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Edinburgh 1910, Evangelicals and the Ecumenical Movement

Harold H. Rowdon

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The World Missionary Conference held at Edinburgh in 1910 has come to be 'generally accepted as the key date of the ecumenical movement'.¹ Shortly after it had taken place, Principal Edwards declared in his presidential address to the Baptist Union that it 'marked a new era, and we might also add the final policy in the solution of the great missionary problem.'² More recently, Miss Rouse has described the conference as 'possibly the most significant missionary event of the twentieth century',³ and Prof. K. S. Latourette, the doyen of church historians, is among the many who regard it in a more or less similar light.⁴

There can be no doubt that it was an occasion of considerable importance for both the missionary enterprise and the ecumenical movement. But the reasons usually given are not always impressive, and a recent writer has called the consensus of opinion on this subject a myth,⁵ and has argued that the foundation of the World Student Christian Federation in 1895 constitutes the real beginning of the modern ecumenical era. Before Edinburgh 1910 is demoted, however, a closer look should be taken at the reasons traditionally given for the crucial importance of that conference. From such an examination the conclusion will emerge, not only that undue weight has been given to such reasons, but also that there is a further factor which has attracted little notice but which is of the utmost importance for a proper appraisal both of Edinburgh 1910 and of the subsequent history of the ecumenical movement. This is the change produced by the conference in the attitude of many evangelicals towards the unity movement that they had themselves initiated and sustained hitherto.

SIGNIFICANCE COMMONLY CLAIMED FOR EDINBURGH 1910

Sense of Urgency

The first group of reasons commonly postulated for the decisiveness of Edinburgh 1910 are somewhat intangible but nevertheless real. We may designate them the sense of high destiny that permeated the conference. It was, of course, one of a series of conferences that had been convened at intervals of approximately a decade during the previous half century, in connection with the promotion of foreign missions. But the decade preceding 1910 was one of unprecedented significance for this enterprise, and the conference could hardly fail to reflect this. In an influential volume published in 1900, John R. Mott pinpointed some basic and significant facts. He drew attention to the new circumstance that virtually the whole of the inhabited earth was at last known—and open to receive the Gospel.⁶ Furthermore, unprecedented facilities for world travel existed (making it possible to travel round the world

¹ J. C. Pollock, *The Keswick Story. The Authorised History of the Keswick Convention*, 1964, 131; cf. S. C. Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 1964, 554, *et alia*.

² Cited in 'The Reunion Outlook. Notes and Comments', *Evangelical Christendom*, May-June 1911, 111.

³ R. Rouse, *The World's Student Christian Federation*, 1948, 128.

⁴ R. Rouse and S. C. Neill (eds.), *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, 1954, 355.

⁵ H-R. Weber, *Asia and the Ecumenical Movement, 1895-1961*, 1966, 54.

⁶ *The Evangelisation of the World in this Generation*, 106.

five times in a year⁷) and the Christian public possessed the resources in terms of manpower, money and machinery to achieve the task of world evangelisation (the spiritual resources were always available).⁸ Mott

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concluded by declaring that 'with literal truth it may be said that ours is an age of unparalleled opportunity'.⁹

At the same time, and in spite of the prevailing optimism of the period, signs were not lacking which seemed to indicate that the opportunity might be short-lived. Indeed, it was feared that some of the very factors that helped to constitute the opportunity might ultimately turn out for the hindrance of the Gospel if that opportunity were not seized. According to Temple Gairdner, those responsible for the planning of Edinburgh 1910 saw that the Church was:

'face to face with a new emergency and a changed situation. Humanity was awaking to self-consciousness: it became tenfold more urgent to say to humanity *Ecce Homo!* The world was realising that it was a unity:—was that unity to be or not to be in One Lord and One Faith? Were the gigantic forces, so contrary and so violent, now liberated and loosened all over the world, merely to be left to fight and clash their way to future settlement?'¹⁰

China was awaking from the sleep of centuries, and, as the 1907 Shanghai missionary conference pointed out in its appeal to the churches in the west¹¹, the intellectual revolution going on there, while neither clearly religious nor irreligious in character, was thought to be capable of becoming a religious movement and a Christian one. Gairdner laid great stress on the significance of Japan's victory over Russia in the war of 1905. This seemed symbolic of the rise of the Orient which was likely to change 'the entire aspect of things'.¹² Not only was the world coming into effective existence as such, but it seemed that its centre of gravity might move from west to east—hence the urgency of the missionary task and the need for the Christian Church to mobilise all its forces in pursuit of the goal of world evangelisation.

This sense of urgency was reflected, not only in the seriousness of the way in which the conference was planned and conducted, but also in the presence of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the 'notable contribution'¹³ made by him. The conference must have been electrified when the Archbishop called for missions to be made central in the plans, policy

⁷ *Ibid.*, 113. Little did he dream that within little more than half a century it would be possible to orbit the earth five times in a day!

⁸ *Ibid.*, 116ff.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 128.

¹⁰ W. H. T. Gairdner, *Edinburgh, 1910: An Account and Interpretation of the World Missionary Conference*, 1910, 12.

¹¹ Cited in N. Goodall, *Christian Ambassador. A Life of A. Livingston Warnshuis*, 1965, 45. Cf. K. S. Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, 1929, 527ff., especially 534.

¹² *Op. cit.*, 9-11. Cf. the similar sentiments expressed by Lord Balfour of Burleigh and the Archbishop of Canterbury in their addresses to the conference. *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, 9 vols., n.d., ix. 145, 149 respectively. Cf. also J. R. Mott, *The Present World Situation*, 1915, 21, 22; B. Sundkler, *The World of Mission*, Eng. trans., 1965, 131.

¹³ The phrase is that of Max Warren who regards the presence and contribution of Archbishop Davidson as a significant element in the importance of the conference. M. A. C. Warren, *The Missionary Movement from Britain in Modern History*, 1965, 152.

and prayers of the Church, and went on to say that 'it may well be that if that come true, "there be some standing here tonight who shall not taste of death till they see",—here on earth, in a way we know not now,—"the Kingdom of God come with power"'.¹⁴ Attention has also been drawn to the significance of the special message sent to the conference by the King of England, and of the extensive Press coverage it received.¹⁵

Quite apart from the significance of the actual events of the conference, the way in which they were reported heightened the sense of destiny that surrounded the occasion. Temple Gairdner's popular account¹⁶ is a most attractive and compelling piece of writing which is a work of very considerable artistic merit. The weaving together of an account of a lengthy conference and the gist of eight considerable volumes of preparatory studies was achieved in a masterly fashion. There is charm, and even fascination, in the volume which must have created for the reading Christian public that sense of Edinburgh 1910 as a moment of destiny which certainly filled the hearts and minds of many who attended it.¹⁷ The analogy drawn by Gairdner—who was a fine musician—between the eight days of the conference and the eight notes of the octave is but one illustration of the way in which a sense of the inevitability of the course of the conference was conveyed to the reader.

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Principles of Representation

The widely representative nature of the delegates is commonly regarded as another unique feature of Edinburgh 1910.¹⁸ Representatives were present, not only from British missionary societies, but from societies of other lands;¹⁹ not only from evangelical societies but from High Church societies.²⁰ Gairdner was loud in his praise of this 'saving element of heterogeneity',²¹ and claimed as a new conception the idea of 'a common platform... on which men might learn from each other's differences, however wide, through faith in the amount of unity, which, as a matter of fact, had enabled them to come together'.²² Indeed, his enthusiasm, which was boundless, caused him to exclaim: 'The question how far inclusiveness can, or should, be carried seemed, in fact, to have been solved automatically. It *should* go just as far as it can go.... Again, it can go just exactly as far as it *should*, and cannot in the nature of things go further.... Thus the principle, let all come who will, is a "safety" one'.²³

¹⁴ *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, ix. 150.

¹⁵ E. Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society*, 4 vols., 1899, 1916, iv. 558, 559.

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*

¹⁷ For example, Bishop Handley Moule, though he had to leave before the conference had completed its deliberations, declared that he had derived 'a whole education from this week, and an inspiration and a hope with which I was scarcely equipped when I arrived in Edinburgh'. *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, viii. 208.

¹⁸ W. H. T. Gairdner, *op. cit.*, 196; R. Rouse, *op. cit.*, 131; B. Mathews, John R. Mott, *World Citizen*, 1934, 232; *et alia*.

¹⁹ K. S. Latourette, *Christianity in a Revolutionary Age*, 5 vols., 1959-1963, v. 505; M. A. C. Warren, *op. cit.*, 152. Canon Lloyd is incorrect in saying that 'men of all Churches but one in the world were gathered'. R. Lloyd, *The Church of England in the Twentieth Century*, 2 vols., 1946, 1950, i. 220.

²⁰ W. R. Hogg, for example, makes the claim that Edinburgh 1910 was a milestone in that it brought continentals, and especially Germans, into the centre of the picture. W. R. Hogg, *Ecumenical Foundations. A History of the International Missionary Council and its Nineteenth-Century Background*, 1952, 135.

²¹ *Op. cit.*, 197.

²² *Loc. cit.*

²³ *Op. cit.*, 198, 199.

