

Editorial

FOR some, it would seem, not least the gaitered oligarchy, the name Paul, provided it is sufficiently contemporary, is adequate to guarantee the plenary inspiration of any document. The correspondence columns of both the secular and the religious press have shown, however, that there are many who find themselves unable to accept the apostolicity of the Leslie Paul Report entitled *The Deployment and Payment of the Clergy*, and that criticism of this document is not confined to any particular party or school of thought within the Church of England. At the same time it would be deplorable if the strictures that have been uttered were interpreted as being merely obstructive in nature or as an indication that those who have voiced them are stubbornly opposed to anything that is new; for it is plain that they have sprung from an intense concern for the spiritual well-being of the Church of England. No one is likely to deny that it is a good thing for a church to examine itself from time to time in the light of changing circumstances, and that adjustments of one kind or another are inevitable if its life is to be saved from stagnation. Nor would anyone with a sense of history presume to question the fact that throughout the successive generations the Church of England has proved itself to be a remarkably adaptable institution.

Nor, we may hope, will it be hastily assumed that the revolutionary proposals of the Paul Report reflect a ruthless antagonism to all that is old. But it is a fateful propensity of revolution to be prodigal in sacrificing the good along with the bad, and it is all too fatally easy in the fervour of following the red flag of a promised utopia to hurl the axe indiscriminately at the old order of things. Where there is the conviction that a revolutionary manifesto is dangerously misconceived it is the plain duty of those so convinced to speak out critically and clearly, as sons of the church, to warn of the perils which they see threatening. Among these warning voices one of the most urgent and percipient is that of the Archdeacon of Hastings, a respected authority on the affairs of the Church of England, whose trenchant assessment of the Paul Report we are happy to include in this issue. We earnestly wish that the wisdom of his admonitory judgment may be pondered and heeded throughout the Church of England.

The great danger of the Paul Report is that the application of its recommendations—borne onward by the wave of Pan-Anglican sentiment that was engendered at last year's Toronto Congress and that demands the communization of all church affairs—will reduce the Church of England to a new and undesirable kind of uniformity, namely, an organizational uniformity which will correspond to big-business bureaucracy and will be under the direction of ecclesiastical tycoons, who at the same time may well be spiritual nonentities. The warning signs are there for all to see. Trusts and obligations created in the past will be bulldozed out of the way to clear the ground for the setting up of the new ecclesiastical "plant". The old private enterprises and independencies will feel the throttling grip of the new

monopolists. All will be required to worship in the temple dedicated to the cult of centralization. God and Mammon will be so far merged into one that the blue-print for the Church of the future will be that of twentieth-century industrialism. The bishops and their subordinate bureaucrats will be the bosses and the management. The "ordinary" clergy and certain lay-workers will be the disponible labour-force, whose wages will be determined in accordance with "average industrial earnings".

Prospective ordinands will receive grants towards their training from the Central Advisory Council for the Ministry only on condition that for the first five years after their ordination they submit to direction from the ecclesiastical bureaucrats as to where they may serve and when they may move. Then, we are told, they will be free to go where their sense of duty or their inclination calls them. How is it that the individual's sense of duty and inclination can be considered dispensable during the vitally important stage of the first five years of a man's ministry, when, if he is not congenially placed, the whole of the remainder of his ministry may carry the scars of a traumatic experience? It must be asked, also, whether theological students will be free to refuse CACTM grants (and to receive aid from independent sources) so that they may preserve their freedom and follow their sense of duty. This power over persons may logically be expected to lead sooner or later (for bureaucracy will never be satisfied with half a loaf) to a bureaucratic dictatorship which will exercise control over all the "lower" clergy. Indeed, the proposal to abolish the parson's freehold already envisages a situation in which clergy will be compelled to move after an arbitrarily stipulated period of years; and so it will not be only at the commencement of his ministry that the individual's freedom to be where his sense of duty or his inclination calls him will be violated.

It is obvious that in the interests of ever-increasing efficiency the human factor, with its attendant ratio of unpredictability, ought to be replaced in due course by government by electronic brain, which promises to be the ultimate in modern achievement. The computer-machine will with superhuman efficiency tell us not only what Paul did and did not write, but also who Paul says has to be moved, and when and where. The forward-looking churchman might do worse than advocate now the adoption of the computer-machine, cultically caparisoned with cope and mitre, as the new symbol of the church.

And let there be no doubt that, as has been the case with the monopolies of big business, the bureaucratic centralization of the church's administration will create, increasingly, a management whose image is faceless and impersonal. In big business this has led to the disastrous loss by the worker of the sense of work as *vocation*. It would be calamitous if the church's workers should ever find themselves in a comparable situation. For everything to be stamped "official" may have the appearance of indefectible efficiency, but if it is achieved at the expense of independence, vocation, and the sense of duty, then the cost will be far too great. That is why we feel bound to fight for the survival of private enterprise in the Church of England, for it is this which, so far from being disruptive of the spirit of the church, is the

particular guarantee of that loyalty, that joy, and that purpose in service without which a church cannot be healthy either in spirit or in organization. Independent missionary societies, independent theological colleges, and independent church newspapers may in some measure be inefficient and even at times embarrassing; but they engage the deep interest of churchpeople and retain their vigorous personal involvement in a way that a monolithic centralized organization never will.

