

**THE OLD
EVANGELICALISM
AND THE NEW**

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The Old Evangelicalism and the New by R. W. Dale

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R. W. DALE

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EVANGELICALISM
AND THE NEW**

*THE OLD EVANGELICALISM AND THE
NEW.*

*A DISCOURSE DELIVERED IN ARGYLE CHAPEL,
BATH, ON OCTOBER 8, 1889, ON OCCASION
OF THE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY
OF ITS OPENING.*

THE OLD EVANGELICALISM
AND THE NEW.

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"And day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they did take their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved."—ACTS ii. 46-47.

THESE words give us the impression that the Christian Church was distinguished for some time after the day of Pentecost by great buoyancy of spirit; and that this buoyancy of spirit was one element of its attractiveness and charm. Only a very few weeks before, the friends of Christ were in despair. All seemed lost. A great darkness had fallen upon them. At His resurrection the dawn came. But I suppose that at first they were unable to receive all the blessedness of it. Christ was restored to them; but His relations to them were not just the same that they had been before. He ap-

peared among them at unexpected times and in unexpected places ; remained with them for a few hours and then vanished—they knew not where. There was a mystery which must have awed them. During the forty days between the resurrection and the ascension theirs must have been a “fearful joy.” Then came ten days of prayer and hope and wondering expectation. Then Pentecost. The great promise was fulfilled. The Holy Ghost descended. The new morning in all its splendour broke upon them. The visible presence of Christ was no longer with them ; but there is no hint or trace that they looked back with any regret either upon His earthly ministry or upon those six weeks in which they knew that at any time their Lord might appear to them. They had abounding happiness — the energy, the spring, the high spirits of youth. “And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved ;” and this increased their joy.

We are celebrating the hundredth anniversary

of the opening of this building for Christian worship. When it was opened there was a similar buoyancy of spirit in the Evangelical Churches of this country ; and of them, too, it might be said, in the very words of Luke, "the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved."

The Congregational Church meeting in this place was founded in the year 1785. Their first minister was Mr. Tuppen. Some years before, while living an irreligious life, he had gone to hear George Whitfield, who was preaching on a common near Portsmouth. He went—not, indeed, from mere curiosity ; nor did he go with any wish to receive religious benefit, but to disturb the congregation and to insult Mr. Whitfield. He says, "I had therefore provided myself with stones in my pocket, if opportunity offered, to pelt the preacher ; but I had not heard long before the stone was taken out of my heart of flesh, and then the other stones, with shame and weeping, were dropped one by one out upon the ground." He became one of Mr. Whitfield's

preachers, and was, for some time, a minister at Portsea.

When he came to Bath in 1785 the congregation was very small, and consisted of less than thirty persons; in the course of three or four years it rose to 700 or 800. They worshipped for a few years in a building on the Lower Borough walls, but this soon became too small for them, and they built a new chapel on this site, which was opened on Oct. 4, 1789. When the chapel was opened, however, Mr. Tuppen's health was broken, and he was never able to preach in it.

The first sermon was preached by Mr. Jay, who was at that time about to leave his first pastorate, at Christian Malford, and who had often preached for Mr. Tuppen during his illness. Early in 1790 Mr. Tuppen died, and Mr. Jay, who had become the minister of a chapel at Clifton, belonging to Lady Maxwell, accepted the invitation of the Church to become his successor. Mr. Jay remained the pastor of the Church for sixty-two years; in October, 1852, he