Furthermore, it has been claimed that representation was apportioned on an entirely new basis. For the most part, delegates were officially appointed by societies engaged in missionary work among non-Christian peoples overseas, the number of such delegates being determined by the financial expenditure on foreign missions of the respective societies.²⁴

Nature and Purpose

Even more important as a claim to originality is the nature and purpose of the conference.²⁵ At a fairly early stage in the preparations for Edinburgh 1910, both British and American executive committees arrived independently at the conclusion that the conference should be primarily consultative. An international committee was appointed, which set up eight commissions, each chaired by an expert and consisting of twenty members, to undertake extensive enquiry and careful study of eight topics which were selected as being of special importance. The topics chosen were: 'Carrying the Gospel to all the non-Christian World'; 'The Gospel in the Mission Field'; 'Education in Relation to the Christianisation of National Life'; 'The Missionary Message in Relation to non-Christian Religions'; 'The Preparation of Missionaries'; 'The Home Base of Missions'; 'Missions and Governments'; 'Co-operation' and 'The Promotion of Unity'. For two years the commissions collected information and opinions from many hundreds of missionaries, and prepared eight volumes which were published just in time to be distributed to all members prior to the conference as the basis for discussion. It was in the light of this that the Archbishop of Canterbury told the conference that it had met 'for the most serious attempt which the Church has yet made to look steadily at the whole fact of the non-Christian world, and to understand its meaning and its challenge!'²⁶ Prof. E. C. Moore, vice-chairman of one of the commissions, said that the reports were epoch-making in that they marked 'the beginning of a serious endeavour to arrive by joint consultation at a policy'.²⁷ Gairdner pointed out that, in particular, the consideration given to the subject of 'Missions and Governments' was novel.²⁸

Results

Most weighty of all the claims to originality made on behalf of Edinburgh 1910 is the assertion that it broke new ground in its results. First, its 'much commented-

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upon decision'²⁹ to create a 'Continuation Committee' has been regarded as without direct precedent³⁰. This committee, which was intended to continue the work commenced at Edinburgh, set up numerous sub-committees for the further study of those matters which had been considered there, and others besides.³¹ A quarterly journal, *The International Review of*

²⁴ *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, ix. 7.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, ix. 8ff.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, ix. 148.

²⁷ W. H. T. Gairdner, *op. cit.*, 116; cf. B. Mathews, *op. cit.*, 231.

²⁸ *Op. cit.*, 154, 155.

²⁹ The phrase is that of M. A. C. Warren, *op. cit.*, 152.

³⁰ B. Mathews, *op. cit.*, 232. Canon Lloyd is mistaken in saying that the 1900 Ecumenical Conference left behind a Continuation Committee. *Op. cit.*, i. 204.

³¹ *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, ix. 136-138.

Missions, was founded under the editorship of J. H. Oldham, secretary of the continuation committee, and the first number appeared in January, 1912.³² Of more direct moment was the tour of the Far East undertaken by John R. Mott, chairman of the continuation committee. Between October, 1912, and May, 1913, Mott held no fewer than eighteen regional and three national conferences in Ceylon, India, Burma, Malaya, China, Korea and Japan.³³ These gave birth to a number of continuation committees, and in some cases 'National Christian Councils' were formed.³⁴ The Great War ended the active functions of the Edinburgh continuation committee,³⁵ but it continued to exist until superseded in 1921 by the International Missionary Council. This brought together missionary societies and boards, or the churches represented by them, together with churches in the mission field, into one world-wide organisation with varied and important functions.³⁶ One of the dreams of Edinburgh 1910 had come true.

But the results of that conference were not confined to the sphere of missionary planning and co-operation. Indeed, it has been claimed that 'its influence on the union of the Churches, which it discussed little, was greater than its influence on missions, which was the purpose of its gathering'.³⁷ Inspired by the transdenominational character of the discussions, and yet disappointed by the exclusion of ecclesiastical and doctrinal issues which had been part of the price of securing it, Bishop Brent went away from Edinburgh determined to work for a conference which would not be so inhibited. This ultimately bore fruit in the series of Faith and Order conferences and the World Council of Churches.³⁸ Furthermore, it was from Edinburgh and the International Missionary Council that J. H. Oldham emerged, to play an important part in the development of the Life and Work movement which was destined to constitute the third basic element in the World Council. Even more important for ecumenical development was the effect of Edinburgh 1910 upon John R. Mott, whose biographer regarded it as marking

'a new epoch in the continuous development of his missionary policy and practice. It not only gave him a central, responsible, representative place in the leadership of missionary expansion, but it harnessed his energies, hitherto concentrated for the most part upon the recruiting and training of youth for that purpose, to the major strategy and executive tasks of missions as a whole'.³⁹

CRITIQUE OF THESE CLAIMS

It may be doubted whether this is the full range of the importance of Edinburgh 1910. But before developing this doubt it will be worthwhile to raise the question whether the foregoing elements in the importance of the conference have been overstated. In a sense, they constitute cumulative evidence with all its strength and weakness. On the one hand, the weight of evidence may seem irrefutable when added together: on the other hand, the arguments in favour of particular ingredients may be mutually destructive. Thus, whereas Canon

³² R. Rouse and S. C. Neill (eds.), *op. cit.*, 363.

³³ *Ibid.*, 364.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 379-382.

³⁵ W. R. Hogg, *op. cit.*, 173.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 203ff.

³⁷ R. Lloyd, *op. cit.*, i. 204.

³⁸ The Faith and Order Movement has been described by W. R. Hogg as 'one of Edinburgh's most significant direct results'. *Op. cit.*, 134.

³⁹ B. Mathews, *op. cit.*, 232.

Lloyd—whose allusions to Edinburgh 1910 are admittedly uncritical and sometimes ill-informed—

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claims that its influence on church unity was greater than its influence on missions,⁴⁰ others like S. C. Neill,⁴¹ regard the conference as one hitherto unsurpassed in significance for the missionary enterprise. Again, Silas McBee, an important participant in the conference, discounted what others have magnified, when he admitted that it represented 'only a small part of the Christian world' and was 'not essentially great in its composition', yet claimed that 'the Edinburgh basis and the Edinburgh idea' had 'touched the imagination and won the respect and sympathy of Christian leaders in almost every part of the world'.⁴² It is worthy of note that even the official 'History of the Conference' acknowledged that 'all that was attained in the Conference was that the Societies came into touch with one another, and in so doing realised their underlying unity'. This, added Dr. Robson, 'was the basis of the appointment of the Continuation Committee'.⁴³

Another preliminary comment that needs to be made is that, again and again, when pointing to particular features of the conference which they regard as significant, writers in the Edinburgh tradition acknowledge precedents, but affirm that, at Edinburgh, distinctive use was made of these precedents, or they were combined together in a new way, or their significance was discerned for the first time. Occasionally, indeed, the significance of the conference has been highlighted by an exaggerated contrast of its outlook and work with that which obtained previously. Thus Dr. Arthur J. Brown, chairman of the North American planning committee for Edinburgh 1910, pictured contemporary missionary work as characterised by lack of unity, flexibility, breadth of conception and definiteness of plan, and went as far as to liken the state of the Church Militant to that of Israel in the Book of Judges.⁴⁴

Sense of Urgency

We now come to a consideration of the detailed claims made on behalf of Edinburgh 1910. Its sense of destiny and urgency is something exceedingly difficult to measure and to assess. Other conferences in the series of which Edinburgh was one had met at crucial points in missionary history. That of 1888 celebrated the centenary of modern missions, and the Ecumenical Conference of 1900 met at the opening of a new century. Nor was it altogether unprecedented for missionary conferences to receive messages from heads of State and Church, and to attract wide publicity.⁴⁵ What is undoubtedly true, however, is that Edinburgh 1910 came in the wake of a deeply significant wave of enthusiasm for the missionary enterprise, of which we shall have more to say presently. Furthermore, it was followed by the epoch-making Great War of 1914-1918, which was to have resounding consequences for missions.

⁴⁰ *Op. cit.*, i. 204.

⁴¹ S. C. Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 393.

⁴² S. McBee, *An Eirenic Itinerary*, 1911, 135.

⁴³ *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, ix. 134.

⁴⁴ W. H. T. Gairdner, *op. cit.*, 190.

⁴⁵ The 1900 Ecumenical Missionary Conference was welcomed by the President of the United States and the Governor of New York. *Ecumenical Missionary Conference, New York, 1900*, 2 vols., 1900, ii. 353.

Principles of Representation

The inclusiveness of Edinburgh also calls for comment. No doubt non-AngloSaxons played a larger part in the planning and conduct of the conference than hitherto: the 1888 conference report, for example, was written unashamedly from an Anglo-Saxon point of view.⁴⁶ But it should not be forgotten that no fewer than eighteen continental societies were represented in 1888, and that their characteristic views found a place in the editor's summary.⁴⁷ Again, it is a fact that High Church societies were officially represented for the first time at the 1910

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conference. But earlier conferences were by no means unaware of, or unconcerned with such societies. At the 1878 conference, Bishop Perry, who was a vice-president of S.P.G. as well as of C.M.S., was asked to give some account of S.P.G. work in South Africa.⁴⁸ The High Church societies—and the Salvation Army—were invited to send representatives to the Centenary Conference of 1888, though in vain.⁴⁹ At Edinburgh, it should be stated, their participation was obtained at a price which, as we shall see later, was to have an adverse effect on the very inclusiveness that was so desired.

