

THE CHELTENHAM CONFERENCE.

“The Church of England and the Church of Rome.”

Full Text of the Papers.

THE Ninth Conference of Evangelical Churchmen was held at Cheltenham on June 24, 25, and 26. In their Letter of Invitation the Committee wrote:—“Recent events within our Church and the prevailing ignorance of the doctrine and system of the Roman Church have directed attention to the great theological and religious principles involved in the Reformation. The need of a reasoned witness to Primitive Christianity and of a true understanding of the teaching and spirit of Roman Catholicism have made it incumbent on Evangelical Churchmen to realize their duty and to understand clearly the positions of the Church of England and the Church of Rome. For these reasons the General Subject of *The Church of England and the Church of Rome* has been chosen for discussion. The Committee have been fortunate in obtaining the co-operation of writers and speakers, whose competence to treat the important subjects allotted to them will be generally recognized throughout the Church.”

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 carefully prepared papers, on a subject which is stirring deeply the hearts of Churchpeople to-day, will be found to be of the highest interest and value. They give to this issue a distinctive character of its own, and, although their insertion has involved the crowding out from the CHURCHMAN, in spite of its enlarged size, of much that usually finds a place in these pages, we believe our readers will appreciate fully the advantage of having within one cover such a full, frank, and reasoned examination, as is

afforded by these papers, of some of the points of difference between the Church of England and the Church of Rome. The Cheltenham Conference in the past has discussed many matters of deep moment to the life and work of the Church, and the influence of its deliberations and Findings has come to be recognized, even in the highest quarters; but we venture to say that rarely, if ever, before, has it given its attention to a subject so far-reaching in its appeal—for it is truly one of national concern—or has it been privileged to have on its platform men of more eminent distinction.

The Conference met under the presidency of the Rector of Cheltenham, the Rev. Canon H. A. Wilson, R.D., who at the opening session on Tuesday evening gave a warm welcome to the representative attendance of members gathered in the Parish Room, St. James's Square, where all the meetings were held. His Presidential address was followed by a paper by Mr. G. G. Coulton in which he gave an Historical Survey of the position (see p. 195). To him the Rev. C. J. Offer succeeded as Selected Speaker.

Wednesday, June 25, was a very full day. There was first a service of Holy Communion at 8 a.m. at the Parish Church, at which an address was given by the Rev. T. Sherwood Jones. At the morning session of the Conference two divisions of the subject were dealt with, viz. "The Theory of the Papacy," upon which the Rev. Dr. R. H. Murray read a paper (see p. 203), with the Rev. G. Foster Carter as Selected Speaker; and "The Roman Doctrine of the Church and Ministry," upon which the Rev. Chancellor Kerr contributed the paper (see p. 208), and the Rev. Harold Drown was Selected Speaker. At the afternoon session, again, two specific branches of the general subject were considered, viz. "Transubstantiation and the Mass," the opening paper being read by Archdeacon J. H. Thorpe (see p. 217), and the Rev. B. C. Jackson following as Selected Speaker; and "Penance and the Confessional," upon which the Rev. T. C. Hammond read a paper (see p. 231) and the Rev. Oliver A. C. Irwin was the Selected Speaker. At the evening session the two remaining branches of the general subject were taken in hand, viz. "Approaches to Rome by Conferences," the paper being read by the Rev. Alfred Fawkes (see p. 241), who was followed by the Rev. George F. Irwin as Selected Speaker; and "Approaches to Rome by Doctrine and Practice," with a paper prepared by the Right Rev. Bishop Knox, D.D. (see p. 247), and the Rev. H. J. Carpenter following as Selected Speaker.

Such is the record of a Conference which we hope and believe will leave its mark upon the history of the great controversy between England and Rome. The rapid development of events in the Church of England makes it all the more important that Churchmen should inform their minds of the nature of the issues raised by that controversy, and nowhere else will they gain more help than is supplied by the papers read at the Cheltenham Conference.

[We regret that there has not been time for the proof of the paper by the Rev. T. C. Hammond to be revised by the author.]