

Our Contributors.

THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

BY PROFESSOR CHARLES ELLIOTT, D.D.

1. THE ORIGIN OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

It had its origin in the feeling that a united effort among all Evangelical Christians, was necessary to oppose the encroachments of the Papacy, and that Romanizing tendency in the Anglican Church, vulgarly known as Puseyism. Dr. Ebrard sees its "inner ground" in the breach between the Free and Established Churches of Scotland, and exclaims: *Gesegnetes Schisma, das zu einer Vereinigung führte, welche an Bedeutung und Umfang das Schisma weit überwiegt.* [Blessed Schism, which led to a union, which far outweighs, in importance and extent, the Schism!] The manner in which the breach between the Free and Established Churches of Scotland both evangelical in doctrine—contributed to the formation of the Evangelical Alliance, was, according to Ebrard, that the outward and visible separation intensified the feeling for a closer spiritual union. The dissensions and oppositions of Evangelical Christians were reconciled in a higher unity.

The call for a meeting to promote a closer fraternal fellowship among Evangelical Christians, was issued in Scotland on August 5th, 1845. On October 1st, a preliminary meeting was held in Liverpool, which sat three days, and was attended by 216 persons from twenty different ecclesiastical communions. From August 19th until September 2nd, the first General Meeting was held in London, and was attended by 921 Christian men from all parts of the world. Sir Culling Eardley, Bart., was called to the chair. From that time until his death, he continued a firm friend of the Alliance.

The object of the Alliance was announced at this meeting, to be the cultivation of Christian and friendly relations among all evangelical denominations, and unity of action against common enemies and dangers. The Alliance was not to be a *Confederation* of Churches, but a *union* of individuals, not an *ecclesiastical* union, but a *Christian* union.

The Alliance has, therefore, nothing to do with Confessions. It adopts those fundamental principles common to all Christians, and it is supposed that all its members hold these principles.

2. THE PRINCIPLES OF THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

Dr. Edward Bickersteth moved, on August 24th, 1846, the following Articles, which were unanimously adopted by the Alliance, viz.:

1. The Divine inspiration, authority and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures.
2. The right and duty of the private interpretation of the Scriptures.
3. One God in three Persons.
4. Human nature is entirely corrupt by the fall.
5. The Son of God became man; He effected reconciliation for sinners of mankind; He intercedes and reigns as Mediator.
6. The justification of the sinner by faith alone.
7. The work of the Holy Spirit in converting and sanctifying the sinner.
8. The immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the judgment of the human race by Jesus Christ, the eternal happiness of the righteous, and the eternal punishment of the wicked. [*Una cum aeterna quam justorum felicitate, tum impiorum poena.*]
9. The divine institution of the ministry, and the obligatory and perpetual ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

[These articles are given in Latin, in Herzog's Real Encyklopädie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche. I have not aimed at an exact translation, but have given the sense.]

The ninth article has been relaxed, on one occasion, perhaps on several, with reference to the Quakers; and at the last meeting some members of the Salvation Army were present. In what capacity, I do not know. One of them made an address, complaining of the persecutions to which the members of the Army are exposed in some parts of Europe. The Alliance, without expressing any views as to the constitution and mode of working of that Army, passed a resolution protesting against persecution in any form. That was perfectly within the sphere of its legitimate objects.

As a general rule, it is not safe to relax any fundamental principle. As soon as one is abated, then a way is opened for the similar treatment of another. Yet among principles called fundamental, some are of greater importance than others. The ninth article is certainly a very important one; but it is not so fundamental to the Christian system as some of the others.

The great majority of the members of the Alliance, however, will always belong to the Reformed Evangelical, Confessional Churches; and hence very little danger will arise from the occasional relaxation of a principle which does not lie at the very heart of Christianity. Some Christian men, owing to certain intellectual and spiritual idiosyncrasies, entertain peculiar views, and have strange methods of casting out devils, which we cannot approve; but the Great Master may acknowledge them as His faithful and true followers. There are, in the spiritual, as well as in the physical world, some abnormal developments.

3. THE MEETING AT COPENHAGEN.

It is known that the last meeting of the Alliance was appointed to take place in Stockholm, Sweden. The opposition of the bishops of that country induced the Committee to change the place of meeting to Copenhagen. This change was providential. In the first place, the Danes, on account of their greater Catholicity, were better prepared to receive it; and in the second place, the Alliance, by meeting in Copenhagen, could exercise a stronger influence on Germany, on the one side, and on Sweden, on the other. The attitude of the bishops was very distasteful to many of the Swedish clergy, many of whom attended the Alliance as delegates, notwithstanding episcopal opposition. Greetings were sent to the Alliance from Stockholm.

The action of the Swedish bishops was probably prompted by the resolution of the Alliance, some years ago, in behalf—if I mistake not—of the Baptists, who complained of persecution on the part of the government; and, on that supposition, it might be considered retaliatory. It was, however, very unwise; and it will tend to promote, what it endeavoured to suppress.