With regard to the principle by which representation at the conference was allocated to societies according to their financial expenditure on foreign missions, several things must be said. In the first place, although this was new to conferences on foreign missions, it was not entirely novel. The North American planning committee for Edinburgh 1910 specifically acknowledged indebtedness to the procedures of the Madras and Shanghai conferences of missionaries⁵⁰, and it was in fact the 1900 meeting of the S. India missionary conference at Madras that broke new ground by being composed of official delegates formally elected or appointed by participating missions.⁵¹ W. R. Hogg dismisses this by saying that this conference and the 1902 Madras and 1907 Shanghai conferences, which were also composed of officially appointed delegates, were comparatively limited gatherings; and the fact that North American delegates to the massive Ecumenical Conference at New York in 1900 were also officially appointed he regards as a mere expedient to limit attendance.⁵² This latter may be true, but it is equally true of Edinburgh 1910. It seems a little pretentious for Hogg to claim that 'Edinburgh fixed the principle of officially-designated delegates for world Christian gatherings'⁵³, especially as Edinburgh was not in the fullest sense a 'world Christian gathering': Roman Catholics and Orthodox Churchmen were still conspicuous by their absence.

It is also worthy of note that the participants at Edinburgh were still, for the most part, representatives of missionary societies. Even the few nationals from missionary lands who

⁴⁶ J. Johnston (ed.), *Report of the Centenary Conference on the Protestant Missions of the World*, 2 vols., 1888, i. 9.

⁴⁷ *Loc. cit.*

⁴⁸ *Proceedings of the General Conference on Foreign Missions held at the Conference Hall in Mildmay Park, London, in October, 1878, edited by the Secretaries to the Conference*, 1879, 83-85.

⁴⁹ *Report of the Centenary Conference*, i. x, xi.

⁵⁰ Minutes, cited in W. R. Hogg, *op. cit.*, 107; cf. N. Goodall, *op. cit.*, 55.

⁵¹ R. P. Beaver, *Ecumenical Beginnings in Protestant World Mission*, 1962, 85; W. R. Hogg, *op. cit.*, 21-23, 106, 107.

⁵² *Op. cit.*, 139.

⁵³ *Loc. cit.*

were present—eighteen in number⁵⁴—were there by invitation either of societies or the conference executive. The number of members appointed by the British, American and Continental executive committees—no fewer than 101 out of a total of 1,200—raises, incidentally, a minor though not unimportant matter connected with the membership of ecumenical conferences.⁵⁵

Nature and Purpose

With regard to the character of Edinburgh 1910, Temple Gairdner acknowledged in his official account that previous conferences on foreign missions provided precedents, both for an occasion convened for deliberation and consultation, and also for one mainly designed to bring missions before the public eye.⁵⁶ Such acknowledgement of the fact that some previous conferences in the series were not unconcerned with the discussion of missionary policy is rarely made so clearly. It is more usually concealed by the statement that earlier conferences were 'chiefly' informative and educative in character.⁵⁷

Yet there is plenty of evidence to show the considerable extent to which missionary policy and outlook had been discussed. The 1854 conferences in New York and London discussed the Biblical basis of missions and specific matters of

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missionary policy.⁵⁸ The 1860 Conference on Missions not only held public meetings each evening for the stimulation of missionary interest but also brought together 'Directors, Secretaries, and Missionaries of all Societies and Churches... to examine in detail the working of their various missionary agencies, to compare their different plans, and to throw into a common stock the results of (their) valuable experience'. Papers were read and discussed at private meetings on subjects such as 'Missionary Education', 'Native Agency in Foreign Missions', and 'Native Churches'.⁵⁹ The 1878 conference, which was held in public, was more hortatory and discussed missions geographically, but addresses were given and discussion took place on matters such as 'The Increased Co-operation of Missionary Agencies', the establishment of 'new Christian Communities' overseas, and the problems connected with educational work in India.⁶⁰ The 1888 Centenary Conference set itself the task of utilising past experience for the improvement of 'missionary methods abroad and mission management at home', and put in the third place the stimulation of support for the task of worldwide evangelisation.⁶¹ The report of the 1900 Ecumenical Conference, which, more than most, was in the nature of a public demonstration, was nevertheless described by Dr. Robson as 'a valuable treasury of information and argument relating both to the theory and practice of missions'.⁶²

⁵⁴ The presence of nationals at a Missionary Conference was not unprecedented. The Rev. Bahari Lal Singh of Calcutta was among the 125 members of the 1860 Conference. *Conference on Missions held in 1860 at Liverpool*, 1860, 8.

⁵⁵ J. Marcellus Kik, *Ecumenism and the Evangelical*, 1958, 129, 130

⁵⁶ *Op. cit.*, 13.

⁵⁷ So, Dr. G. Robson in *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, ix. 9.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, ix. 3, 4.

⁵⁹ *Conference on Missions... 1860*, 1, *passim*.

⁶⁰ *Conference on Foreign Missions... 1878*, *passim*.

⁶¹ *Report of the Centenary Conference*, I. viii.

⁶² *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, ix. 5.

Not only should the deliberative element in previous conferences be remembered: it should not be forgotten that Edinburgh 1910 made provision for the stimulation of missionary interest. A parallel conference was arranged as 'a school for missionary study and stimulus', with morning addresses, afternoon sectional meetings and evening addresses. A third series of meetings was held in the Tolbooth Assembly Hall, and was thrown open to all and sundry.⁶³ The two sides of Edinburgh 1910 were, however, kept separate.

Just as the consultative character of Edinburgh was not original, so the method of procedure—often regarded as its most distinctive feature—had its lineage. Gairdner frankly acknowledged that the 1902 Madras conference and the 1907 Shanghai conference had appointed special committees to make preparations and carry out investigations. The Shanghai committee had printed and circulated to delegates papers dealing with the subjects to be discussed. Similarly, the Pan-Anglican Congress of 1908 had been preceded during the three years prior to the congress by the circulation of short papers to all 'who desired to prepare their minds for the discussions themselves'.⁶⁴ The difference, in Gairdner's view, was that the preparatory committee for Edinburgh served as a co-ordinating element, and that the chief purpose of the conference was 'study'.⁶⁵ So then, it is a case of little more than a shift in emphasis. Edinburgh laid more stress on deliberation and consultation than previous conferences in the series had done, but there was no question of taking decisions which would be binding on individuals, societies or churches. Indeed, Edinburgh 1910 was criticised at the time on the ground that 'no wide organisation exists to perpetuate its mission by banding together those who were influenced by its spirit'.⁶⁶

Results

The formation of a Continuation Committee was, however, an attempt to supply this need. It was certainly an unprecedented step. But there already existed

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well-tried machinery for co-operation on the part of mission executives. From 1819 the secretaries of foreign mission boards with headquarters in London met monthly during the winter for consultation and the planning of joint action. The three great conferences of 1860, 1878 and 1888 had their origin in this London Secretaries' Association which, although it possessed neither executive power nor full-time officers, was an instrument of co-operation both before and after Edinburgh 1910.⁶⁷ On the continent, the Northern Lutheran Missions Conference (1863) and the Continental Missions Conference (1866), which brought together representatives of continental missionary societies quadrennially, pioneered co operation. The *Ausschuss* broke new ground in 1885 when it was formed to serve as a standing committee of German Protestant Missionary Societies. The General Dutch Missionary Conference was formed in 1887.⁶⁸ The Foreign Missions Conference of North America did not appear until

⁶³ *Ibid.*, ix. 13, 14.

⁶⁴ *Op. cit.*, 17.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 17, 18.

⁶⁶ *Evangelical Christendom*, Jan.-Feb. 1911, 8, 9.

⁶⁷ W. R. Hogg, *op. cit.*, 51-53.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 53-74.

1893, but, following the example of the German *Ausschuss*, a Committee of Reference and Counsel was set up in 1907 and rapidly grew in effectiveness.⁶⁹

The Continuation Committee did, of course, bring together missionary statesmen from more than one area, and enabled men from America, Britain and the Continent to confer together. But the outbreak of war in 1914 brought it to an untimely end as a piece of international machinery, though it continued in name until 1921. It is significant that, despite this, international missionary co-operation was able to continue. The machinery used included the Foreign Missions Conference of North America which was pre-1910 in origin, as well as the Conference of British Missionary Societies which was post-1910.⁷⁰

During its brief active life, the Continuation Committee gave birth in 1912 to *The International Review of Missions*, a quarterly review for the study of missions. This, however, was not entirely without precedent. Three-quarters of a century before, the Evangelical Alliance had founded its monthly organ, *Evangelical Christendom*, which provided remarkably comprehensive coverage of missionary news. The General Conferences of the Alliance, held every few years from 1851, included thorough surveys of the missionary situation, e.g. the one given by Prof. Christlieb of Bonn at the Basle Conference of 1879 ran to 164 pages in the Report. Such surveys, which often advocated an 'advanced and forward-looking policy' have been acknowledged by Miss R. Rouse as anticipations of those in *The International Review of Missions*.⁷¹ Half a century before 1910, the 1860 Conference on Missions had discussed the need for a Quarterly Review of Missions, and about the same time, Alexander Duff as convener of the Foreign Missions Committee of the Free Church of Scotland had advocated the publication of a Missionary Quarterly Review.⁷² In 1877, the Rev. Royal G. Wilder had founded in America *The Missionary Review of the World* which provided well-nigh worldwide coverage.⁷³

The other important initiative taken by the Continuation Committee was the sending of John R. Mott to East Asia. This had important results, but without seeking in any way to depreciate the importance of the contribution made by Mott, it must be said that the National Christian Councils which were ultimately formed, did not spring into existence *ex nihilo*. This has been admitted⁷⁴, and it must be underlined. To imply that missions in the Far East and elsewhere were in a condition of disarray, that little or no progress had been made, or even interest shown, in the development of 'national' churches, and that Mott's tour brought order out of chaos, does not seem to be warranted.

