

The Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England in Australia and Tasmania to the Faithful in the Lord Jesus

Greeting:—

We appeal to all Church people to study the report of this Lambeth Conference of 1930, in which Australia was so fully represented.

It has often been truly said that the Lambeth Conference is in no sense an oecumenical council, possessing powers of legislation. From the first it has carefully rejected the assumption of any powers except those that are advisory. It can only give counsel. But yet recommendations coming from an assembly of over 300 Bishops of varying experience and diverse views carry in themselves weighty arguments for consideration by the Church.

3 The main objective that the Bishops set before themselves was to assist the members of the Church to-day in their thought and life so that they should rise above the often embarrassing conditions that the present generation has to confront. We ask you to study the Encyclical Letter and the Resolutions of the Conference with the same direct purpose of seeking to improve the witness that you can bear in your own day and by your own life to the reality of the Gospel trust that is committed to you in this generation.

The first subject dealt with was the Christian Doctrine of God, and it is of paramount importance and should receive your most careful attention. Some of our most eminent Theologians drew up this great Report and they state emphatically that no modern researches have shaken the credibility of the faith that is in Christ Jesus as delivered to us in the Gospels. The foundation of God standeth sure. We owe much to the critical faculty in our study of the Bible, and we should make reverent use of its conclusions.

It has made plain much that was obscure. It has deprived us of nothing that had value. Through the word of God we see the open road to the presence of God. The Bishops strongly urge upon Christian men and women the daily duty of treading that road of access to God by prayer. They also emphasise the need of careful study of the word of God. They call us to worship with greater reality and deeper intensity.

5 The Lambeth Conference next draws attention to the significance of various aspects of social life amongst Christian people as part of the witness of the Church to this generation. By our works men shall know us, if we have been with Jesus.

Prominent in this category is the sanctity and responsibility of the marriage tie. There is a call to all married people to live their married life as under the eye of God. These clauses dealing with marriage need to be read together if their full meaning is to be grasped. They seek to promote the holy happy life of a Christian home. They must not be disturbed from their context as has often been done in the Press.

Clear statements are also made concerning the attitude of the Christian towards Peace and War and also upon the relationship of the various races of mankind as part of the family of God.

Another subject upon which Churchmen will look for guidance is the problem of Christian Reunion as it is presented to-day. They will not look in vain, but it will necessitate discriminating attention if they are to appreciate fully what has been done. There has been no new and startling departure of statement such as was contained in the Appeal to all Christian People at the previous Lambeth Conference of 1920. Yet the same call to Christian Reunion was repeated, evidence of much progress in fellowship was reported, and distinct advance was encouraged by the general support given to definite schemes of new Fellowship proposed in South India and in Persia, and to matters brought forward with a view to negotiation for a further closer union by representatives of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Unfortunately no parallel concrete proposals were offered by the non-Episcopalian Churches nearer home, but the Conference was glad that a distinguished deputation from them gave their Committee the privilege of consultation with them.

We trust that careful consideration of the resolutions passed on this complicated subject will stimulate Church people to continue their prayers and efforts to bring about such a relationship amongst Christian people as shall be more in accord with the mind of Christ, Who prayed that they all may be one. It may well be hoped that these new experiments thus generally approved in the Mission Field may reveal new doors of opportunity that may

have their reaction at home. We also ask you to give attention to the important resolutions which attempt to define the Anglican Communion, what it is, and what its future may be.

Another appeal world-wide made by the Conference to all members of the Church, no matter where they dwell, was to remind them of the importance of the Christian Ministry, and of the responsibility of the laity of the Church to make provision for the training of suitable men, and for their support when Ordained. We desire to emphasise this appeal in Australia. "The fields are white to the harvest," as the Encyclical says with a world outlook, but nowhere is the harvest more promising than in Australia, if only the sowers and the reapers are forthcoming. The Bishops say that there is no reason to doubt that the men will be found if the laymen of the Church make adequate financial provision for their training and maintenance.

Nothing was more inspiring at Lambeth than the wide spread conviction of Bishops of varied experience that the younger generation of to-day are as ready to respond to the call of adventure in the name of Christ as were the youth of any previous age. They need guidance; they need example; they need sympathy; but the heart is sound to its core.

We would remind you that throughout this whole Conference a profound sadness rested upon us as Bishops from Australia because of the unexpected death of Dr. Long, the honoured Bishop of Newcastle, rightly endeared to every one of us. His end came with startling suddenness. He had been present about a week before at a meeting of the Australian Bishops convened to consider the problem of our new Constitution. With, as it seemed to us, unimpaired vigor, he had urged the importance of summoning a Second Constitutional Convention to consider afresh the Draft Constitution that left the First Convention of 1926. He had pointed out that this was logical, since we had closed that Convention over-hastily, and had not submitted the draft for a Third Reading, a procedure which would have been advisable. The Bishops assented to his wish, and agreed to hold the Second Constitutional Convention in October, 1931. We regard this duty as a solemn legacy from him, and in the light of our Lambeth Conference, we confidently call upon all Church people to support us by their prayers. Many of us entered upon our work at Lambeth very doubtful whether effective work could be done when opinion was so keenly divided. The result rebuked our want of faith. We are convinced that the happy issue reached at Lambeth was God's answer to the faithful concerted prayers of the Church, together with the spirit of prayerfulness in which our debates were conducted. Why should we not hope that, in answer to the intercessions of the Church in Australia and of the Bishops in Conference, God may lead us similarly to agreement upon a form of Con-

stitution for our Church that we can submit with one mind to the Parliaments of the several States whose assent is necessary if our desired reorganisation is to be accomplished.

JOHN CHARLES, SYDNEY
F. W. MELBOURNE.
GERALD, BRISBANE.
HENRY, PERTH.
CECIL, BUNBURY.
A. NUTTER, ADELAIDE.
JOHN, (N. QUEENSLAND.)
HENRY, BISHOP OF NEW GUINEA.
G. H. GIPPSLAND.
R. S. TASMANIA.
DONALD, BISHOP OF BENDIGO.
JOHN, WILLIAM, GRAFTON.
STEPHEN, CARPENTARIA.
REGINALD, BISHOP OF RIVERINA.
PHILIP, BALLARAT.
M. C. ST. ARNAUD.
RICHARD, BISHOP OF WILLOCHRA.
J. S. WANGARATTA.
HORACE, BATHURST.
FORTESCUE, BISHOP OF ROCKHAMPTON.
JOHN S. ARMIDALE.
JOHN, (N. W. AUSTRALIA.)

Unfortunately the Bishops of Goulburn and Kalgoorlie have not returned at the time of going to press.

Diocesan Church House,
Sydney,
2nd. January, 1931.