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WE ARE A "DIMINISHING CHURCH," SAYS BISHOP FEW AUSTRALIAN LEADERS, MANY CONTROVERSIES

Lack of Australian leadership and preoccupation with questions of churchmanship are the reasons why the Church of England in Australia is a "diminishing Church," said the Bishop of North Queensland, the Right Reverend Ian Shevill, on June 8.

Bishop Shevill was giving his Charge, "Let my people go," to his diocesan synod in St. James' Cathedral, Townsville.

He said we are in the grip of a nostalgia for nineteenth century England; and our "image" abroad is a very poor one.

Just as Moses pleaded for his people to be delivered from the dominance of Egypt, the bishop said he was pleading for the Australian Church to be "delivered from the bondage of a colonial nostalgia for an England which has long ceased to exist."

We were, as a result, "passive members of a diminishing domination." The bishop was abroad earlier this year in Russia, they had never heard of us; in the U.S.A., Canon Howard Johnson's book, "Global Odyssey," damned us without even faint praise.

Canon Johnson said we were ill-prepared to receive migrants; our title is "unwisely and uninviting"; we have too few clergy; we do little about evangelisation; our theological colleges are "underfunded" with libraries so tiny and obsolete.

England said the bishop was critical of our lack of Australian leadership, lack of originality.

POPE JOHN'S DEATH

W.C.C. SYMPATHY

The World Council of Churches sent the following telegram to Cardinal Bea as soon as the death of Pope John XXIII was announced:

"We beg your Eminence to accept the expression of our deeply felt sympathy on decease of Pope John XXIII who has contributed so greatly to the brotherly relationships between the Churches believing in the one Lord. May he rest in peace and his work be fulfilled. Franklin Clark Fry, Chairman, General Committee; Ernest Payne, Vice-Chairman, General Committee; W. A. User, J. Hoof, General Secretary."

In addition, Dr Visser 't Hooft made the following statement:

"The great significance of the Pontificate of Pope John XXIII is clear, clearly when we remember how many important decisions and changes took place in that short period of less than five years."

From the point of view of the ecumenical movement we mention especially the calling of the Council through which so many vital spiritual forces have been released, and the whole Christian world has been challenged, the creation of the Secretariat for Unity, the sending of observers to the Council Assembly at New Delhi and the invitation to other Churches to send observers to the Vatican Council.

"But most important of all has been that profound change in relationships which has led to the beginning of a true dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the other Churches."

"I believe that Pope John XXIII will be remembered as the Pope who made that new dialogue possible."

gation, and our effect on the community at large. As for Canada, no Australian churchman had been invited to speak at the Toronto Congress although Australia has more Anglicans living in it than in any other part of the world outside the United Kingdom.

"This picture of our Church gathered in the major countries of the world is an unhappy one," said Bishop Shevill.

"It suggests that we are an outdated, understaffed, inflexible body of well-meaning colonialists devoted to the perpetuation of a fading tradition."

There was a steady increase in Church membership in the U.S.A., but Anglican numbers were decreasing in New Zealand and Australia. In the country all diocesan bishops and most assistants were American citizens; in Australia and New Zealand lack of indigenous leadership was marked.

In 175 years, there had been no Australian archbishop; in the capital cities of the West Coast, three out of four deans were from abroad.

"In theological colleges it is not an unique situation in Australia to find that the entire residential staff has been imported."

"Broadly forty per cent of Australians live in Sydney and

Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth second for another ten per cent, which means that half the Anglican population of the Commonwealth have never had indigenous leadership.

"The Presbyterians do not insist that their moderators be Scotsmen, nor the Roman Catholics that their cardinals and archbishops should be Irish or Italian," said Bishop Shevill. "Is it not time we dropped it?"

(Continued on page 12)

CHURCHMEN IN UNITY ON COLUMBA'S ISLAND

ANGLICAN NEWS SERVICE

London, June 10

Iona, famous hearth of Western Christianity, was the scene of an historic ecumenical service on June 2.

Representatives of the Anglican, Presbyterian and other Free Churches to mark the 1,400th anniversary of the landing of St. Columba.

The service was in Iona Abbey, the restoration of which has been a process of completion for the past 25 years by the ministers, craftsmen and voluntary labourers of the Iona community.

Pilgrims from several countries attended the service. Some of them could not gain admission to the abbey and watched on television screens in the cloisters.

The first part of the service was conducted in the open behind the Chapter House, by Bishop Leslie Newbigen, of the Newburg, the Bishop of Durham, the Bishop of Edinburgh, which both the Church of England and the Church of Scotland are in inter-communion.

