

THE CHELTENHAM CONFERENCE.

“Unity among Evangelical Churchmen.”

Full Text of the Papers.

THE Tenth Conference of Evangelical Churchmen was held at Cheltenham on June 11, 12 and 13. In their letter of Invitation the Committee wrote: “In recent years the Conference has dealt with subjects primarily concerned with the world-wide influence of Christianity. The Evangelical School has a special contribution to make to those important matters, but while this is so, we have to recognize that it is not united in its witness. It has a great opportunity, but divisions in its ranks are weakening its power to make use of it. This is a domestic matter of the utmost importance, and yet of great difficulty. As convinced Evangelicals, and lovers of the truths for which we stand, the Committee desire to bring together representatives of all sections of Evangelical thought, to seek by conference, prayer and mutual intercourse to find the common platform on which we may stand, and from which we may proclaim the great fundamental truths on which the future of the Christian Faith rests. We desire to rise to the height of the opportunity which God is giving us at this time, and we believe the Conference can be, under God, the means of bringing Evangelical Churchmen together in a new confidence, sympathy, strength and co-operation. The need for Evangelical Unity is pressing and urgent, and we believe it can be obtained. For these reasons the General Subject of “Unity among Evangelical Churchmen” has been chosen for discussion.

The exigencies of publication do not permit of our giving any detailed report of the Conference, or the text of the Findings, but by the kind courtesy and hearty co-operation of the appointed readers of papers, which we desire most gratefully to acknowledge, we are able to print in this issue of *THE CHURCHMAN* the full text of their addresses. These papers are on subjects of such importance to the present welfare and future work of the Evangelical School in the Church of England that we feel assured our readers will be glad to have them in this convenient form. They contain a striking body of statements, and illustrate the underlying unity there is among Evangelicals of all sections. We are sure that as these papers are

read and appreciated they will lead to a clear perception that the whole Evangelical School is bound together by great truths and great traditions, and that the matters which divide, are in comparison of much smaller moment. We earnestly pray that the wishes of the conveners of the Conference may be gratified and that they may have the pleasure of seeing their desire fulfilled, so that as a result there may be a new era of Evangelical advance, and a united endeavour to make the truths of the Gospel have their full effect in the lives of men and in the affairs of nations.

The Conference met under the presidency of the Rector of Cheltenham, the Rev. Canon H. A. Wilson, R.D., who gave his usual warm welcome to the members at the opening session on the first evening. There was a large and representative attendance and the utmost interest was maintained throughout. His opening address was on "The Need of Unity," a subject with which he dealt in the last number of *THE CHURCHMAN*, in view of the meeting of the Conference. The first portion of the subject, "Our Common Ground," was then opened by Canon A. B. G. Lillingston in a paper on "The Authority of Holy Scripture" (see p. 201). Canon Wilson then read a paper on "The Atonement" (see p. 208), and another by the Rev. H. B. Gooding on "Unmediated Access to Christ and the Free Grace of God" (see p. 215) concluded the set papers of the session. The Rev. A. E. Hughes was the selected speaker on these aspects of the subject.

Friday, June 12, was the central day of the Conference. There was a service of Holy Communion according to custom in the Parish Church at 8 a.m., at which an address was given by the Rev. A. E. Hughes, M.A.

At the morning session of the Conference the portion of the subject appointed for consideration was "Differing Points of View." The Rev. T. W. Gilbert, D.D., read the first paper on "Inspiration of Holy Scripture" (see p. 220). The Rev. E. L. Langston followed on the same subject (see p. 228). The second division of the subject was "Ritual and Ceremonial," on which the Rev. T. J. Pulvertaft read the paper (see p. 234). The Rev. A. W. Parsons was the appointed speaker.

At the afternoon session the branch of the subject under consideration was "Our Common Foes," and Mr. W. Guy Johnson read the first paper on "Sacerdotalism." This was followed by a paper on "Rationalism" by Canon G. W. Briggs (see p. 238). The selected speaker was the Rev. H. M. Foyl.

At the evening session "Our Evangelical Witness" was treated under two heads: First as "Expressed by means of the Ministry and Scholarship," and secondly as "Expressed in the Councils of the Church." The first was taken by the Rev. H. F. S. Adams (see p. 245) and the second by Prebendary E. N. Sharpe (see p. 250). The Rev. W. L. P. Float followed as the selected speaker. The Conference met the following morning to draw up the Findings which were prepared for their consideration by a committee appointed for the purpose.