

Editorial

The hundredth volume of the Churchman

To be associated with a journal which has reached not just its hundredth issue but its hundredth volume is, when one reflects upon it, somewhat awe-inspiring. How many journals must have appeared, and disappeared again, during the period that the *Churchman* has been running its quiet but steady course? And what will its future be?

The *Churchman* commenced publication, under its present name, in 1879, so its centenary fell seven years ago. A volume to each calendar year soon became the pattern, but not immediately, and that is why the hundredth volume has had to wait for 1986. It was at first a monthly journal, and only became a quarterly after the First World War.

Though there have now been a hundred volumes, even in 1879 the *Churchman* was not really a new journal, but an old one under a new name. It was the continuation of one published monthly for most of the nineteenth century, from 1802 to 1877, under the name of the *Christian Observer*. This was the earliest important journal of the Anglican Evangelicals, first projected by the original Eclectic Society, and taken up in a practical way by the circle of the 'Clapham Sect'. One of this circle, Zachary Macaulay (formerly governor of Sierra Leone, and father of the historian) was its first editor, and the poet Kirke White was among the early contributors. From the outset, it aimed to cover doctrine, church history, biblical exegesis and current affairs, and thus to build up an informed evangelical consciousness in the national church, as well as to assist practical ministry. It rapidly secured a large circulation and considerable influence.

As the nineteenth century advanced, other evangelical journals came into existence, but the *Christian Observer* maintained its evangelical character and scholarly standards, which the *Churchman* then inherited. Notable editors of the journal, under its new name, have included Henry Wace, W.H. Griffith Thomas, and more recently Philip Hughes, and it might be difficult to name any distinguished evangelical scholar in the Church of England who has not at some point contributed articles to its pages. As the hundredth volume appears, we thank God for maintaining its witness for so long, and look forward hopefully to the future.

(It may be possible to include a more detailed history of the journal later this year.)

ARCIC and BEM in the deaneries

The sending down to the dioceses and deaneries of the main motions about the *ARCIC Final Report* and the Lima report *Baptism*,

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Eucharist and Ministry passed by the General Synod last year, has, not surprisingly, resulted in considerable confusion and some well-founded alarm. Many deanery synod members have found the questions unintelligible, and it can be confidently assumed that even those who think they understand them often do not. For the motions allude not only to the Lima report and the ARCIC report (which have had some degree of circulation), but also to the Faith and Order Advisory Group's report *Towards a Church of England Response* to the other two reports (C.I.O.), a closely printed volume of 109 pages costing £4.95, which it is hard to imagine one deanery synod member in five hundred will ever have seen. The volume is, in fact, quite worth seeing, for it scrutinizes the two other reports with some care, and is not uncritical about them. However, it expresses its criticisms in such a mild way as to inhibit it from proposing anything but the acceptance of the two reports, with only some slight reservations about the treatment of the papacy in the ARCIC statement on Authority.

This may not matter too much in the case of the Lima report, which comes from the World Council of Churches, and could only result, if accepted, in a greater degree of mutual recognition among denominations which would remain separate. In the case of ARCIC, however, the announced goal is complete reunion of the Anglican Communion with the Church of Rome; and if, after the deanery and diocesan voting, the new General Synod confirms in November the decision of its predecessor, and accepts the ARCIC report, this will come to the 1988 Lambeth Conference as the decision of the Church of England, when it attempts to sum up the reactions of all the Anglican churches, and to make a comprehensive response to Rome. With this in prospect, for the deaneries and dioceses to be asked to answer questions which many of their members find unintelligible, is a serious situation. Nor is it less serious to hear that, in many cases, the only visiting speakers invited have been people in favour of the motions, that unfair restrictions have been put upon the debate, and that friendliness to Roman Catholics has been represented as demanding an affirmative answer. Those who have still to vote may be glad to know that an analysis of the motions is available from Latimer House (131 Banbury Road, Oxford. OX2 7AJ) for 10p and a stamped addressed envelope.

Of course, there is a second ARCIC commission sitting, due to present a further report, and even if Lambeth '88 were able to announce the whole Anglican Communion in favour of the first report (misleadingly called 'final'), the second report would still have to go the rounds as well. Moreover, the Holy Office at Rome, in its *Observations on the Final Report of ARCIC*, has made it pointedly clear that, even if Anglicans accept the final report, Rome will not; and the national bishops' conferences of the Roman church, in their

Responses now beginning to appear, are saying more politely what the Holy Office has said abruptly, that ARCIC has moved some way in the direction of traditional Roman Catholicism but not far enough. Whether, when rejecting the adequacy of the first ARCIC report in 1988, Rome will attempt to soften the blow by making some counter-proposal, one can only speculate. But the offer of an Uniate relationship, according to which Anglicans would be able to continue as before in practical matters, provided they accept papal authority and Roman doctrine as a complete whole, ought not to be an attractive option to Anglicans with any theological concern or any knowledge of the experience of the existing Uniate churches.

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