

and laity, and the feeling is very general that the Bishops have given the Church, and even Christendom, a great lead.

The Roman press has been sarcastic and antagonistic, repeating its time-worn statements about Henry VIII. being the founder of our Church, and so on. Here, as elsewhere, Rome has to be left outside of our negotiations until God teaches her the true position and mission of the Church of Jesus Christ. We all need to learn this more and more; but surely no one needs the lesson more than the Roman Communion. When one reads of their assertions, so lacking in humility, one is reminded of the words of our Lord, "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth" (St. John ix. 41). In studying this question we Anglicans, too, must beware lest our blindness, together with our boasted "seeing," should cause our sin of schism to remain. He has surely spoken to us in these days, and "now we have no cloke for our sin."

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III.—AUSTRALIA.

Australia sent a larger contingent of Bishops to Lambeth than any of the dominions—*i.e.*, 20 out of her 24 Bishops, as compared with 19 from Canada and 12 from South Africa.

Of these twenty, however, only seven had been consecrated at the time of the last Conference, and only one dated back to the Conference before that, while no less than seven had been consecrated within the last five years, so that the representation was somewhat lacking in ripeness of experience or fortunate in the possession of considerable youthful vigour, as the case may be.

With regard to the resolutions of the Conference and their special bearing on Australian problems, an effort will be made to place them in the order of importance to Australia, though the writer is very conscious that the correctness of his judgment of their importance to Australia is open to challenge. He gives it simply as his own impression for what it is worth.

1. It will be probably conceded that reunion is the subject of most vital importance to the whole Church everywhere, because many other subjects which cause much anxiety would lose their menace and become hopeful could they only be dealt with by a united Church.

Public opinion on the subject of reunion both within and without the Church in Australia is probably considerably in advance of English opinion, simply because we are free from so many of the difficulties which surround the matter in England. Our chief difficulty probably lies in the "legal nexus," to which unfortunately a large minority of Australian Churchmen cling with a loyalty worthy of a better cause, under the misapprehension that to sever it means somehow to weaken our spiritual tie with the mother Church. The lawyers declare that we are not a branch of the Church of England, but are the Church of England itself, bound by all the laws of the Church in England, though passed without our knowledge or consent, past, present, and future; and as long as this legal nexus exists we cannot hope for Australian reunion. All we can do is to say to other religious communions what we would do if we only could.

Church opinion in Australia will undoubtedly welcome most gladly

the Lambeth appeal, with a few almost negligible exceptions. In no place does polychurchism press more heavily than in the country districts of Australia, with their real feeling for religion split up into at least half a dozen different channels. The ideal of "a Church genuinely Catholic, loyal to all truth, and gathering into its fellowship all who 'profess and call themselves Christians,' within whose visible unity all the treasures of faith and order bequeathed as a heritage by the past to the present shall be possessed in common and made serviceable to the whole body of Christ"—this ideal will commend itself very widely to Australians weary of our present unhappy divisions.

To my mind the most important resolution of the Lambeth Conference is No. 11. "The Conference recognizes that the task of effecting union with other Christian communions must be undertaken by the various national, regional, or provincial authorities of the churches within the Anglican Communion, and confidently commits to them the carrying out of this task on lines that are in general harmony with the principles underlying its appeal and resolutions." The Bishops have here departed from their usual cautious attitude as a council of advice, and have definitely committed to the local churches of our communion the practical task of locally carrying out reunion without further delay or without waiting for the whole body to move.

To us in Australia this means that *if* we can overcome the tremendous *vis inertiae* of our own members, *if* we can overcome the fears and suspicions of other Christians, *if* we can rid ourselves of the entangling web of the legal nexus, *if* we can agree among ourselves as to what we want, and secure from others terms which do not betray the Catholic faith, then we can go ahead and do something. There is no fear whatever that we shall advance too fast or go too far.

Considerable progress has already been made towards the "union of the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational Churches of Australia," and the proposed basis of "doctrine and polity" prepared and agreed upon by the joint committee of the three Churches contains much that is excellent and little from which we need dissent. It will be much easier to deal with this united Church than with the three separate bodies.