The sermon was preached by Professor James Stewart, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, who later went to the Communion table in company with Bishop Newbigen, the Bishop of Durham, the Right Reverend M. H. Harland, the Bishop of Edinburgh, the Right Reverend Kenneth Carey (Presbyterian Church in Scotland); and Dr Neville Davidson (Church of Scotland).

The Reverend Vladimir Rodzanko, representing the Eastern Orthodox Church, read one of the lessons.

Others present included leading members of the Presbyterian Churches in England, Wales and Ireland, the Methodist, Baptist and Congregational Churches, the

Salvation Army and the Society of Friends.

Brother Christopher, of the Tzartine community of the French Reformed Church, was a tall, conspicuous figure in his white robes, among the black and purple of other clergy and the scarlet and purple of the chorists.

A great task of practical Christianity and restoration is being fulfilled in this small island. The abbey, founded by Columba and his monks, has been almost renewed.

IONA FORCE

The Iona community, an expeditionary force of churchmen and craftsmen, originally came out of the shims and unemployment of the shipping area of Govan, Glasgow, in 1938, to complete the rebuilding of the abbey and to prove that the Church offered the example of a deed as well as a collection and inspiration of the Word. They were led, as they still are, by Dr George MacLeod.

The community, which has its headquarters in Glasgow, continues to try to involve itself in the social and industrial life of the people, to express its creed of "work, and worship, and service." It has the roughest praying hands in the Church.

More pilgrims will be coming here during the next fortnight. The Prime Minister is to pay a visit this week, more than 1,000 young people were there last Sunday and the Archbishop of Canterbury is to lead a pilgrimage of Anglicans and Episcopals on June 12.

A crowd similar to that used by the saint is being drawn here by members of the Church of Ireland, and a Royal fishing boat was presented to the community by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland last Sunday. Those who were here last Sunday have strained the accommodation in Iona. They seemed indeed to be the simple, active Christianity practised in the community.



Mr and Mrs Christopher Coney, with their son, Andrew, new missionaries from New Guinea, the office of the Anglican Missionary Council, Perth, with the Reverend John Wardman, recently returned from New Guinea.

Left: Mrs. photograph.

Perth, June 3

MISSIONARIES FOR NEW GUINEA

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

When the "Stratheden" from England called at Fremantle last week, two new missionaries for New Guinea came ashore to be welcomed at the office of the Anglican Missionary Council.

They met the Reverend John Wardman and Mrs Wardman, who returned last year from New Guinea, where they had served for eleven years.

The new missionaries were Mr Christopher Coney, who has been a teacher at Adirindale College, Sussex, and his wife, Joanna, a daughter of a vicar in Bedford and a nurse before her marriage. With them was their 15-month-old baby, Andrew.

They are bound for the Martyrs' Memorial School, Popondeta. Asked what put the idea of missionary service into his mind, Mr Coney said that he had been challenged to go to New Guinea, if he wanted worthwhile work overseas.

Mrs Coney's sister is married to the Reverend Stephen Adams, who was out at Wai and Bulolo in 1958-59. They are anxious to get to Popondeta and to get down to the job for which they have come half-way across the world.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND INFORMATION TRUST

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The Trust is empowered to administer bequests under Wills, and property of all kinds and to aid by publishing, books, pamphlets, leaflets, and other educational purposes in connection with the doctrines and activities of the Church of England.

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The Trust is at present making an Appeal for a capital sum of £60,000, for the purposes of publishing, books, pamphlets, leaflets, and other educational purposes in connection with the doctrines and activities of the Church of England. It is helping to set up the Primatial Library in the Anglican School of Theology in London. It is helping to provide books for the Colgate Library of St. Mark, Canberra.

COMPOSER'S RECITAL

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

Melbourne, June 10. An organ and choral recital, probably the first of its kind, will be held at St. Andrew's, Brighton, Diocese of Melbourne, on June 25 at 2 p.m.

It is being organised by the Victorian Music Composers' Society. The works to be performed at this recital are those composed by Ian L. Thomas, Organist and Master of the Chorists at St. Andrew's.

The V.M.C.M.S. exists to foster an appreciation for music by local composers. It is a project of work to be presented has already been performed during the normal course of Church services. This includes the Passion Cantata, "Truly Great is the Lord, our God of God" for tenor and bass soloists and choir.

This glass chalice, twelve feet in height, forms part of a trilogy, symbolising the Holy Trinity, which will be mounted above the altar in Holy Trinity Church, Hounslow, near London, about June 15.

When completed, it will be spotlighted.

of these Centres.

BOOK REVIEWS

A STIMULUS TO
THOUGHT

HONEST TO GOD. John A. L. Bullmann. House of Woodhick, S.C.M. Press. Pp. 142. 8s. 6d.