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⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 173.

⁷¹ R. Rouse and S. C. Neill (eds.), *op. cit.*, 322.

⁷² *Conference on Missions... 1860*, 64ff, W. Paton, Alexander Duff. *Pioneer of Missionary Education*, 1923, 183. Duff also pleaded for a Missionary Institute, and for a Chair of Missions which was established for a time and which he himself held. No wonder one of his biographers remarked that in many ways Duff would have been far more at home at Edinburgh 1910 than he was in his own generation. *Ibid.*, 184. Cf. G. Smith, *The Life of Alexander Duff, D.D., LL.D.*, 2 vols., 1879, ii. 414-423.

⁷³ R. P. Wilder, *The Great Commission*, (1936), 15. In 1887 the editorship was taken over by A. T. Pierson, that tireless evangelical missionary enthusiast, who is said by his son to have set a new standard for missionary periodicals. D. L. Pierson, *Arthur T. Pierson*, 1912, 199ff.

⁷⁴ E.g. by Prof. Latourette in *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, 379. Cf. R. P. Beaver, *op. cit.*, 36, 37.

Almost, if not quite, from the beginning of the modern missionary movement, the necessity of working towards 'an autonomous Church, freed from the leading-strings of missionaries' had been felt by missionaries and mission boards.⁷⁵ Indeed, it has been said that the endeavour to build up a self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating Church 'may be called, with considerable justification, the most characteristic missionary attitude of the "Great Century" of foreign missions'.⁷⁶ Missionary statesmen like Henry Venn, Rufus Anderson and Gustav Warneck addressed themselves to the problem,⁷⁷ and endeavoured to translate theory into action.⁷⁸ At the 1860 Conference on Missions, several speakers showed their awareness of the need to work from the very beginning towards a 'native church' which would be able to stand on its own feet—and make progress.⁷⁹ This matter was discussed at the 1878 Conference where it was revealed that in some areas considerable progress was being made. Thus the Rev. Dr. J. M. Ferris, corresponding secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church in America, reported that the Presbyterian Church in Japan, the work of the American Reformed Church and American and Scotch United Presbyterians, had been organised in one body: 'This is an independent Japanese organisation, a self-governing Church. The Missionaries are only advising members. The Missionary Boards give only counsel and help. The Church is controlled by the Japanese members and pastors'.⁸⁰

There were set backs; the problems raised by the denominational approach were many; and they were not always tackled energetically. But on the other hand, overlapping was avoided to a considerable extent by the practice of comity⁸¹; united missionary conferences on the field⁸² made for co-operation in practice; and steps were being taken to bring about more radical measures. In China, for example, Dr. Thomas Cochrane initiated a movement to create a nation-wide federation of churches. A paper read by him to the Peking Missionary Conference of 1902 led to the appointment of a Committee on Union. This circularised every known missionary in China with reference to such matters as a Union Hymn Book, a common designation for churches and chapels, common terms for God and the Holy Spirit, and a federation of all Protestant Churches in China. A Conference on Federation met in Peking in 1905, and the matter was referred to the Centenary Missionary Conference at Shanghai in 1907. This passed a resolution calling for a 'Christian Federation of China'. Though nothing materialised on a national scale, provincial councils and associations were formed, and the ground was thoroughly prepared for Mott's tour and conferences, and for the creation of the China Continuation Committee in 1913.⁸³ To some extent at least, the same was true of India where Mott's National Conference of 1912 took the place of the Decennial Mission Conference which was due that year in the series that had commenced in 1872.⁸⁴

Even the International Missionary Council, most important though among the more remote of the results of Edinburgh 1910, was not a new idea. Gustav Warneck, in a paper read to the 1888 Centenary Conference in London had urged the formation of a 'Standing Central

⁷⁵ P. Beyerhaus and H. Lefever, *The Responsible Church and the Foreign Mission*, 1964, 10.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 25ff, 45ff.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 65ff.

⁷⁹ *Conference on Missions... 1860*, 49, 224, 227, 285ff.

⁸⁰ *Conference on Foreign Missions... 1878*, 244; cf. 192-194, 198, 200, 267. Cf. also *Report of the Centenary Conference*, ii. 360ff; *Ecumenical Missionary Conference*, ii. 289ff.

⁸¹ R. P. Beaver, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

⁸² W. R. Hogg, *op. cit.*, 16ff.

⁸³ R. P. Beaver, *op. cit.*, 119-121; cf. F. French, *Thomas Cochrane, Pioneer and Missionary Statesman*, 1956, 77.

⁸⁴ W. R. Hogg, *op. cit.*, 152.

Committee of Protestant Missionary Agencies', with headquarters in London, composed of delegates from all societies and with a related missionary conference in each Protestant nation.⁸⁵ There seems to be no evidence that his proposals had any influence on the formation of the I.M.C., though this was 'almost an exact embodiment of his plans'.⁸⁶

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Finally, with reference to Edinburgh's influence upon the development of wider ecumenicity, that conference certainly played a part in preparing such men as J. R. Mott and J. H. Oldham for future tasks in the service of the Ecumenical Movement. But they had already gained preliminary experience in the various student movements with which they had been closely associated. And, if Brent was fired with the idea of a Faith and Order Conference at Edinburgh, Mott had been deeply influenced by Moody at the Mount Hermon Conference⁸⁷, and Söderblom, who was to play a leading role in the Life and Work Movement, was also impressed by Moody and his Northfield Conferences.⁸⁸ But this is to anticipate. To those who claim that Edinburgh contributed to the Ecumenical Movement the three vital principles of officially appointed delegates, broad denominational inclusiveness and willingness to embark on co-operative enterprises of an essential nature without demanding prior theological agreement, it must here suffice to say that, as we have already seen, the first had already been used on the mission field, and the others were drawn from the practice of the Student Christian Movement.⁸⁹

A NEGLECTED FACTOR IN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EDINBURGH 1910

It is doubtful whether the time is ripe for a definitive evaluation of Edinburgh 1910. The movement in which it is set is still in too great a state of flux. It is true that remarkable developments have taken place. A World Council of Churches has been constituted, and the International Missionary Council which, as we have seen, grew indirectly out of the Edinburgh conference, has been affiliated to the World Council. But the implications of this remain to be worked out. The total impact of Edinburgh 1910 upon the world mission of the Church is not yet clear.

In the meantime, however, attention may be drawn to one aspect of the importance of the conference which seems to have been generally overlooked. This is its effect upon evangelical participation in the ecumenical movement. A recent editorial in the magazine *Christianity Today* has claimed that 'a movement of Christian unity that began in evangelical transdenominational zeal to evangelise the world has resulted in a theological conglomerate in which evangelism is muffled and the evangel confused'.⁹⁰ To what extent is it true that modern ecumenism arose out of evangelicalism, and what effect did the World Missionary Conference of 1910 have upon the process by which many evangelicals became estranged from this movement, as it developed in the twentieth century? It is to a consideration of such questions that we now turn.

⁸⁵ R. P. Beaver, *op. cit.*, 69.

⁸⁶ R. Rouse and S. C. Neill (eds.), *op. cit.*, 363.

⁸⁷ B. Mathews, *op. cit.*, 315, 316.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 168, 169.

⁸⁹ W. R. Hogg, *op. cit.*, 139.

⁹⁰ 8th October, 1965, 35. Cf. L. Lyall, *A Passion for the Impossible. The China Inland Mission 1865-1965*, 1965, 76.

The debt owed by the ecumenical movement to nineteenth century evangelicalism is immense, and it will not be out of place to examine some aspects of this debt, before going on to consider the reactions of evangelicals to Edinburgh 1910.

The Missionary Movement

It is common knowledge that the modern movement towards Christian unity arose largely—though not entirely—out of the missionary enterprise of the nineteenth century. Writers of all schools of thought, both now,⁹¹ and then,⁹² agree. It is equally clear, though not perhaps as widely acknowledged, that both the missionary enterprise and the movement towards Christian unity that grew out of it were basically evangelical, and to a large extent the offspring of the evangelical

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awakening of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries⁹³. In the opinion of W. M. Horton, the 'first and most far-reaching answer' to the question of what made Edinburgh possible is 'the Evangelical Movement which renewed the life of the British and American churches between 1738 and 1910'.⁹⁴ Several writers have been even more specific and have drawn a connection by way of the 1860 Conference on Missions between the 1859 evangelical awakening and both Edinburgh 1910 and the International Missionary Council.⁹⁵

The Evangelical Alliance

Further, there can be no question that the Evangelical Alliance made a remarkable contribution to the promotion of Christian unity. Its organ, Evangelical Christendom, was making no idle boast when it claimed in 1911 that the Alliance's long service in the cause of Christian union had given an impetus to the World Missionary Conference.⁹⁶ More recently, it has been described as 'the principal seed plot of the nascent impulse toward Christian unity'⁹⁷ and as 'a testing laboratory for the many theories on Christian unity then current'.⁹⁸ The conference which founded the Alliance in August, 1846, was a phenomenon more remarkable in some respects than Edinburgh 1910. Eight hundred delegates assembled, drawn from fifty-two different churches. Despite the primitive travel conditions of the time, no fewer than 6 per cent came from the continent, and 10 per cent from America. In its subsequent international

⁹¹ M. A. C. Warren, *op. cit.*, 145; H. P. Van Dusen, *One Great Ground of Hope. Christian Missions and Christian Unity*, 1961, 16, 46; N. Goodall, *Christian Missions and Social Ferment*, 1964, 88; R. Lloyd, *op. cit.*, i. 222; J. C. Pollock, *The Keswick Story*, 132.

