

FROM WEEK TO WEEK

"Spectator's" Discussion of Topics of Interest to Churchmen

IT requires thought and effort to understand the Anglican spirit and the Anglican ideal of teaching and worship. The Church makes demands upon its members, and effort is not always welcomed. If we are not willing to make that effort, slight though it be, we will go through life missing largely the riches of spiritual strength and inspiration that are placed so easily within our grasp. The enthusiasm of numberless Anglicans is untouched; their inability to throw light upon the ordinary questions directed to them by non-Anglicans is largely due to the fact that they have not taken the trouble to study the Prayer Book that they so frequently use. What a delight it would be to the clergy to have their congregations asking questions and seeking light on the structure, sequence and purpose of the various services and the true object of worship. A little reading, a little thinking, a few questions each week would transform our people from helplessness, to power, from indifference to eagerness, from blindness to the capacity to see and help others to see. We, of course, have this kind of Anglican, but the number is far from the proportion of our membership that it ought to be.

There seems, however, now to be signs of a stirring in the hearts of men. A day is dawning when men shall not be afraid or ashamed to discuss and enquire about spiritual things. The world has gone through, and is going through so many troubles and has tried so many remedies without avail, that there is now a disposition to listen to what the Church of God has to say on the subject. It is a time above all times when the Church must be sure, steady, humble, strong, transparently honest. It is a time when we need the informed intelligence of the laity to assist in our great task. In this great movement in the heart of humanity, the methods of commerce won't do. Men rushing in to adjust a great psychological problem on the lives of the market place, only cause confusion. Men approaching a great ideal that the Church is striving to set up as a dominating force in the conscience and will of our race, with some inane suggestion about business methods and advertising, can do untold mischief. Will our laity, our splendid business men, our clear-headed conscientious women, prepare themselves, without cant or make believe, to understand what the Church is really aiming at? We are entering upon a great vision and a great task, and the will to conquer, in the name of our Master, must be ours.

The necessity of all Anglicans, and especially Canadian Anglicans, making an intelligent study of the reports and resolutions of the recent Lambeth Conference, ought to be obvious. In the past these conferences aroused little interest in the Church at large, for their findings were usually in the rear rather than in the front of public judgment. To-day the position is reversed. The Bishops have clearly placed themselves in the position of leaders and they have founded their leadership upon the solid foundation of fidelity to truth, trusting to the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit of God. There is their starting point, and the idea runs through the entire scheme of their deliberations. What is the truth, the fundamental, all encompassing truth—the truth to-day, to-morrow and forever? What is the will of the God of truth? That is what they seek. That is what they call upon us to seek and to follow. Not

a word is said about the world being ready or unready for this or that move or doctrine. If it conforms to the Divine will that is enough. Do not our hearts assent most fully to this attitude? Who on this broad earth, in thinking out the things of the spirit and of eternity, desires anything less? If public opinion here and there is focussed upon a narrower and more superficial outlook, it must acquire breadth and depth. That is all. We gratefully receive the admonition of the Bishops and the spirit that they invoke upon the whole Church. We salute them for the clearly and consecutively expressed appeal that they make, for their nobility of utterance, for their consistent spirit of humility, for their wide embracing sympathy, for their definite effort to supplement their theory of action by resolutions indicating the steps we should take to realize a church, catholic in fact as in idea. Into this spirit of our prelates it is the duty of the clergy to lead our people. Our first and great task in realizing the unity of the Church of God is to develop, to the full, the fellowship and unity of the spirit of the Master within our own communion. This means the instruction of the mind and the development of the heart and conscience of our people.

Churchmen throughout Canada must bear in mind that the decisions of the Bishops of Lambeth on Church reunion have no legislative effect in this country until they have been approved by our own General Synod. Neither Bishops nor priests are presumably at liberty to invoke these decisions as justification for action on lines therein recommended until the Canadian Church has affirmed them in her own authority. It may be well to emphasize some of the outstanding features of the resolutions passed "all but unanimously" by the Lambeth Conference as they affect our relations with non-episcopal communions. The full text of these resolutions have been given in the *Canadian Churchman*. The writer only wishes to draw special attention to some of them:—

- (1) There is no idea in thought or deed of casting reflection on the efficacy of the ministry of other communions. The only desire is to make the ministry of the united Church conform to the will of God. The ministry must be "a ministry acknowledged by every part of the Church."
- (2) Ministers of non-Anglican communions, before reunion is accomplished, may be authorized to preach in our church and ours in their's.
- (3) Baptized but unconfirmed non-Anglicans under certain conditions may be received at Holy Communion.
- (4) This does not authorize general inter-communion nor exchange of pulpits.

The above is an indication of the great advance that is made by the Bishops to secure a reunited Church. This is not laid down as a basis of union, but only a tentative effort to bring about a coalescence that will ultimately restore the parts into a great whole. The chief thing is the spirit in which this effort is put forth and the spirit it may be hoped to induce in those that we expect to reach. To catch that spirit we must study the document, for it is impossible to summarize what is itself a summary. The Anglican Church has opened a new chapter in its history and the prayers of the faithful will be that we may be lead to a worthy conclu-

(Continued on page 610.)

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