than they used to be, and I am sure Evangelical men lose if they disregard this feature of our times.

I don't think that Evangelical men often, by any means, receive their due share of Episcopal favour and patronage, but I could not say that I think Evangelical men are wholly free from blame in this matter.

I know I am setting a high standard, but my conscience tells me it is not too high. Can a bishop always point to the Evangelical parishes in his diocese as standing out conspicuously for good work, up-to-date organization, and harmonious concord between clergy and people? I know faithfulness to the truth does sometimes demand public remonstrance to episcopal action, but it makes all the difference as to the time and tone and temper and mode of the remonstrance. I believe it may be so made as to win, not forfeit, true respect. I have always worked with Nonconformists in the Bible Society and such like causes, but I am sure they respect us of the Church of England all the more when, at the same time, we show that, unhappily at present, a very definite line separates us in matters which are not unimportant.

I commend to you some words of the Vicar of St. James, Bermondsey, read at Sion College last year. He said, speaking of our dangers from parochialism: "There is a fact in the recent history of religion in this country the significance of which we have hardly yet begun to realize, I mean the drawing together of the Nonconformists under the federation of the Free Church Council. While the Nonconformists are feeling after union and a higher conception of Churchmanship, we who bear the name of Churchmen and stand for its principles are in danger of becoming absorbed in a spirit of parochialism, of being, in fact, mere Congregationalists. The remedy for this is to be found not in the imposition from without of iron uniformity, as in the voluntary drawing together in mutual support."

I venture to say that we Evangelical men shall never do our full duty to advance our principles unless we take our proper place in Ruridecanal Chapters and Conferences as well as in all

Archidiaconal and Diocesan Meetings and Church Congresses, both to assert our principles and to understand other men better.

Coming from Wales I cannot be silent on the threatened Disestablishment of the four Welsh dioceses of this province of Canterbury. I know all do not agree with me, but I am thoroughly convinced every loyal Churchman ought to resist Disestablishment with all the strength he can command for the welfare of his country and for the glory of God.

For knowing accurately how best to advance our principles we cannot do better than consider how others see us, and for what we stand in the Church. I quote from two articles in the *Record* by the Rev. Henry Lewis, Rector of Bermondsey. He gives four criticisms of the Evangelical School :

1. Cardinal Newman in his "History of my Religious Opinions" says, "An Evangelical was the human means of the beginning of Divine life in me." To Thomas Scott "I almost owe my soul, I so admired and delighted in his writings." His earliest displeasure with Evangelicalism was aroused by what appeared to him to be deterioration in its spirituality. He says : "The Evangelical party itself with their late successes seemed to have lost that simplicity and unworldliness which I admired so much in Milner and Scott." He referred to recent Evangelical appointments to important positions in the Church.

2. Then in 1879, Mr. Gladstone wrote in the *British Quarterly Review*, "The main characteristics of the early Evangelical School were of an high order. It was a strong, systematic, outspoken and determined reaction against the prevailing standards both of life and preaching. It aimed at bringing back on a large scale and by an aggressive movement the Cross and all that the Cross essentially implies both into the teaching of the clergy, and into the lives as well of the clergy as of the laity." As to its future, Mr. Gladstone says, "It may be that it is still destined to suffer from what I take to be its besetting weakness—Individualism. But it may also be that a more or less pronounced Evangelical School is still required for the general religious welfare of the Anglican Church, in order

to maintain, if only by an emulation as between the men of Apollos and of Paul, the vigour and activity in the Anglican body of those doctrines of grace, without which the salt of Christianity soon loses its savour." Surely higher praise as to what our principles stand for could scarcely be had. Even such a paper as the *Church Times* said two years ago, "There was something of the Evangelical about Newman to the end, as there must be about all holy men, and where does the Evangelical spirit breathe more than in the writings of Pusey and Keble?"

3. On one occasion, fearing a secession of Evangelical men from the Church, Archbishop Benson said, "Except these abide in the Church, *ye* (the rest) cannot be saved."

4. Lord Hugh Cecil in "Church Problems," edited by Canon Hensley Henson, says, "The glory of Evangelicals lies in their vivid sense of the relations between man and God; in their strong faith in the Divine mercy; in their passionate devotion to the Person of our Lord; in the abundant love of others which they display; in short, in the vital character of their Christianity. Certainly it is not all Evangelicals of whom this can be said. Some who are called by that name are very unamiable persons. But a good Evangelical deserves the sincere reverence of Christian people. He ranks high among the Saints."