⁹² J. R. Mott, in a report of 1906, cited in B. Mathews, *op. cit.*, 223; *Evangelical Christendom*, 1911, 8, 172.

⁹³ H. P. Van Dusen, *op. cit.*, 14, 15; *idem*, *World Christianity: Yesterday; Today; Tomorrow*, 1948, 54, 55; K. S. Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, 7 vols., 1947, iv. 39; cf. R. P. Beaver, *op. cit.*, 18-22.

⁹⁴ Cited, without page reference, from *Towards a Reborn Church*, in E. Duff, *The Social Thought of the World Council of Churches*, 1956, 20n.

⁹⁵ J. E. Orr, *The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain*, 1949, 223, 224; K. S. Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, iv. 105; M. A. C. Warren, *op. cit.*, 39.

⁹⁶ 'Notes', Jan.-Feb. 1911, 3.

⁹⁷ H. P. Van Dusen, *World Christianity*, 86.

⁹⁸ J. B. A. Kessler, Jr., *The Evangelical Alliance and the Problem of Christian Unity* (Unpublished dissertation, Utrecht, n.d.), 27.

conferences, its official organ, and its representations on behalf of religious liberty, the Evangelical Alliance, despite certain limitations, expressed a remarkably broad ecumenicity.⁹⁹

Conference Movements

Similarly, the various conference movements of the second half of the nineteenth century played a part in the furthering of the ecumenical idea. It was in part with a view to supplementing the work of the Evangelical Alliance¹⁰⁰ that an evangelical clergyman, the Rev. W. Pennefather, vicar of Christ Church, Barnet, called a conference for 26-29 August, 1856, 'to promote personal holiness, brotherly love, and increased interest in the work of the Lord'.¹⁰¹ Members of twelve different churches were present at the conference, which included a communion service 'according to the form of the Church of England' that was attended by 120 persons.¹⁰² Similar conferences, attended by growing numbers, were held annually at Barnet until Pennefather's removal to St. Jude's, Mildmay Park in 1864, when they were held at Mildmay.¹⁰³

The Barnet and Mildmay conferences attracted evangelicals almost exclusively. A series of conferences, basically evangelical, but more eclectic in attendance, was held at Broadlands, Romsey, the home of Lord Mount Temple, almost annually from 1874 to 1888.¹⁰⁴ These were necessarily somewhat restricted in social character and in numbers of people attending, but at the first the suggestion was made of a conference at a venue where larger numbers could be accommodated. The result was the Oxford conference of September, 1874, at which approximately 1,000 were present,¹⁰⁵ and the Brighton Convention of Spring, 1875, when an estimated 8,000 visitors invaded the town for conference meetings.¹⁰⁶

Whereas the Barnet and Mildmay conferences remained comparatively small, and the Broadlands conferences were select and tended to become somewhat

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exotic,¹⁰⁷ and those held at Oxford and Brighton were ephemeral, the Keswick Convention which commenced in 1875 was a stable factor of considerable importance for both evangelical and general ecumenicity. The first Keswick convention was convened by Canon Harford-Battersby, vicar of St. John's, Keswick, and Robert Wilson, a Quaker from Great Broughton who had attended the Oxford and Brighton conferences and who at Brighton invited 'Christians of every section of the Church of God' to visit Keswick for three days of 'union meetings for the promotion of practical holiness' commencing 29 June, 1875.¹⁰⁸ The conference became an annual event which served to bring together Christians from varying

⁹⁹ See R. Rouse and S. C. Neill (eds.), *op. cit.*, 318-324; G. J. Slosser, *Christian Unity*, 1929, 174-187.

¹⁰⁰ R. Braithwaite, *The Life and Letters of Rev. William Pennefather, B.A.* (1878), 284n.

¹⁰¹ Letter of invitation, cited in *ibid.*, 305.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 306.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 385.

¹⁰⁴ E. V. Jackson, *The Life that is Life Indeed. Reminiscences of the Broadlands Conferences*, 1910. High, Low and Broad Churchmen and nonconformists—even Swedenborgians—were said to have attended. *Ibid.*, 2, 32.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 18; *Record of the Convention for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness held at Brighton, May 29th to June 7th, 1875*, (1875).

¹⁰⁷ E. V. Jackson, *op. cit.*, 18.

¹⁰⁸ J. C. Pollock, *op. cit.*, 33.

ecclesiastical backgrounds for the exposition of Scriptural teaching on 'practical holiness'. Indeed it was claimed in 1907 that 'during Keswick week, High Churchmen and Low Churchmen, Churchmen and Nonconformists, find, if spiritual men, that the things on which they honestly differ are as nothing compared to that living Unity in Christ which there finds its pre-eminence'.¹⁰⁹ Eugene Stock, who besides being the historian of the C.M.S. was 'virtual creator' of the missionary interest which became integral to Keswick,¹¹⁰ was making no idle boast when he claimed at Edinburgh in 1910 that evangelicals 'have been accustomed all along to enter into common conference and co-operation with our separated brethren'.¹¹¹

Student Movements

A development which became informally associated with Keswick—the Christian movement among students—has been described, with Christian missions, as one of the two developments that were 'the principal precursors and source springs of present-day ecumenical Christianity'.¹¹² Indeed, it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that the movement towards Christian unity around 1910 was virtually the student movement 'writ large'.¹¹³ It has even been suggested that 1895 would be more suitable than 1910 as the key date of the modern ecumenical movement, since it was in that year that the World Student Christian Federation was founded.^{113*} The various branches of the student movement were indubitably evangelical, having links not only with Keswick but also with the evangelistic campaigns and work of D. L. Moody, and to some extent with the Evangelical Alliance.

The Young Men's Christian Association which was to play an important part in fostering the student movements, and was indeed one of them, had close links with the Evangelical Alliance. No fewer than 50 of the 500 registered delegates to the 1854 Evangelical Alliance conference in Paris also participated in the first world conference of Y.M.C.As., which was held in Paris just prior to the E.A. conference, and several Y.M.C.A. leaders were also secretaries of E.A. branches.¹¹⁴ Jean Paul Cook, one of its founders, said in 1854 of the association of Y.M.C.As. that it would 'accomplish for young men, and in a very practical matter, all that which the Evangelical Alliance has proposed to do since it came into existence ten (*sic*) years ago'.¹¹⁵

The Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union, which was organised in 1877,¹¹⁶ benefited from the Broadlands conferences.¹¹⁷ It was enormously stimulated by the evangelistic missions of D. L. Moody which revolutionised the student movements, not only at Cambridge, but also at Oxford¹¹⁸ and elsewhere. In Scotland, Henry Drummond was fired by

¹⁰⁹ A. E. Barnes-Lawrence, 'Clergy and Ministers at Keswick', C. F. Harford (ed.), *The Keswick Convention. Its Message, its Methods and its Men* (1907), 191.

¹¹⁰ J. C. Pollock, *op. cit.*, 135n.; E. Stock, *My Recollections*, 1909, 203-207.

¹¹¹ *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, viii, 214.

¹¹² H. P. Van Dusen, *One Great Ground of Hope*, 120, 121.

¹¹³ R. Rouse and S. C. Neill (eds.), *op. cit.*, 341. For the part played in the ecumenical movement at Edinburgh 1910 and subsequently by men trained in the student movements, see R. Rouse, *op. cit.*, 129-131.

^{113*} H-R. Weber, *op. cit.*, 54 and n.

¹¹⁴ C. P. Shedd, *et alia*, *History of the World's Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations*, 1955, 113, 114.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 136.

¹¹⁶ J. C. Pollock, *A Cambridge Movement*, 1953, 41-44.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 36-38.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 71.

Moody's example and followed up his successful work among the students of Edinburgh and Glasgow.¹¹⁹ The announce-

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ment in autumn 1884 of the news that seven outstanding Cambridge men—the Cambridge Seven—had dedicated themselves to evangelical missionary work created something of a sensation whose spiritual results were deepened by the visits paid by the seven to other universities.¹²⁰ It is noteworthy, as providing additional evidence of the evangelical nature of the student movements, that the final farewell meeting of the Cambridge Seven before they left for China to work under the China Inland Mission—that most evangelical of missions—was arranged by the Y.M.C.A. specially for young men, and was chaired by George Williams.¹²¹

A close link existed between the student movements and the Keswick convention. This, and the debt owed by the one to the other, has not only been claimed by J. C. Pollock,¹²² but has also been admitted by Canon Tissington Tatlow.¹²³ Students were invited—and aided—to join house-parties at Keswick, and from 1893 to 1898 ran their own camp at Keswick immediately preceding the convention, most of them remaining for the convention meetings.¹²⁴ Keswick played an important part in the early spiritual development of men like Temple Gairdner, Douglas Thornton and Donald Fraser who became student leaders.¹²⁵ It was at Keswick that decisive steps in the development of student movements were discussed or decided—in 1893 the formation of the Inter-University Christian Union (re-named the British College Christian Union in 1894 and the Student Christian Movement of Great Britain and Ireland in 1898); in 1894 the adoption of the 'watchword' of the American Student Volunteers, 'The Evangelisation of the World in this Generation'; and in 1895 the formation of the World Student Christian Federation.¹²⁶

Furthermore, the student movements in America, which influenced the student movements in Britain, and which produced ecumenical leaders of the calibre of J. R. Mott, were unashamedly evangelical and were deeply influenced by evangelicals such as D. L. Moody.

