

Editorial

Theological Colleges

CHURCH REFORMERS have been very concerned for some years now to do something about the theological colleges. There have been several reports recently, the De Bunsen report in 1968, two reports of the Joint Planning Group in 1968 and 1969 respectively, and the Runcie report of 1970. There have been considerable changes in the colleges during these six years but relatively few of them have been planned. The reasons for this are partly the lack of the necessary criteria for deciding what a theological college should be in the last quarter of the twentieth century, partly the lack of the necessary data about numbers and finance and partly the lack of the necessary co-operation from the colleges in doing things which might affect their own *status quo*. The fact that suggestions for much more effective action have now come from the theological colleges staffs' conference *via* the principals' conference suggests that the last defect may be more likely to be remedied. It is therefore all the more important that, before colleges are closed or forced into ill-considered marriages, the first two defects should also be remedied.

So much have theological colleges become part of the church scene in recent years that it seems to be surprising to some people that they have only been in existence in the Church of England for just over a century and that they are not in fact mentioned in the Epistles of St. Paul. They were founded to meet a particular need at a particular time in a particular social and educational climate and by and large they have fulfilled their role quite adequately. In the different social and educational climate of today their role is likely to be different. Most colleges have seen this point and willingly or unwillingly have made considerable adaptations of their pattern of life in the last few years. The 'Benedictine ideal' of a quasi-monastic community seemed natural when most students had read for their degrees in establishments derived from a similar ideal. When there were few married ordinands

they could be treated as exceptional cases but their families wherever possible were to be drawn right into the community so that the husbands should not seem to be defaulters. It was a natural and understandable fault of theological college staffs to wish to have the whole of a man's training firmly in their own hands. The proportion of married men among ordinands and the change in student attitudes has now rendered this approach impossible and most colleges have seen the need for some decentralisation and a wider involvement in the church for ordinands in training and for the colleges to have a wider responsibility to the church at large. Moves towards part-time training are to be welcomed in appropriate cases but the fact remains that a period of full-time training is almost essential for anyone who is to spend the whole of his professional life in such a highly-skilled and demanding calling as the ordained ministry. Full-time training may not necessarily be the same as what we have come to know as residential training but most of the colleges have sufficiently humanised themselves and rid themselves of most of the pettiness associated with the old system to be able to provide a variety of training according to the needs of the people concerned, though problems of finding a true self-discipline remain.

The uncertainties about numbers and finance have of course been the factors which have compelled a great deal of the rethinking that is going on at the moment. Fewer, larger, more economic colleges is the cry. It is hard to refute the logic of this, but there are points which must not be forgotten. First, as Mr. Wilson Campbell, a leading layman in the Synod, frequently says, we ought to distinguish between what is best educationally and what is best economically. If the two do not coincide the church must be asked whether it is willing to pay for the training of its clergy more than it might be necessary to do if economic considerations are given full sway. Secondly there are the lessons to be learnt from what was probably an over-zealous running down of the railways and coal mines in the 1960s. If there were to be an upward turn in the number of ordinands and colleges had been closed, it would be very much more expensive to build again from scratch if this pattern of training were still to be the norm.

Perhaps part of the answer lies in the development of theological training within multi-purpose Christian communities. This could develop in a variety of ways. The community would normally be an educational one (a college or hall of residence in a university or a college of education) but might be a religious order or a community devoted to some kind of service in a big city. Suggestions have been made in the past about having a theological college as a special department of a church college of education. Such is the lack of co-ordination in church educational policy that a major scheme for re-organisation of the colleges of education has been produced without any apparent consultation with the theological colleges. Fr. Michael Richards,

writing in the Roman Catholic monthly *The Clergy Review* for January 1974, advocates both a married clergy and that 'seminaries should be schools of ministry of every kind, not directly linked to the sacrament of ordination itself, but preparing men as disciples of Christ to serve him in whatever capacity they prove apt for, whether married or celibate. It should be quite normal for a Christian to enter such an institution for some part of his life, for the deeper spiritual and intellectual formation which he needs to train him for the practice of the Christian life in whatever capacity it may be'.

It is of course easier to talk in generalised terms than to produce a workable scheme with all the uncertainties of the present time. It is essential that all the churches get together to think out what their educational policy should be and what they could do in co-operation with each other. Just as the separation between men's and women's training has been broken down with a large measure of success, so the barriers between training by the different denominations are beginning to be breached. If some of the hang-ups from the past can be disposed of the opportunities which may be taken in the field of Christian education are enormous.

