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THE CHURCHMAN

April, 1931.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Lambeth and the Orthodox and Old Catholic Churches.

THE attitude of the Lambeth Conference towards Reunion is standing out more clearly as time goes on, and is arousing considerable conflict of opinion. Definite steps have been taken in the approach to the Orthodox Church and the Old Catholics by the appointment of Commissions to meet representatives of these Churches. Considerable disappointment has been expressed that Evangelical Churchmanship has been very inadequately represented on these Commissions. Without such representation it is difficult to believe that the teaching of our Church will be presented as clearly as it ought to be to the delegates of the Orthodox and Old Catholics. The statements of Archbishop Germanos at the Church Congress at Cheltenham, and the references to doctrine in the Lambeth Conference Report, seem to indicate that there is considerable misunderstanding on the part of these foreign Churches as to the real teaching of the Church of England. We are indebted to the Rev. Thomas J. Pulvertaft for an important review of the whole situation in the present number of THE CHURCHMAN. It will be seen from his lucid examination of the facts that there is considerable danger of our Church being placed in a false position by the endeavour to produce a harmony of doctrine with the un-reformed teaching of these Churches. There must be a much more complete examination of the points of difference, and of the true significance of some of the technical terms used, before Evangelical Churchpeople can be satisfied that the Reformation teaching of our Church is fully understood by the Orthodox Church, and that our doctrine as set forth in the XXXIX Articles is not compromised by any acceptance of teaching not to be found in our formularies and definitely rejected over three hundred years ago.

Lambeth and the Non-Episcopal Churches.

While there is little interest among Churchpeople in general in regard to Reunion with those Churches abroad with which there is little contact, there is a growing feeling that some definite steps should be taken to draw closer to our brethren of the Non-Episcopal

Churches at home. A remarkable "United Service of Witness" recently held at the Parish Church, Birmingham, gives striking evidence of the development of this desire. At this united service, representatives of the Church of England and of the Free Churches took part, and important addresses were given by Dr. Carnegie Simpson and the Rev. Paul Gibson. Dr. Carnegie Simpson was one of the representatives of the Free Churches who took a leading part in the negotiations which followed the Lambeth Conference of 1920. He has expressed his keen disappointment more than once that the Lambeth Conference of 1930 practically shelved any further discussion. At Birmingham, he frankly stated that the *entente* begun in 1920 had a sharp set-back in 1930, yet he was convinced that "the interests of religion in England need, and even demand, that the forces of the Anglican tradition and those of the Free Church traditions must be united; and we must see how the danger of their drifting apart is to be counteracted." He regrets the summary dismissal in half a dozen lines of negotiations with the Free Churches, but he regards even more seriously "the swing of the Lambeth mind in the direction of unreformed Eastern Orthodoxy." As he points out, "the Church of England can only meet and satisfy Eastern Orthodox doctrinal requirements by magnifying all the elements in Anglican doctrine which are remote from and even antagonistic to those elements in it which have an Evangelical and Reformed character."

Some Practical Steps.

The Lambeth appeal of 1920 was made to "All Christian people," but the 1930 Conference has magnified its relationships in one direction and minimized them in another, so that there is not an adequate expression of the Catholicity of the original Appeal. Union with the Orthodox Eastern Churches would hardly at all affect the work of Evangelization of the world, and would contribute little or nothing to the solution of the problems of Christian life and thought with which we have to deal. Dr. Carnegie Simpson lays down several practical steps which can be taken, and Evangelical Churchpeople will heartily support his views. First, he advises acts of unity between Churches up and down the country. "The Union Movement between the Church of England and the Free Churches has been surfeited with documents and been not sufficiently nourished with deeds." The interchange of pulpits and intercommunion are not, as some think, calculated to stereotype our differences, but tend to produce the better feeling necessary for ultimate unity. These acts of unity must be inspired by a sense of the urgency of the needs of the work of the Kingdom of God. This has inspired the Reunion Movements already achieved. The leading of the Spirit of God is to be followed, and this will do more for organic Union than all the efforts of ecclesiastical statesmanship. The Holy Spirit's Work is as clearly evinced in the Ministries of the Non-Episcopal Churches as in those of the Episcopal. These clear statements on the whole question of Reunion may well serve

as a guide to further thought and action. It is not out of place to add from the recent statement of the Bishop of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich the words, "I feel myself, too, that we ought to take more frequent steps than we are disposed to, to join in common worship with one another and in one another's assemblies."