This is clearly seen in the early history of the Student Volunteer Movement. It was D. L. Moody who in 1885 convened the Northfield Conference at which Dr. A. T. Pierson, the noted evangelical, delivered an impassioned address and called for a world conference.¹²⁷ Moody was stirred, the conference issued an 'Appeal to Disciples everywhere', and the first of an annual series of conferences for students was arranged for 1886.¹²⁸ This 'Mount Hermon

¹¹⁹ G. Adam Smith, *The Life of Henry Drummond*⁶, 1902, 62ff.

¹²⁰ J. C. Pollock, *A Cambridge Movement*, 71ff; *Idem*, *The Cambridge Seven*, 1955.

¹²¹ *Idem*, *A Cambridge Movement*, 84.

¹²² *The Keswick Story*, 113, 116; cf. J. Stuart-Holden, 'Young Men at Keswick', C. F. Harford (ed.), *op. cit.*, 207, 208.

¹²³ *The Story of the Student Christian Movement (1880-1930)*, 1933, 61, 62.

¹²⁴ J. C. Pollock, *The Keswick Story*, 114.

¹²⁵ T. Tatlow, *op. cit.*, 61; J. C. Pollock, *The Keswick Story*, 114.

¹²⁶ J. C. Pollock, *op. cit.*, 115, 116.

¹²⁷ D. L. Pierson, *op. cit.*, 192ff.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 196ff; R. P. Wilder, *The Great Commission. The Missionary Response of the Student Volunteer Movements in North America and Europe; some Personal Reminiscences* (1936), 20ff. Cf. J. C. Pollock, 'Dwight L. Moody-Grandfather of Ecumenism?' *Christianity Today*, 23 November, 1962, 29, 30.

Conference' gave what Miss Rouse has called 'a new stream of life and power'¹²⁹ to the student movements of America, such as the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A.,¹³⁰ and the Interseminary Missionary Alliance, whose first meeting had been convened in 1880.¹³¹ Among the 251 students (drawn from 89 college Y.M.C.As.) who attended the Mount Hermon conference in 1886, was Robert P. Wilder of Princeton.¹³² A missionary's son, he had already formed the Princeton Foreign Missionary Society, as the result of an address delivered by A. J. Gordon at the 1883 conference of the Interseminary Missionary Alliance.¹³³ During the autumn of 1885 and the spring of 1886, Wilder and his sister had been praying for 1,000 missionary volunteers from the colleges of America.¹³⁴ At Mount Hermon, Wilder secured permission from Moody to hold a meeting addressed by ten students representing ten countries. As a result, no fewer than 100 students volunteered for missionary service. Among this number was John R. Mott,¹³⁵ whose commitment to the service of Christ had followed an address by J. E. K. Studd, brother of one of the Cambridge Seven who had visited America in 1885,¹³⁶ Mott was profoundly influenced by a missionary address given by A. T. Pierson at Mount Hermon, and

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signed the paper which read: 'We are willing and desirous, God permitting, to become foreign missionaries'.¹³⁷ After the conference, Wilder toured the colleges of America in company with John N. Forman, one of the original Princeton volunteers (who had not been at Mount Hermon¹³⁸), following a tradition of tours which seems to have been established by the Cambridge Seven.¹³⁹ During 1886 and 1887, Wilder and Forman visited no fewer than 162 institutions, in many cases using openings made for them by Wishard and Ober, student Y.M.C.A. secretaries, and enrolled no fewer than 2,106 volunteers, including S. M. Zwemer, the celebrated missionary to the Muslim world, and R. E. Speer, who was to play a part in ecumenical history.¹⁴⁰

Thus was launched the Student Volunteer Missionary Union which was to recruit large numbers of students as evangelical missionaries and was to become a powerful force in the student world on both sides of the Atlantic. The American S.V.M.U. was organised in 1888 under the chairmanship of J. R. Mott,¹⁴¹ who had recently become secretary of the Intercollegiate Y.M.C.A.¹⁴² At its first Quadrennial Convention, held 26 February to 1 March 1891, Mott was able to report that no fewer than 6,000 students had volunteered for missionary service and at least 320 had already sailed¹⁴³.

¹²⁹ R. Rouse, *op. cit.*, 92.

¹³⁰ The intercollegiate Y.M.C.A. movement in America dates from 1877. W. R. Hogg, *op. cit.*, 82.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 83, 84.

¹³² R. P. Wilder, *op. cit.*, 20; B. Mathews, *op. cit.*, 58.

¹³³ R. P. Wilder, *op. cit.*, 14, 15.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹³⁶ B. Mathews, *op. cit.*, 47, 48.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹³⁸ R. P. Wilder, *op. cit.*, 23.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 22. The story of the Cambridge Seven became well-known in America through a book by Benjamin Broomhall of the C.I.M., of which Wilder ordered 1,000 copies in 1887. *Ibid.*, 49.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 24, 25.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 41ff.

¹⁴² B. Mathews, *op. cit.*, 81-90.

¹⁴³ R. P. Wilder, *op. cit.*, 59.

From America, the Student Volunteer Movement spread to England through the visit of R. P. Wilder in 1891 on his way to India.¹⁴⁴ Moody provided Wilder with fourteen letters of introduction, and Eugene Stock, one of the numerous leading evangelicals whom he thus met, advised him to attend the Keswick Convention. There he spoke at the missionary meeting, and as a result was invited to address meetings at the universities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Cambridge and Oxford.¹⁴⁵ Early in 1892 it was agreed that a Students' Foreign Missionary Union which had already emerged in London as a result of a short visit by John Forman in 1887,¹⁴⁶ should be reorganised, together with similar unions in other universities, to form a Student Volunteer Missionary Union. The Rev. A. T. Polhill-Turner, one of the Cambridge Seven, then home on furlough, was appointed its first travelling secretary.¹⁴⁷

By 1896 the Student Volunteer Missionary Union in Britain was strong enough to hold a huge Student Missionary Conference at Liverpool. The idea was that of Donald Fraser, who had been claimed for the cause of missions by Wilder's address at Keswick in 1891, who had served the S.V.M.U. as travelling secretary, and who was mainly responsible for organising the conference.¹⁴⁸ Among the speakers were A. T. Pierson from America, F. B. Meyer and other Keswick speakers, and C. T. Studd of the Cambridge Seven.¹⁴⁹ It was a thoroughly evangelical conference which formally accepted the American watchword, 'The Evangelisation of the world in this Generation',¹⁵⁰ and published its report under the stirring title, *Make Jesus King*.

There were similar repercussions on the continent,¹⁵¹ but enough has been said to give some idea of the massive contribution of evangelical Christianity to ecumenism. The missionary movement, which it had largely initiated and sustained, created much of the drive for unity; the Evangelical Alliance and the various conference movements had demonstrated the existence of a basic unity which can override lesser disunities; the student movements, which were of evangelical origin, not only gave further impetus to the missionary enterprise

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but also drew together men and women into a fellowship that transcended denominational loyalties.

EVANGELICAL NATURE OF THESE MOVEMENTS

Attempts have been made to discount such claims. Thus it has been asserted that 'evangelical' was not a party name in the mission field, and that 'the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches were usually the only ones excluded from the designation'.¹⁵² But inasfar as this is

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 65ff.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 72-74.

¹⁴⁶ R. Rouse, *op. cit.*, 55.

¹⁴⁷ R. P. Wilder, *op. cit.*, 73ff.

¹⁴⁸ A. R. Fraser, *Donald Fraser of Livingstonia*, 1934, 31.

¹⁴⁹ E. Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, iii. 655; 'Make Jesus King', *The Report of the International Students' Missionary Conference*. Liverpool. January 1-5, 1896 (1896), , vii-xii.