No doubt the Church of England does need a "new look" in certain important respects. But bureaucratization along the lines of big business is not the way to go about producing it. The proper alternative (if one is needed) to the present patronage system, for example, is not the setting up of a central "clergy staff board", but the recognition of the right of each parish to take the initiative in "calling" or inviting the minister of its choice when a vacancy occurs. And, as a simple but significant contribution to the establishment of a new look which would make an immediate impression on the man in the street, what could be more commendable than the abolition of all honorific titles in the church, so that all clergy, bishops included, were designated as no more than "Reverend"? A hierarchy of titles panders to unworthy ambitions and inappropriate distinctions, and in any case there is something ludicrous about the possibility that a man who today is addressed as "Venerable" or "Very Reverend" may tomorrow, through no more than a change of sphere, slump to the comparative indignity of "Reverend". But the new look which the church needs above all will be produced not by the planning of an "ecclesiastical Beeching" (however necessary reorganization may be) but by the dynamic reviving work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those who profess the name of Christ. It is for this, first and foremost, that we must pray and preach. It is He who must ever direct and govern the personnel of the Church.

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The proposal to form a body of Friends of Lambeth Palace Library under the presidency of His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, the purposes of which will be to promote the welfare of the Library and to provide an opportunity for members to meet in the pleasant surroundings of Lambeth, will be of particular interest to our readers. It is a project which we commend most warmly. Further information may be obtained from the Librarian, Lambeth Palace Library, London, S.E.1. All who participate in this project will have the satisfaction of knowing that they are helping to support a worthy cause and at the same time doing something which can be of great benefit and pleasure to themselves. As the admirably produced brochure *Lambeth Palace Library, 1958-1963* reminds us, "Lambeth is the oldest public library in the country, and the richness and variety of its contents make it a library of national importance, as well as the principal library of the Church of England and the Anglican Communion". Not only is it a treasury of many ancient books and manuscripts of great preciousness, but it is also the repository for the central archives of the Church of England.

Among recent acquisitions is "a manuscript which, on preliminary inspection, seems to be of no special interest, but which, once its true character is revealed, proves to be an exciting discovery. It is a volume of sermons on the Book of Genesis preached by John Calvin, the Reformer, at Geneva in 1559 and 1560. It is not in Calvin's handwriting, and at first sight would seem to be nothing more than a contemporary copy of a manuscript of his sermons—the sort of document in fact which in one form or another is very commonly found in the 16th and 17th centuries. But consideration of the history of Calvin's sermons puts the matter in a very different light. From 1549, Calvin preached on the Bible twice on Sundays and once daily in alternate weeks. On Sunday mornings he preached on the New Testament, and on Sunday afternoons on the Psalms or New Testament, and on weekdays he preached on the Old Testament. Steadily over the years he preached on book after book of the Bible—200 sermons on Deuteronomy, 159 on Job, and so on. These sermons were extemporary and were never committed to writing by him. In 1549, the refugees in Geneva hired a Frenchman named Raguenier to take down the sermons in shorthand and superintend their transcription, and in the 17th century the resultant volumes, which then numbered 44, were deposited in the Bibliothèque Publique at Geneva. But in 1805 the Librarian was instructed by the Directors of the Library to sell off duplicates, and this he did by weight, adding the whole series of Calvin's sermons but for one volume. This action seems inexplicable to us today and it would be fruitless to speculate on the motives which led to such a remarkable step which was speedily regretted. Between 1823 and 1887, thirteen of the volumes were recovered, but they did not include any of the sermons on Genesis. There are three volumes of Calvin's sermons in other libraries, in addition to the volume now at Lambeth, and of these, one is a presentation volume of sermons given to Sir Thomas Bodley and now in the Bodleian Library. The Lambeth volume therefore appears to be a contemporary copy of some of Calvin's sermons on Genesis, perhaps made for presentation, and with the Bodleian manuscript is the only record now known to exist of these sermons. Its value is the greater because the sermons on Genesis have not been printed".

We have given this quotation from the brochure mentioned above not only because of itself it is of unusual interest, but also because 27 May next will be the 400th anniversary of the death of John Calvin, who, in accordance with his own instructions, was buried in a coffin of common wood in a place not marked by any stone or memorial of any kind. The monument of a great man is the abiding influence of his own works. It was to honour this occasion of the fourth centenary of the Reformer's death that we invited Dr. T. H. L. Parker to contribute the essay on Calvin the Expositor for publication in this issue. As a revealing study of the man and his work by one who is exceptionally well qualified to write on this theme it is an important contribution to Calvin scholarship. One of the most encouraging signs of the present time is the manner in which the works of this remarkable man of God, whose gifts and industry were so phenomenal, are being published and studied anew in all parts of the world.

P.E.H.