

**FROM WEEK TO WEEK**  
*"Spectator's" Discussion of Topics of Interest to Churchmen*

THE report of the preliminary meeting of the World Conference on Faith and Order has come to hand. It is a modest pamphlet for such a notable event, composed of about ninety-five pages, including names of delegates, organization and other matters incidental to the assembly. In referring to this conference it is only just to remember that it is essentially of a preliminary and organizing character. The burden of this work has been borne for the past ten years by the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States and entirely financed by the late Mr. J. P. Morgan and his son and successor. We are informed that no set programme was arranged in advance, the conference being left quite free to take the course it thought best. This, no doubt, accounts for the rather disappointing quantity and quality of the discussions on the great themes that brought the delegates together, out of forty nations and seventy autonomous communions. Two subjects, or two aspects of the same subject, were alone considered. The first was "the conception of the Church" in the ideal of unity, and the second, "What is the place of the Bible and a creed in relation to reunion?"

The intention of those who have had charge of this great movement was manifestly to get a very frank expression from the learned representatives of the greater and more widely separated communions as to just what they thought were the essentials of the Church of Christ. The idea was to lay bare the fundamental differences that stand in the path of reunion, if such differences really exist, and thus the way would be opened to the consideration of the actual problems that have to be faced. Strange to say, the speakers as reported in this pamphlet were very diffident about revealing their inner convictions. Those whose point of view would be most interesting and instructive to us of the western world were particularly cautious. Even after Bishop Gore had laid down the line of discussion desired with great clarity and force, he was obliged to admit that he had failed to call forth the argument into the channel and to the depth he considered useful. The point was not to secure agreement, but to know where in we differ, and until we do so, no progress is possible. Two days were spent in the expression of polite formalities, that lead nowhere in particular. The place of the Bible and the Creed went a little further. Here there was shown to be a decided cleavage. On the surface it wasn't a case of creed or no creed, but of a creed of definite assertion, or others shading off to just short of the vanishing point. Bishop Gore, the Bishop of Bombay and Dr. Cooper, of Glasgow, were protagonists of the Nicene Creed, while British Nonconformists and German Lutherans were opposed. Dr. Roth, of Germany, said: "The attempt to create a creed lasted a long time in the Prussian Church, and all it did was to create wide differences of opinion." The full length that the Church could go was "Christ is our Lord and Master." Remarkably few participated in discussions, nevertheless, the general atmosphere of the conference was hopeful and invigorating, and due arrangements were made to prepare for the full discussion of the vital elements of unity in various countries, so that at the next assembly there

would be more daylight as to where to begin and how to proceed.

Apart altogether from the content of a formal symbol of faith, "Spectator" has long felt that the Anglican Church makes excessive use of its creeds: At every regular service of the Church, priest and people are called upon to declare their position by the recital of either the 'Apostles' or Nicene Creed. In the early days of the Church one can imagine that this might have been both necessary and edifying. In the mission field it may be so to-day. It seems to the writer to tend to the negating of the very purpose for which it stands, if we make it a matter of daily recital. If the faithful were called upon, say once a month, or perhaps better still, only on selected festivals and Sundays, to confess their faith in this formal manner, its solemnity and impressiveness would be much greater, its subject matter would receive deeper consideration, and its educative value be largely enhanced. At all events, it would do no harm to have an expression of opinion on the subject.

"Spectator" desires to express his gratitude to his many friends from all parts of the Dominion, and indeed in some cases from distant countries, for messages of appreciation, encouragement and goodwill. He may seem to "carry on" unmindful of these things and pretend to rise superior to all external influences as, perhaps, a good journalist ought to do, but he is free to confess that there is more or less human nature in him after all. The things that are selected for commendation, however, do not always gratify him. Neither do those that are condemned invariably bring repentance. He keenly enjoys the incisive analysis of a subject from a point of view other than his own, and is grateful for it. It is ever a source of surprise how kindly of heart, how patient and long suffering his readers are, and how ready they are to forgive his defects. He would feel that he was failing of his purpose if he did not succeed in stimulating a spirit of frank enquiry and interrogation and in creating dissatisfaction with the mere cursory interpretation of what are really the deep things of life. Deny him not; therefore, the happiness of feeling at this season that perhaps in the far-off Yukon, on the outrolled prairie, in the metropolitan centre, or by the tide-waters of the east, there have been some who have been awakened, invigorated or even more definitely helped by his unworthy efforts. That would be a great reward. Say not that it is a delusion. At all events, out of a full heart, friends new and old, he gives the season's greetings, and repeats the sentiments of Tiny Tim: "God bless us every one."

"Spectator."

The Dean of Westminster has received from the Carnegie Endowment Fund through Mr. Elihu Root, the President, a draft for £10,000 towards the Westminster Abbey Endowment Fund.

A cable despatch from Suez states that the Duke of Connaught, who is on his way out to India, is ill on board H.M.S. "Malaya." The report stated that the Duke's temperature was, at the time the despatch was sent, 101.

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