¹⁵⁰ The executive committee had been considering its adoption for three years. R. P. Wilder, *op. cit.*, 78.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 91ff; A. R. Fraser, *op. cit.*, 36-38

¹⁵² R. P. Beaver, *op. cit.*, 32.

true, it is surely because non-evangelical doctrines were so rarely propagated overseas, at any rate till well on into the nineteenth century. At the 1878 Conference on Missions, for example, it was reported of the S.P.G. as well as of the L.M.S. mission at Cuddapah, India, that 'the Gospel was faithfully preached to the people'¹⁵³ (though this was not claimed for all S.P.G. work at that time).¹⁵⁴ As the century progressed, the High Church attitude hardened, and, indeed, sometimes frustrated the practice of comity.¹⁵⁵

The Evangelical Alliance, was, of course, evangelical! Doctrinal aberrations within its ranks received fairly short shrift.¹⁵⁶ With the partial exception of Broadlands, the conferences were unashamedly evangelical, and the efforts of Canon Tatlow to show that Keswick later became 'less representative in character' than it was c. 1891 hardly square with his dismissal of Keswick as 'one particular school of thought', nor with his assertion that the platform of the students' conferences at Keswick (1893-1898) was broader than that of the Convention.¹⁵⁷ This further claim¹⁵⁸ is equally dubious. The student movements may have been inarticulate on many issues which were later to arise and cause tensions and separations, but there should be no question that in origin, and insofar as they were articulate in the early days, they were thoroughly evangelical.¹⁵⁹ It is significant that Miss Rouse says of R. P. Wilder who continued to work with the World Student Christian Fellowship after many evangelicals had parted company from it: 'His theology never altered and was decidedly conservative'.¹⁶⁰

Changes did take place in the student movements as well as in the wider world. For example, the shift in theological ideas due to the emergence of the 'Higher Criticism' became widespread before the end of the nineteenth century. The Evangelical Alliance took measures to stem the tide. Special meetings were held in 1888 and again in 1906; an 'Evangelical Alliance Tractarian Movement' published counter-blasts by men of the calibre of James Orr; and the Council reported 'unswerving adherence to the original basis of the Alliance'.¹⁶¹ Yet the E.A. itself did not escape altogether unscathed. At its 1911 annual conference in Dublin, the Rev. H. Rodgers suggested that loyalty to the Person and claims of Christ as revealed in Holy Scripture was a sufficient basis for Christian unity,¹⁶² and a new and briefer form of membership was introduced in 1912 'in order to establish comprehensiveness without compromise in the Membership of the Alliance'.¹⁶³ In America, Josiah Strong, General Secretary 1885-1898, became a zealous advocate of a full-blooded 'Social Gospel', and virtually sabotaged the American branch of the E.A., causing it to die on its feet.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵³ *Conference on Missions... 1878*, 122.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 84.

¹⁵⁵ R. P. Beaver, *op. cit.*, 30, 236, 237.

¹⁵⁶ *Evangelical Christendom*, 1868, 33; 1870, 100.

¹⁵⁷ *Op. cit.*, 22n, 61, 45 respectively.

¹⁵⁸ Also made by Donald Fraser. A. R. Fraser, *op. cit.*, 26.

¹⁵⁹ According to a memorandum by Nettie Dunn Clark, a member of the first committee of S.V.M.U. in America, 'no Biblical criticism had then assailed the students'. Cited in R. P. Wilder, *op. cit.*, 47. Cf. D. Johnson (ed.), *A Brief History of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students*, 1964, 37-40. Even Tatlow admits that the student movement in England originated 'in evangelical circles'. *Op. cit.*, 387.

¹⁶⁰ R. Rouse, *op. cit.*, 167.

¹⁶¹ J. B. A. Kessler Jnr., *op. cit.*, 76ff.

¹⁶² Various contributors, *The Problem of Unity*, 1911, 108-110.

¹⁶³ *Annual Report of the Evangelical Alliance, 1911-1912*, 6, 7; J. B. A. Kessler, Jnr., *op. cit.*, 79, 80. The revised form, which appears to have been used alongside the existing one, subsequently fell into disuse.

¹⁶⁴ R. Rouse and S. C. Neill (eds.), *op. cit.*, 255, 256; W. S. Mooneyham (ed.), *The Dynamics of Christian Unity*, 1963, 97.

Similarly, new ideas soon began to appear in the student movements. This is the grain of truth in the assertion that they did not originate in any single school of thought. The 'advanced views in relation to biblical scholarship' to which Tatlow refers,¹⁶⁵ produced a broadening effect welcomed by men like Donald Fraser¹⁶⁶,

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but not by others¹⁶⁷. Indeed, 'the increasing hospitality being given to other theological schools of thought and the bolder experiments in comprehending within the one organisation several radically different ecclesiastical traditions'¹⁶⁸ was the cause of the disaffiliation, by mutual agreement, of the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union from the Student Christian Movement,¹⁶⁹ and ultimately to the emergence of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship of Evangelical Unions as a parallel movement claiming to remain true to the original evangelical basis of the student movements.

EVANGELICAL REACTIONS TO EDINBURGH 1910

In view of their record, it is no cause for surprise that evangelicals welcomed the idea of another conference on missions. They played a part in the Edinburgh Conference,¹⁷⁰ and their initial reactions were by no means unfavourable. At Edinburgh, Bishop Handley Moule spoke enthusiastically both of the conference itself and of the proposed Continuation Committee.¹⁷¹ Despite certain reservations, the annual report of the Evangelical Alliance for 1910-1911 described the conference as 'an impressive spectacle of Christian love and unity, and the startingpoint for co-operation, hitherto unattained, among Foreign Missionary Societies'¹⁷². As for Keswick, the Trustees took the unprecedented step in 1913 of allowing J. H. Oldham, secretary of the Continuation Committee, to give a lengthy review of the world missionary situation in place of the normal series of short talks at the missionary meeting.¹⁷³

Nevertheless, all was not well. The desire for inclusiveness, which had appeared in E.A. and had won the day in S.C.M., triumphed at Edinburgh—though the victory proved to be a Pyrrhic one. It soon became clear that the method by which the promoters of Edinburgh were seeking to foster unity in the Church was the very opposite of the one pursued by evangelicals. The sense of unity enjoyed by the latter stemmed from their agreement in the basic areas of truth. In their view, unity was the essential basis for joint activity, not the outcome of it. True, an evangelical like W. Y. Fullerton, who was a member of the Edinburgh Commission for the Promotion of Co-operation and Unity, had been 'converted' and could declare at the 1911 annual conference of the E.A.: 'It has been wrought into the fabric of my being this year that we must co-operate before we agree. We must co-operate before we settle

¹⁶⁵ *Op. cit.*, 45. Cf. R. Rouse, *op. cit.*, 85.

¹⁶⁶ A. R. Fraser, *op. cit.*, 215.

¹⁶⁷ W. M. Miller, Jr., *Evangelism among University Students in the Non-Communist and Non-Roman Catholic World 1960-1962* (Unpublished thesis, Princeton, 1964), 117. Cf. T. Tatlow, *op. cit.*, 387.

¹⁶⁸ D. Johnson (ed.), *op. cit.*, 40.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 43, 44; J. C. Pollock, *A Cambridge Movement*, ch. xiii.; T. Tatlow, *op. cit.*, 383.

¹⁷⁰ The E.A. was represented at Edinburgh by Lord Kinnaird, its Vice-President and Chairman. *Annual Report of the Evangelical Alliance for 1910-1911*, 9. Prominent members such as W. Y. Fullerton and H. W. Webb-Peploe were also present.

¹⁷¹ *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, viii. 207, 208.

¹⁷² *Op. cit.* 9.

¹⁷³ J. C. Pollock, *The Keswick Story*, 132.

all our doctrinal or ecclesiastical differences. We can settle them after we have united, and we will settle them a great deal easier afterwards than before'¹⁷⁴; but this was unusual. *Evangelical Christendom*, the organ of E.A., re-affirmed in its Jan.-Feb. 1911 number that 'the first great task for us is the union of Reformed Christendom on a Gospel basis, and this can only be brought about by the conscious prayerful effort of all who know the truth in Jesus Christ'.¹⁷⁵

Edinburgh 1910 worked the other way round. Imbued by the ideal of inclusiveness and the method of interdenominationalism, the conveners made an agreement with the High Churchmen in accordance with which the latter came to Edinburgh in return for certain concessions which were evidently not generally known.¹⁷⁶ The first of these was the exclusion from the agenda of matters of faith and order. This was a blow for evangelicals who regarded doctrinal agreement as basic to united action. Incidentally, it was alleged that the exclusion was not always

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observed by the very party that had demanded it, and that this had been condoned by the chair.¹⁷⁷ It also appeared that 'a compact, explicit or implied' had been agreed, making it 'irregular for speakers to refer to the evils of Romanism or the defects of Churches that are historically described as corrupt'. This compact had been made with 'organisations, which, at best, take but a back place in genuine missionary purpose or achievement'. To the writer in *The Christian* for 30 June, 1910, who raised the complaint, this was 'to assume a position which is utterly indefensible in the judgment of Evangelical Protestants'.¹⁷⁸ Moreover, several speeches at Edinburgh, notably those of Bishop Brent, the Bishop of Southwark, and the Rev. R. Wardlaw Thompson,¹⁷⁹ struck an unfamiliar note in their eirenic attitude towards Rome. The latter could confess: 'I long for the time when we shall see another Conference and when the men of the Greek Church and the Roman Church shall talk things over with us in the service of Christ'. In this respect, at least, it was a far cry from previous conferences on missions, and even from the 1896 Students' Conference,¹⁸⁰ to Edinburgh 1910.

It was alleged that no opportunity was given for a reply¹⁸¹—the chairman called on those speakers whom he selected from the large number of applicants—and those who did speak, and might have replied, seemed overawed. Eugene Stock confessed that Anglican Evangelicals had 'very much kept ourselves in the background in this conference'. He did say that he had felt during the morning session on Co-operation and Unity that 'we were meeting rather like a great demonstration before the public than as a conference of brethren who were going to speak their minds out bravely and mention the difficulties'. But he confessed that he had felt 'ashamed in the delightful enthusiasm to mention the difficulties' nor could he bring himself to specify them when he was on his feet during the afternoon session. All he could do

¹⁷⁴ W. Y. Fullerton, 'The Problem of Unity in relation to Eastern Lands', *The Problem of Unity*, 145.

¹⁷⁵ *Op. cit.* 9.

¹⁷⁶ The Moravian Bishop Hasse, who was a delegate at Edinburgh, 'The Problem of Unity', *Evangelical Christendom*, Jan.-Feb. 1911, 2.