2. *Missionary Problems.*—Australia has not been deaf to the primary call to the Christian Church to make known the Gospel of Christ. The progress in missionary interest and missionary effort during my own experience of Australia has been most remarkable. Thirty-five years ago interest in missions was confined to a few enthusiasts, and £3,000 would have covered the whole contributions of the Australian Church to missions. The annual contributions rose steadily all through the war and the Australian Board of Missions and the C.M.S. in Australia now contribute over £50,000 a year in about equal proportions. This has, of course, only been rendered possible by the enormously increased diffusion of missionary knowledge and the great growth of enthusiasm for missionary work. Some few years ago a successful effort was made by a new constitution for the Australian Board of Missions to secure greater efficiency and bring the C.M.S. within the official scope of the Church's missionary activity, while leaving it "such a degree of independence as the conditions of its efficiency demanded." It would not be true to say that the working of the new constitution has been always easy, but it has worked, and there is every hope that it will continue to work, to the manifest advantage

of the whole missionary cause. The remaining resolutions on missionary work do not bear very specially on Australian conditions.

3. *Marriage and Sexual Morality*.—While we are free in Australia from the special difficulties in relation to marriage caused by the establishment of the Church, the whole question of sexual morality is a most pressing one in Australia. I have frequently drawn attention both in Australia and England to the terribly low level of sexual morality in Australia as evinced by the clear evidence of the official yearbook's statistical returns, which show beyond all possibility of doubt that of all the women married in Australia at the very least 40 per cent., and in all probability a much larger percentage, are unchaste before marriage. The figures in the latest yearbook show no improvement, but a perceptible worsening. When the mothers of Australia make such a bad start, it is little wonder that the moral level is low in other ways, that venereal disease is ever increasingly prevalent, and that the birth-rate is abnormally low in spite of the tremendous need that Australia has for a greater population. The resolutions of the Conference have an obvious message to Australia, and the report on this subject is worth a very careful study.

4. *Social and Industrial Questions*.—Australia has distinguished itself by a remarkable boldness of experiment in the matter of social and industrial legislation, and on the whole with satisfactory results. It had achieved a much greater equality of opportunity, a much higher general standard of living, and a more widespread sense of human fellowship and mutual responsibility than prevailed in England before the war altered wages and conditions of life. Much credit is undoubtedly due to the Labour Party, which, in spite of many unfortunate lapses and failures, has on the whole been a sane and most useful influence in political life, has done much to check individualism and profiteering, and to promote a sense of responsibility for other people's conditions of life and work.

The Lambeth assertion that the true "basis of industrial relations is the principle of co-operation in service for the common good in place of unrestricted competition for private or sectional advantage" will be widely accepted in Australia far beyond the ranks of Labour, and, indeed, it runs counter to the Labour extremists, who do not advocate the common good, but only the good of their own particular class.

The resolution of sympathy with the prohibition movement in the United States will certainly find a ready response from large numbers in Australia. Most of the States have adopted six o'clock closing with manifest advantage, and in spite of an enormous expenditure in propaganda by those interested in the drink traffic the feeling in favour of prohibition is steadily growing.

5. *Development of Provinces*.—The question of Provinces becomes pressing where, as in Australia, the different dioceses are separated by enormous distances, and where individual action by small and isolated dioceses would produce obvious danger and confusion.

The word Province is used in two senses: (1) As denoting the Church of a country—*e.g.*, the Province of South Africa; (2) as denoting the Church of a State, as the four Provinces of the Church in Australia. This double meaning must always be borne in mind.

We in Australia are entirely in accord with the Lambeth recommendation of the development of provincial Church life in whichever sense the word is used. Our General Synod is, however, still a Synod only in name, as all its resolutions have to be referred to the dioceses for acceptance.

In theory this is somewhat absurd, but in practice it works much better than might have been expected. The Conference did wisely in fixing the minimum of dioceses to form a Province at four. In Australia the number is three, but there is a strong feeling that this number is too small. It may, perhaps, be doubted whether it is necessary for every Metropolitan to be an Archbishop, when the Province is only one of many Provinces in a regional Church. The Lambeth resolutions do not touch this point.