The Commission on Church and State.

Nothing has, so far, been heard of the work of the Commission appointed to consider the relations between Church and State. Our readers will remember that when the Commission was appointed, Lord Brentford and the Bishop of Norwich expressed their surprise that as the appointment of the Commission was almost directly due to the Prayer Book controversy, no representative was appointed of the very large body within the Church who are opposed to the new book. Even those who do not altogether sympathize with the opposition to the Revised Prayer Book, regret that the Commission is not fully representative of the Church. The matter has been widely considered, and expression has been given to the view that without adequate representation of all important sections within the Church, the conclusions of such a Commission cannot be expected to command widespread acceptance. In the meantime, the Bishop of Durham continues his solitary campaign for disestablishment, although it is clear to the great majority of Churchpeople that disestablishment would mean a serious injury to the religious life of the Nation. It is unlikely that disestablishment would be carried through without an extensive measure of disendowment. The Church is severely handicapped at present by lack of adequate financial resources, but it would be absolutely crippled by the loss of the sources from which a large number of the Clergy in the country parishes receive their income, while in town parishes the adequate maintenance of a staff of Curates would become an impossibility. It has been pointed out that there is no conflict between Church and State to demand such a severance as disestablishment would mean. We are thankful to know that it can still truthfully be said, "We are a definitely Christian country, governed by a Christian King, and a Christian Parliament."

Affairs in Malta.

Affairs in Malta show no sign of improvement. The attitude taken up by the ecclesiastical authorities of the Roman Church in the Island is not only maintained but has shown further developments. Lord Strickland recently drew attention in the House of Lords to the new measures adopted by the Bishops to lay an ecclesiastical ban on those who support his party. An announcement was made in the Churches of Malta on February 15 that the Sacraments would be refused to all who frequented or who paid subscriptions to Clubs of the Constitutional Party, or of the Labour Party; and subsequently the members of an Imperial Club were refused the Sacraments. Little help to settle the matter has been obtained

from the Vatican, and although the Lenten Pastoral this year was, "as it were, an olive-branch carried by a dove, at a secret meeting of the Parish Priests held in St. John's Church, the Archbishop directed that the Pastoral should have as a postscript, verbally delivered and to please the ultra-clericals, a new declaration of war delivered apart from faith or morals." Mr. Henderson declared last year that no outside authority would be allowed to dictate, either in Malta or elsewhere, the dismissal or punishment of British Ministers appointed in the Empire Overseas in the name of the King. This declaration had in practice been watered down almost to disappearing-point, and the pledges given that Maltese Ministers would be retained in a consultative capacity, has been interpreted against them in a manner that would astonish any lawyer who read the Maltese Constitution. The Secretary of the Colonies in reply to Lord Strickland said that His Majesty's Government had not received any assistance from the Vatican in endeavouring to bring about the resumption of the normal state of things.

The Oxford Conference of Evangelical Churchmen.

The Oxford Conference of Evangelical Churchmen (in continuation of the Cheltenham Conference) is to be held in St. Peter's Hall, Oxford, on April 13, 14 and 15. The general subject is: "The Basis of Anglican Doctrine and Fellowship." The Committee has decided to make the Conference an opportunity of passing under review the Report of the Lambeth Conference on the Position of the Anglican Communion. They point out that a new view of the Anglican Communion has been accepted, and its relation to the Unreformed, Reformed, and the new Missionary Churches has, in consequence, received a new orientation. It is a matter, therefore, of primary moment, that Evangelicals should grasp clearly what is involved in the new outlook, as some of the proposals can only be adopted by the acceptance of changes in our historic attitude to the Reformation, and to the reformed and unreformed Churches. The Programme will therefore be of special interest and will cover the principal points, including "The World Position of the Anglican Communion." The Basis of our Doctrine, (1) as set forth in the XXXIX Articles (2) in relation to the Orthodox Eastern Church, (3) in relation to the Old Catholic Church, and (4) in relation to the other Reformed Churches. "The Church of England and the New Missionary Churches" will also be considered. We hope to publish the full text of the Papers read at the Conference in the next number of THE CHURCHMAN.