

Editorial

THE Lambeth Conference has been well prepared by copious literature. For the *locale*, the Librarian, Dr. Dodwell, has produced a handsome history,¹ lavishly illustrated by prints and photographs, an admirable folio presentation book. Among its interests are the pictorial comparisons—the Crypt, the Chapel, the Lollards Tower, for instance, shown as they were at different dates. Dewi Morgan's *The Bishops Come to Lambeth* (Mowbray, 5/-) gives a popular account of the development of the Anglican Communion, and of the Conference. Gordon Hewitt's *Church of Free Men* (Highway Press, 2/6) approaches the subject from a somewhat wider angle, though mainly within the context of the Church Missionary Society, as an aid to parish study groups. It has useful tables and notes.

On a deeper level, *Essays in Anglican Self-Criticism*,² just published, is timely. The Editor of the S.C.M. Press has brought together sixteen writers, ordained and lay, and not all Anglicans, and they appraise strengths and weaknesses, constructively but often controversially. Some discuss matters of interest mainly to this country; M. J. M. Paton, for instance, in an essay which is not only incisive but entertaining, even if it will not convert, would abolish the Establishment; while Miss Batten's "The Parish To-day", reaches, from a different starting point and with a wider reference, much the same conclusions as the writer of the anonymous article on "The Church in the Countryside" in this number of THE CHURCHMAN, and offers a very similar remedy. Some relate to a specific corner of the Communion, and the essay by a Chinese clergyman in Peking must have made the editor hot under the collar: it gives that garbled view of the history of Christians missions in China which is the basis for many of the tensions now afflicting, beneath the bland surface of the Three-Self movement, the Church in that land. The symposium as a whole, however, is a brave attempt to make us think, whether or not there is agreement with any or all of the writers.

But the most important book for Lambeth is undoubtedly Bishop Stephen Neill's *The Unfinished Task*.³ Already in a second impression, it is a book which should be read by every one of the three hundred bishops, and by clergy and intelligent laymen who create that public opinion which, indefinably, can influence Lambeth.

The Unfinished Task is not concerned solely with the Anglican Communion, and its discussion is primarily of the Church in non-Christian lands. These points only increase its importance, for Lambeth 1958 will have no meaning except in an ecumenical context, while the "home countries" more than ever must turn their eyes outwards. From his wide experience Bishop Neill places his finger on the needs of to-day, with all its complexities and opportunities. He illumines failures and weaknesses, and often he goes unerringly to their answer. "The major task," he writes (p. 106) of the question of a Christian culture in Britain, "is to get the Bible back into the consciousness of the ordinary man and woman". "Competent knowledge of the Bible is the only basis for effective Christian witness,"

he states (p. 130) of younger churches. Of the modern missionary he writes (p. 141), "He must be, to use the old phrase, a soul-winner. . . . Whatever his technical abilities, he is not worth his pay, unless the very heart and centre of all his work is to bring men and women to the point of personal surrender to Jesus Christ."

It is a book to read, and read again, for its massive yet readable survey of the situation, for its realism (see, for instance, the assessment of what went wrong in China, and of the stresses in Asia and Africa to-day), and for its devotion to the uniqueness and power of God's revelation in Christ Crucified and Risen.

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With this issue the Editor hands over active editorship on going overseas for nearly two years. He asks the prayers of readers for what he is to do: the writing of a descriptive appraisal, for the general reader, of some of the work of Christians in modern Asia, which it is hoped will help towards understanding, and the stirring up of prayer and service. The book is to be published by Hodder and Stoughton (and by Macmillans in U.S.A.) and to make it he and his wife will be travelling in fifteen countries, returning by the United States to research for a biography of D. L. Moody, and reaching England again in the spring of 1960. THE CHURCHMAN will be edited from Wine Office Court, and the Acting Editor, under the Secretary, will be Mr. David J. Mitchell, M.A., of Trinity College, Oxford. Mr. Mitchell, who is thirty-four, was for some nine years a professional journalist and editor, with *Picture Post* and Pictorial Press, and is now manager of the Church Book Room Press. All correspondence, reviews and articles should now be addressed to him until further notice.

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Recent weeks have seen the publication of three new series. The first two volumes of Hodder and Stoughton's Christian Commitment series, edited by the Rev. J. R. W. Stott, are reviewed in this issue. The Inter-Varsity Fellowship's Pocket Books, beginning with three well-chosen new works and one reprint, will be discussed in an article in the next issue. The Banner of Truth Trust, newly formed to reprint lesser known but weighty Protestant theology, has led off with several volumes, among them *Princeton Sermons* by Charles Hodge (1797-1878), 13/6, and *A Commentary on Zechariah* by T. V. Moore (1818-71), 9/-. A full list can be obtained from 58-9, Highgate West Hill, London, N.6.

Crusade has published an admirable evangelistic pamphlet in magazine format: *This is Your Life* (6d.). Cleverly set up and illustrated, it should be highly effective among reasonably intelligent parishioners.

¹ *Lambeth Palace* by C. R. Dodwell, *Country Life*, pp. 69, 35/-.

² *Essays in Anglican Self-Criticism*, edited by D. M. Paton, S.C.M. Press, pp. 238, 25/-.

³ *The Unfinished Task* by Stephen Neill, Edinburgh House Press and Lutterworth Press, pp. 228, 12/6.