6. *Spiritualism, Christian Science, and Theosophy*.—I do not know that these errors are very much more rampant in Australia, but they are sufficiently in evidence to make one wonder at the extraordinary credulity of people who reject Christianity and swallow greedily all the revelations and miracles of these and other modern heresies. Spiritualism finds a large number of devotees in the large cities, and Theosophy has been making considerable efforts to obtain converts, being apparently well supplied with funds. The followers and representatives of the late Bishop Matthew in Australia have now openly allied themselves with the Theosophists, and are represented by the notorious "Bishop" Leadbeater. Christian Science is widely spread, though it makes little outward show. The report and resolutions of the Conference will be of very great value.

7. *International Relations*.—The fact that Australian international relations are for the most part controlled from London naturally deprives this subject of a good deal of its immediate and practical interest for Australia.

The project of the League of Nations and all efforts for international peace naturally commend themselves to Australia, a self-producing and self-contained country which has no desire to extend its borders, no imperialistic aims, and which only desires to be let alone and to be safe from external interference. It may, however, be very much doubted whether the resolutions that Germany should be admitted into the League as soon as possible will find much favour in Australia, which is not in a position to understand how entirely the European States are interdependent and how closely the welfare of Germany is bound up with that of England and France.

With regard to justice to child races, I believe that the present Governments of Australia are sincerely anxious to secure it; and the colour prejudice, which has so largely distinguished Australia in the past, has undoubtedly been weakened by the war, though the white Australia policy still commands the unquestioning assent of the vast majority of its people.

8. *The Position of Women*.—This is in no sense a pressing or burning question in the Australian Church. The great majority of Churchwomen are content with the position they hold and the influence they exercise in the work and councils of the Church. I am inclined to think that the general opinion will be that the Conference has given undue weight to the opinion and wishes of a few highly educated women, and has opened doors and set precedents which so far as Australia is concerned were neither necessary nor desired. In any case, I do not think that the resolutions of the Conference on this subject will have any immediate or far-reaching effect.

Taking now the Conference as a whole, the Australian Bishops feel, I think, that it has been a very great and fruitful gathering, well worth the long journey they have had to make and the serious interruption of their diocesan work. They have received everywhere a warm welcome

and generous hospitality—no small matter in these difficult times. Especially do they owe a great debt to the Archbishop of Canterbury, not only for his princely hospitality but for his unfailing individual interest and sympathy. At the same time in view of future Conferences it is a question whether some effort ought not to be made either to pool travelling expenses or to assist those of the more distant members of the Conference. As it is, the expenses of the most highly paid Bishops are practically nil, while the travelling expenses of Bishops from small poor dioceses in Australia and of missionary Bishops from China and Japan amount at the very least to £200. In view of the great importance of a really representative attendance and of the general depletion of episcopal incomes the subject deserves careful consideration before the next Lambeth Conference.

Archdeacon Boyce of Sydney has sent to the Bishops a suggestion for an Anglican Synod in place of the Lambeth Conference of Bishops, in which the clergy and laity should have their full and personal representation, but the scheme, however attractive in theory, does not seem workable in practice. In the first place, it is certain that the American Church would have nothing whatever to do with such a Synod, or with any scheme which deprived the Conference of its character as a purely consultative and advisory body; it would be unwieldy in size and most costly, and it is extremely doubtful if its decisions would be accepted to anything like the extent that those of the present Conference are accepted.

At any rate, it seems probable that the present system will continue for some time to come, and if the Conference continues to advance with the same courage and wisdom as it has shown on the present occasion, its influence and importance is likely to grow steadily.

One point was not raised in the Conference. Is the next meeting to be held in 1928 or in 1930? We in Australia have to fix our dates so long ahead, and a visit to England is such a serious business, that we ought to know years beforehand. Perhaps the consultative body will be able to advise on the subject.

In conclusion, we go back to Australia feeling that our whole position has been cleared and strengthened by the Lambeth Conference of 1920, and bound by closer and deeper ties to the old mother Church. Not the least valuable part of the Conference is the informal intercourse with English and other overseas Bishops, which clears away many misunderstandings and enables us to realize as never before the greatness, the complexity, and the enormous spiritual force of the Anglican Communion.

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