The Australian edition of this book is reported to have sold 15,000 copies in a fortnight, breaking the record previously held by *They're a Weird Mob*. One wonders what a great majority of the 15,000 readers will make of it.

For it is not altogether easy reading and almost demands some previous acquaintance with the writings of one of the theologians—Bullmann, Tillich and Bonhoeffer—who the bishop quotes so extensively.

In record sales are due, of course, to the sensational Press reports which followed its publication in England. It may be that those reports have done a disservice to its author by making him appear a rebel against ecclesiastical authority.

He is, as he says, "a reluctant revolutionary," and his book is a serious and obviously sincere attempt to express the Christian faith not only in language, but more importantly, in the thought-forms of the contemporary age.

It is true that, as he says, "it will doleful seem to some that I have by implication abandoned the Christian faith altogether."

It will certainly seem so to the fundamentalist and the traditionalist.

He goes on to say, "I believe that unless we are prepared for the kind of revolution of which I have spoken it will come to be abandoned. And I am writing this because it is moulded, in the way we know it, by a cast of thought that belongs to a past age—the cast of thought which, through their different expressions, Bullmann describes as 'mythological,' Tillich as 'supernaturalist,' and Bonhoeffer as 'religious'."

The revolution of which the bishop speaks is a revolution in our accustomed way of thinking about God, as a Being "out there," beyond the world of Jesus Christ, as "coming from there" and taking our flesh from Him, of worship and prayer as "disengagement" from the life of the world of morality as obedience to a code of laws prescribed by God and applying to every situation.

There are, he recognises, many people for whom this way of thinking is not only meaningless but helpful; but there are vast multitudes for whom they no longer have meaning. They no longer "ring a bell."

It is for such people that they may come to know "the truth as it is in Jesus" that the bishop makes his revolutionary statement.

ADELAIDE RECTOR'S
SERMONS

THE WORD MADE FLESH. Lancelot R. Babbington. Fontana Press. Pp. 128. 3s. 6d.

This volume of thirteen sermons is by the Holy Trinity of Adelaide.

Dr Babbington, in his foreword, in commenting on the ancient biblical preaching of the resurrection that twice in his ministry the seating capacity of the church has had to be enlarged.

This is evangelical preaching in the grand manner. Many of the sermons would take from half an hour to three quarters of an hour to present.

Your reviewer would find them unforgettably long and, with so much material to digest, rather wearisome.

One sermon deals with each petition of the Lord's Prayer, another with each verse of the 23rd Psalm and a third with each of the Beatitudes. Even to give the sweep of the passages one wonders if this is the best method of expository preaching.

Much more valuable are these practical sermons on the "handling" of grief, loneliness, worry and guilt.

It is good to see sermons from Australian Anglicans in print. Your reviewer feels Mrs Muri Shillito will publish another volume and he hopes that the material will be handled with greater depth with fewer headings.

—A.V.M.

AND A CORRECTIVE

IMAGE, OLD AND NEW. Michael Rennie, Archbishop of Canterbury. G.B.E., Pp. 112. 2s. 6d.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has written a very fair, temperate and, indeed, kindly, criticism of the Bishop of Woolwich's "Honest to God."

He is concerned as much to explain to those who are puzzled and perplexed by it as to show that it is about as to criticize its conclusions.

But he does have some reasoned criticisms to make. First, that the bishop's image of God as "deep down," within the depths of the world, as a being, must not be allowed to be "deep down" beneath the "above" the world, as a being, making it known to us by revelation and grace and seeking us out.

Here the archbishop puts his finger upon a weakness in the bishop's argument which, in fairness, it must be said the bishop has already foreseen.

There is the danger that in stressing God's immanence we may imprison him within the central image of his transcendence and so fall into the forces of the world.

Of the bishop's treatment of the Person of Christ, the archbishop writes:

"It seems to me to be in essence, not far from the presentation in the Gospel of St. John of the divine glory in the Cross. In the light of his transcendence and so fall into the forces of the world."

BUT he adds that the language of "coming and going" may still be necessary to express "the depth of the divine humanity, the humility of Bethlehem, as well as of the fear-sacredness of Calvary."

On worship and prayer, he agrees that "that is the way it is true. There is need for a God who is immanent in the life of the world."

"But if it is thought to be the life of the world, it is not the life of the world. There is ever an urgent place for just what the Christian life for beyond what is."

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school of thought realises or allows.

"It is at this point specially critical of the new way of thinking in the world, the wide dimension of truth, which we explain to those who are puzzled and perplexed by it as to show that it is about as to criticize its conclusions."

The archbishop is most severely critical of the "new approach to Christian morals," which, he says, "is a very serious criticism of its aims, but also for concern to explain to those who are puzzled and perplexed by it as to show that it is about as to criticize its conclusions."

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