

## The Lambeth Conference.

### ENCYCLICAL LETTER.

To the Faithful in Christ Jesus, greeting—

We, Archbishops, Bishops Metropolitan, and other Bishops of the Holy Catholic Church in full communion with the Church of England, 194 in number, all having superintendence over dioceses or lawfully commissioned to exercise episcopal functions therein, assembled from divers parts of the earth at Lambeth Palace, in the year of our Lord, 1897, under the presidency of the Most Rev. Frederick, by Divine Providence Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, and Metropolitan, after receiving in Westminster Abbey the Blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood, and uniting in prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, have taken into consideration various questions which have been submitted to us affecting the welfare of God's people and the condition of the Church in divers parts of the world.

We have made these matters the subject of careful and serious deliberations during the month past, both in general conference and in committees specially appointed to consider the several questions, and we now commend to the faithful the conclusions at which we have arrived.

We have appended to this letter two sets of documents—the one containing the formal resolutions of the conference, and the other the reports of the several committees. We desire you to bear in mind that the conference is responsible for the first alone. The reports of committees can be taken to represent the mind of the Conference in so far as they are affirmed or directly adopted in the resolutions. But we have thought good to print these reports, believing that they will offer fruitful matter for consideration.

We begin with the questions which affect moral conduct, inasmuch as moral conduct is made by our Lord the test of the religious life.

#### TEMPERANCE.

Intemperance still continues to be one of the chief hindrances to religion in the great mass of our people. There are many excellent societies engaged in the conflict with it, but they need steady and resolute perseverance to effect any serious improvement. It is important to lay stress on the essential condition of permanent success in this work—namely, that it should be taken up in a religious spirit as part of Christian devotion to the Lord.

#### PURITY.

We desire to repeat, with most earnest emphasis, what was said on the subject of purity by the last conference, and we reprint herewith the report which that conference unanimously

adopted. We know the deadly nature of the sin of impurity, the fearful hold it has on those who have once yielded, and the fearful strength of the temptation. The need for calling attention to this is greatly increased at present by the difficulties that hamper all attempts to deal with the frightful diseases which everywhere attend it. We recognize the duty of checking the spread of such diseases, but we recognize also the terrible possibility that the means used for this purpose may lower the moral standard, and so, in the end, foster the evil in the very endeavour to uproot it. We are convinced that the root of all such evil is in the sin itself, and that nothing will in the end prove effectual against it which does not from the very first teach the Christian law that the sin is a degradation to those who fall into it, whether men or women, and that purity is within reach of every Christian who, trusting in the grace of God, fights the battle of his baptismal vow.

#### SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE.

The maintenance of the dignity and sanctity of marriage lies at the root of social purity, and therefore of the safety and sacredness of the family and the home. The foundation of its holy security and holiness is the precept of our Lord. "What, therefore, God hath joined together let not man put asunder." We utter our most earnest words of warning against the lightness with which the life-long vow of marriage is often taken; against the looseness with which those who enter into this holy state often regard its obligations; and against the frequency and facility of recourse to the courts of law for the dissolution of this most solemn bond. The full consideration, however, of this matter it has been impossible to undertake on this occasion.

#### INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS.

The industrial problems of the present day present themselves under the double aspect of justice between man and man and sympathy with human needs. It is widely thought in some classes that the present working of our industries is unjust to the employed and unduly favorable to the employer. It is obviously not possible for us to enter upon the consideration of such a question in detail; but we think it our duty to press the great principle of the brotherhood of man, and to urge the importance of bringing that principle to bear on all the relations between those who are connected by the tie of a common employment. Obedience to this law of brotherhood would ultimately in all probability prevent many of the mischiefs which attend our present system. Upon this aspect of the industrial problems, wise and helpful counsels will be found in the report.

The other aspect of these problems concerns those classes of the community who are, above all others, commended by our Lord to the loving care of His disciples, the poor. It is undeniable