Surely the way to advance our principles is to try, every one of us, in that omnipotent strength promised to every seeking soul, to live out in daily life, wherever we are and whatever our immediate work, that spirit which shone in our fathers long since called up higher, and that saintly life which from such pens as Cardinal Newman's, Mr. Gladstone's, Archbishop Benson's, and Lord Hugh Cecil's is still expected of us. I can only hope that these criticisms may produce in every one of us great searchings of heart as to how far we are worthy successors of such saintly lives as Scott, and Simeon, and Carus, and Henry Venn, and Edward Hoare, and Henry Wright.

I fear many High Churchmen have a greater reputation for hard self-denying and self-sacrificing work, which simply amounts to a denial of our principles. The Bishop of Stepney considers

that a torpor has fallen upon the Church of England. If this is true, can we Evangelicals refuse to take any share of the blame? A lazy, idle Evangelical is surely a contradiction in terms. He ought to be the hardest working man in his parish. You know the story of Dean (then Rev. Hugh) M'Neile, in Liverpool, whose study light was noticed very early in the morning, and a working-man who determined to be before the light found he had to be up at 5.30. Bishop Christopher Wordsworth, of Lincoln, regularly lighted his own study fire at 6.30.

A narrow-minded, illiberal, uncharitable Evangelical is a contradiction in terms. Unless we are breathing forth the spirit of Christ in all the duties and details of life, we are not doing our part to advance Evangelical principles. A conceited, stand-off, cold, unsympathetic, stiff Evangelical is a contradiction in terms and a caricature of Him whom "the common people heard gladly." He was "the friend of publicans and sinners." If we would advance our Evangelical principles, I will only say of the pulpit what my old college friend, Canon Aitken, once remarked to me, that we must show every time we go into it that "we mean business," and of the parish that we shall so labour that it may stand out as a bright witness for the truth in the whole neighbourhood, by a large proportion of godly communicants, by a goodly band of devoted workers, and by an ever growing interest and liberality in Home and Foreign Mission work.

Surely a two years' old deficit of nearly £60,000 on the C.M.S is a great reflection upon the Evangelical body. Canon Sutton told us in Exeter Hall last May that while Birmingham sends up to the C.M.S. some £3,000 a year, three Birmingham Football Clubs had an aggregate income last year of £30,000, ten times as much as Birmingham sent up to the C.M.S. I believe very few clergy have learnt the power of small sums.

During Lent in last year, in a large Liverpool church, a sermon was preached on the strength of Evangelicalism, and I

adopt now the preacher's closing words: "I maintain that Evangelicalism so called, if fully and truly taught, is really, as the name implies, the preaching of the Gospel, and I commend it to you not only as a working aspect of theology, but as a rule of practical life. The gift of Pentecost is ours, His Spirit is striving with men, and there is no end to the influence of spiritual religion; far greater exploits of faith are before us if we will. 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord,'" and I close with the late Lord Selborne's exhortation, when he addressed the students of St. David's College, Lampeter, "Be spiritual, spiritual, spiritual."



Loyalty to the Prayer-Book.¹

BY THE REV. T. W. DRURY, B.D.

THE conduct of public worship is one of the highest duties of a Christian pastor. It is to lead the children of God into the presence of their heavenly Father; it is to lead the flock into the green pastures of Divine love.

For this the supreme qualification is the pastor's own communion with God. Nothing else can take the place of this. For how can we lead if we ourselves do not know the way?

And the true walk with God will save us from all that savours of taking liberties with sacred things; it will lead to scrupulous care in fulfilling our public ministry. It is self-esteem that leads to eccentricities in worship. If we remember that it is not only God's work, but that He is really close by us in it—"holding the stars in His right hand"—we shall never forget how *awful* as well as how happy is our ministry. βλέπετε πῶς ἀκριβῶς περιπατεῖτε—"that ye walk *accurately*," remembering the importance of detail, judging nothing to be trivial even in matters of common life, least of all in your work as ambassadors

¹ A paper read at the Reunion, Ridley Hall, June, 1906.