The reception of the members of the Alliance in Copenhagen was very enthusiastic. The venerable Dr. Kalkar, an octogenarian, of that city, delivered the address of welcome. Addresses were delivered by the Lord Mayor of London, Count von Bernstorff, of Berlin; Count Bylandt, of The Hague; the Rev. Dr. Hall, of New York, and others. The Bishop of Zealand, Primate of the Danish Church, was present; but he took no part.

The fraternal Christian spirit which pervaded all the meetings was beautiful—but it shone most beautifully in the prayer-meetings, two of which—one in English and one in German—were held at seven o'clock every morning.

The King and Queen of Denmark, the King and Queen of Greece, the Crown Prince and Crown Princess attended one of the evening meetings. They listened with great attention, and at the close of the meeting, the King and Queen of Denmark shook hands with the Rev. Dr. Schaff, of New York, and expressed their agreement with the views, which he had expressed in an able paper on the "Divisions and Unity of Christendom." On two other occasions members of the Royal Family were present.

Many able papers were read. Those that interested me most were Dr. Schaff's, on the topic just mentioned, Dr. Christlieb's on the "Causes of Religious Indifference"; and the Rev. Prebendary Anderson's, on "Evolution." In expressing my preference for these, I do not attempt to deny that there were others of equal ability.

There is something suggestive in the music and in the meetings of the Alliance. The same hymns, in four different languages—Danish, German, English, French—were in many instances sung to the same tunes so that the members of the Alliance sang together, each in his own language the praises of God.

The members of the Alliance, at the close of its meetings, attended a musical concert in the Frue Kyrkan; and next day, the Lord's Day, September 7th, as many as remained in Copenhagen united in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, in the French Reformed Church.

I have refrained from minute details, for two reasons—space and the fact that the details have been already published.

BROTHER SKINFLINT'S SOLILOQUY.

BY KNOXONIAN.

The Church is in a bad way. A man must have his hand in his pocket all the time now. In the good old days the Government built the churches, and paid the ministers. One could sit in the church for years in these happy times and never put his hand in his pocket. Those were the days when religion flourished and the people could put their money in mortgages at twenty per cent.

Things are much worse now than when this country was settled. In those early times ministers got three or four hundred dollars a year for stipend. It was enough. The arrangements for collecting the stipend then were much better than now. Part of the stipend was often paid in produce. If a man had anything that he could not sell for money on the market he could always take it to the minister. It was so handy when one had small potatoes or produce of any kind that would not sell to take it to the minister; when the collector came round one could always say "I paid in produce." The plan of paying in kind was a good plan. It was far better than the envelope system. The envelope system makes a man keep his hand in his pocket all the time. That is the weak point about the envelope system. The envelope system was devised by worldly-minded men, who say that one should pay for the Gospel by the week instead of putting one's money in the bank or lend it on mortgages at twenty per cent.

I read in that *Mail*, that I borrowed from one of the neighbours last week, that the Church is in a state of decay. The *Mail* says the Church has lost its influence in the world and blames Huxley and Darwin and men of that kind for making the Church so weak that, like Wellington at Waterloo, it calls for night or Blucher. The *Mail* does not understand the question. Darwin and his people have not injured the Church to any great extent. The injury has been done by the envelope system. The worldly-minded men who devised that system shows how weak we are by dividing our annual subscription by fifty-two and showing how small the quotient is. The quotient is often weak, so weak that you have to handle the little thing tenderly or it might die. I have always paid four dollars a year for my pew which holds nine. Taken as a lump sum my contribution looked respectable. I always liked to hand it to the minister himself. I wished to produce a feeling of dependence in him, and keep him from spiritual pride. It was his spiritual good I had in view. Our congregation elected a worldly minded man for treasurer, and he introduced the envelope system, and divided my contributions by fifty-two. He said the quotient was only about seven cents per Sabbath for the Gospel for the family or three and a half cents for those who went to church twice. Then he tried to divide the seven cents by the number of my family and he couldn't get any quotient at all. He was a very worldly-minded man, that treasurer, but, he couldn't find any quotient. Such carnal devices as dividing one's contribution by fifty-two should not be allowed. The Church will always call for night or Blucher until the envelope system is abolished.

Some of our ministers say too much about the Schemes. I was always a liberal supporter of missions. I never allowed the plate to pass me on collection day without putting five cents on it. Never. Dr. Cochrane came here a short time ago and made such a fuss about Home Missions that I had to double my contribution. He spoke nearly two hours and so worked up the people that several liberal contributors like myself had to double up. He said that "half farthings were just coined to give Scotchmen a chance to contribute to charitable and religious institutions." I deny the charge. I never gave less than a cent for any religious or charitable purpose in my life. I am afraid Cochrane is a worldly-minded man like these who introduce the envelope system and divide by fifty-two.

I have no great admiration for Mr. Macdonnell. I am afraid he has a touch of worldly-mindedness, too. He goes up and down through the Church speaking on augmentation and making the people believe that a minister should have \$750 a year and a manse! The worst thing about it is that a great many people do believe him. He has a terribly earnest way about him and makes his points so clear and plausible that simple minded good people are carried away by him. He is a dangerous man to come into a congregation—