¹⁷⁷ *Loc. cit.* The charge finds confirmation in W. R. Hogg, *op. cit.*, 129. Cf. the speech of Bishop Montgomery at the conference. *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, viii. 213, 214.

¹⁷⁸ Cited in *Evangelical Christendom*, July-Aug. 1910, 93.

¹⁷⁹ *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, viii. 198, 199; 201, 202; 215, 216 respectively.

¹⁸⁰ *Make Jesus King*, 221, 234.

¹⁸¹ T. J. Pulvertaft, 'The Problem of Unity in Relation to the Church of Rome', *The Problem of Unity*, 149.

was to express the hope that the Continuation Committee would not 'be afraid to face those difficulties, otherwise we shall in avoiding Scylla fall upon Charybis'.¹⁸²

The Continuation Committee did not fulfil Stock's hope. It continued to practise the approach to unity through joint action before common agreement.¹⁸³ To the consternation of evangelicals it included 'representatives of the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield',¹⁸⁴ and resisted all efforts to curb the urge to inclusiveness.¹⁸⁵ Its course ran parallel to that which was taken by the World Student Christian Federation which, at its Constantinople conference in 1911, opened its ranks to members of Orthodox Churches.¹⁸⁶

One particular matter highlights the price paid for the inclusion of the High Church element at Edinburgh: the exclusion from the discussions of missions to the native peoples of South America. J. H. Oldham regarded this as the greatest problem he had to face as conference secretary.¹⁸⁷

At some stage in the planning of Edinburgh 1910 the decision was taken to invite only those societies operating among non-Christian peoples. This was evidently done with a view to conciliating German societies who were sensitive about Methodist and Baptist missions in Germany, as well as English High Church societies who looked askance at missions by Protestants among people professing another form of Christianity.¹⁸⁸ Yet many missionaries in Latin America had been asked to prepare material for the report of the Commission on Carrying the Gospel—and, indeed, their names appear as correspondents in Appendix A to the report. One of these, the Rev. A. Stuart McNairn, was thus engaged when

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'the staggering news reached them that they were to be excluded from the purview of the Conference and their work have no place, owing to representations from high Anglicans that they could not recognise work in Roman Catholic lands as legitimate missionary enterprise. 'Thus', commented McNairn, 'was a Continent, embracing one-seventh of the habitable globe and containing some seventy million souls, excluded from the consideration of the Christian Church gathered to confer on the problems of world evangelisation'.¹⁸⁹

Small wonder that there was spirited opposition at Edinburgh to this decision. Despite the representations of men like Robert E. Speer, and Oldham's admission that Latin America was a border-line case, the exclusion was upheld. So strongly did Speer feel about this that he convened two 'rump' sessions which resolved that a special conference should be convened to consider the 'neglected continent'. The result was a two-day Conference on Missions in Latin America held in March 1913, followed by the great Panama Congress of 1916.¹⁹⁰ It is passing strange that this Congress has been claimed by W. R. Hogg as the offspring of Edinburgh, for

¹⁸² *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, viii, 214, 215.

¹⁸³ S. McBee, *An Eirenic Itinerary*, 132, 133, 135.

¹⁸⁴ *Evangelical Christendom*, Nov.-Dec. 1910, 131, 132.

¹⁸⁵ S. McBee, *op. cit.*, 164.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 115ff; R. Rouse, *op. cit.*, 155ff.

¹⁸⁷ W. R. Hogg, *op. cit.*, 132.

¹⁸⁸ R. Rouse and S. C. Neill (edd.), *op. cit.*, 357.

¹⁸⁹ A. S. McNairn, 'Why South America?' (1936), 32.

¹⁹⁰ R. Hogg, *op. cit.*, 131, 132.

although its business committee was chaired by J. R. Mott it was in fact a stepchild that proved remarkably independent! The Committee on Co-operation in Latin America that had convened it called further conferences in 1925 at Montevideo and in 1929 at Havana. A few delegates from Latin America attended the Jerusalem meeting of the I.M.C. in 1928 and the Madras meeting in 1938. In response to a request made by the Latin American delegates at Madras, J. R. Mott made five extended tours of Latin America in 1940 and 1941, during the course of which thirteen conferences were held. As an outcome, National Evangelical Councils or Confederations of Churches were formed. But the story of the Far East was not to be repeated in the New World. The Latin American Evangelical Conferences held in 1949 and 1961 resisted all attempts to involve them in further ecumenical organisation. Instead, they characteristically called a Conference on Gospel Communications at Huampani in 1962 which 'set Evangelicals free to unite in a continuous concerted endeavour to fulfil the great commission entrusted to them'.¹⁹¹

Meanwhile, the decision of Edinburgh to exclude Latin America, and the conciliatory pose adopted towards Rome and the Orthodox Churches, had had other repercussions. Evangelical Christendom repeatedly drew attention to the incompatibility of evangelicalism and the Churches of Rome and the East.¹⁹² More positively, leading evangelicals, such as the Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, met at the Great Eastern Hotel, London, at the invitation of Mr. Charles Hay Walker, to discuss missions in South America. It was agreed that it would be advantageous if some of the small evangelical missions at work there were brought together.¹⁹³ As a result, the Evangelical Union of South America was formally inaugurated at the 1911 Keswick Convention.¹⁹⁴

Another consequence of the inclusion of High Church elements in the movement for Christian unity was the dropping of united Communion Services. United conferences such as those held by the Evangelical Alliance, as well as those at Mildmay and Keswick, had felt free to include such services as an expression of the unity already enjoyed. It soon became clear that the policy of inclusiveness would preclude them. In 1911, the Bishop of Hereford created a storm when he invited nonconformists to a united Communion Service in Hereford Cathedral,¹⁹⁵ and when at the close of the Kikuyu Conference of 1913 the members, who included

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non-Anglicans, received Holy Communion from the hands of the bishop,¹⁹⁶ the High Church party created such a furore that Archbishop Davidson felt obliged to deprecate the holding of united Communion Services.¹⁹⁷ *Evangelical Christendom* commented: 'We have reached the parting of the ways, not between the Anglican or another view of the Episcopacy, but about whether the church is formed by ecclesiastical rules or by union with Christ'.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹¹ W. S. Rycroft, *On this Foundation. The Evangelical Witness in Latin America*, 1942, 70, 71. The quotation is from a paper by my colleague, the Rev. J. Savage, to whom I am also indebted for much stimulating conversation.

¹⁹² Sept.-Oct. 1910, 98; Jan.-Feb. 1911, 5-9; Mar.-April 1911, 41; Nov.-Dec. 1911, 203.

¹⁹³ MS. by Sir Kenneth Grubb, as yet unpublished.

¹⁹⁴ J. C. Pollock, *The Keswick Story*, 1932.

¹⁹⁵ G. K. A. Bell, Randall Davidson, *Archbishop of Canterbury*, 2 vols., 1935, i. 634-636.

¹⁹⁶ J. J. Willis, *The Kikuyu Conference. A Study in Christian Unity*, 1913, 17.

¹⁹⁷ F. Weston, *The Case against Kikuyu. A Study in Vital Principles*, 1914, 33; G. K. A. Bell, *op. cit.*, i. 694, 708; R. Lloyd, *op. cit.*, ii. 272, 273.

¹⁹⁸ Sept.-Oct. 1915, 181, 182.

Thus the inclusivist policy adopted by Edinburgh 1910 antagonised evangelicals because it signalled the entry—apparently on their own terms—of the High Church interest. Since 1910, the assimilation of the Orthodox Churches in the World Council of Churches and the friendly approaches made by leaders of some member churches towards Rome have heightened the fears of many evangelicals. The 'parting of the ways' has been shown to be a real one.

Furthermore, it should be added that Edinburgh 1910 revealed the acceptance in the ecumenical movement of men who were prepared to dilute their evangelical beliefs with considerable amounts of liberal thought. The inclusion of a man like R. F. Horton among the special delegates invited by the British Executive to attend Edinburgh is at least a straw in the wind—a wind that was to increase in force as the years went by. Here is another factor that has continued to serve as a wedge between evangelicals and the ecumenical movement.

Edinburgh 1910, then, was significant in more ways than are usually claimed. Indeed, it may be claimed that its deepest significance was not so much its atmosphere of high destiny, nor its representative character, nor its nature, nor even its results as customarily understood. Rather, the long perspective may yet demonstrate that its crucial importance was its effect upon evangelical participation in the ecumenical movement. It undoubtedly marks an early stage in the process whereby that movement, whose beginnings should probably be located in 1846 rather than 1910, was transformed from evangelical to inclusivist. This is not to say that non-evangelicals had hitherto shown no ecumenical activity: (this is no more correct than the assumption that evangelicals lost all sight of the ecumenical goal after 1910). But it is to suggest that the home leadership of the missionary movement, which was undoubtedly the most important seed-bed of the ecumenical movement, seriously began at Edinburgh to open mind and heart to the inclusivist rather than the evangelical basis of ecumenism. Where evangelical ecumenism looked for ways and means of giving expression to a unity which already existed in the form of a body of doctrine held in common, the new ecumenism attempted to find unity through common action on the part of those who were not united on fundamental doctrines. The result was the same on the wider stage as it had been in the colleges: evangelicals began to find themselves edged out of the very movement they had commenced. True, many have remained within it; but their position is tenuous. If there is one point at which the issue was decided in principle, it was surely Edinburgh 1910.

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