Cathedrals

AMONG the most expensive assets of the Church of England are its cathedrals. There is some evidence that once again they are being seen to be amongst the most valuable also for promoting the work of Christ. While few have been designed as modern auditoria most can help to provide a fitting and inspiring setting for some of the larger Christian meetings which are increasingly taking place these days. The maintenance of high standards of music and worship should be compatible with a wider usefulness not only of the cathedral itself but also of the people and the plant associated with it. The day of sanctified museums is passing and all support should be given to efforts which are made to turn them into generators for the mission of the church.

One cathedral which has had its share of vicissitudes since Norman times is that at Durham. Archdeacon C. J. Stranks, who has just retired from a residentiary canonry, tells the fascinating story of the cathedral and its chapter in *This Sumptuous Church* (SPCK, 1973, 114 pp., £0.95). The famous stories of the past are interestingly told, like those of the openings of Cuthbert's tomb and the use of the cathedral as a prison for Scottish soldiers taken captive at the battle of Dunbar. There are striking cameos of some very remarkable characters, but above all we are shown the way in which the role of the cathedral has changed over the years and what an influence it has had at its best.

C. S. Lewis

FEW laymen can ever have had so much influence on Christian thinking as C. S. Lewis. As so often happens he has become the object of something of a cult since his death. Those who have read his writings but know little of the man will be glad to have *C. S. Lewis, Speaker and Teacher*, edited by Carolyn Keefe (Hodder, 1974, 190 pp., £0.50). There are seven chapters in which six different writers relate their impressions of Lewis in different situations and from different points of view. As it is very easy to exalt a person like Lewis to a pedestal which he would have repudiated, it is good that there are passages which show up the weaknesses of the man as well as his strengths. The same publishers have produced a lavish book of photographs entitled *C. S. Lewis: Images of His World*, edited by Douglas Gilbert and Clyde S. Kilby (1973, 192 pp., £4.50). Some of the pictures seem of very doubtful assistance to a better understanding of Lewis, but the book would make an unusual contribution on the coffee table.

New Bible

WE greet yet another new version of the Bible, of which the New Testament has just been published. *The Holy Bible, New International Version* (Hodder, 1974, 546 pp., £0.60) has been prepared by the New York Bible Society. Its style is very like RSV but God is addressed as 'you'. The translation is by an unnamed team of Evangelical scholars, but there are few differences from the more established modern versions on doctrinal points and it is hard to see that there is much of a need for it in this country. The present fashion of producing new renderings of the Bible may end up by confusing more people than it helps.

Massacres

MANKIND has been sickened recently by reports of massacres in various parts of the world, usually connected with differences of race or tribe. In *Wiriyamu* (Search Press, 1974, 158 pp., £1.50), Adrian Hastings tells the story of the atrocity in Portuguese Mozambique which has hit the headlines recently. It is hard for those who do not know Africa to judge about many of the details but the whole story has the ring of truth about it and has now been well probed by the world's press. Perhaps even more disturbing because representing something more 'normal' is *A Place Called Dimbaza* (Africa Publications Trust, 1973). It is a case study of rural resettlement township

in South Africa where 10,000 people have been resettled in the last seven years after being removed from their homes in areas designed for white occupation. If there has been a cry of horror about this from Christians it should not mean that they are any less concerned about oppression in Eastern Europe or inter-tribal atrocities in Africa, to give two examples. It does however seem right that European Christians should be the chief critics of the policies and actions of Europeans who claim to come within the Christian tradition. The most effective voice of criticism of others will come from within their own cultures and it is a matter for prayer that God will raise up in all parts of the world those who can with full conviction and knowledge speak out against the crimes of their own society. Amos coming from outside may have a certain role, but it is Hosea who lives and suffers with his people who can do most to bring them to repentance and reformation.

Ordination of Women

ANOTHER important book has been published on this current burning issue. *Women Priests in the Catholic Church? A Theological Historical Investigation* by Haye van der Meer (Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1974, 199 pp., \$10.00). The author is a Dutch Jesuit and the book consists of a dissertation at the University of Innsbruck in 1962, translated with a foreword and afterword by Arlene and Leonard Swidler and a further foreword by Cynthia C. Wedel. It has created a good deal of interest in the Roman Catholic Church and its line of approach, through the fathers as well as the Bible, suggests that there may be more possibility of change in the position of Rome than is sometimes asserted.

Other Books

ANOTHER very useful booklet from Grove Books is *A Modern Liturgical Bibliography* by John Tiller (24 pp., £0.20). It lists books and articles on liturgy published in English since 1960 and will be of use to all concerned to know what has been happening in recent liturgical thinking.

Church Book Room Press have just produced a paperback reprint of *Pioneers of the Reformation in England* by Marcus L. Loane, Archbishop of Sydney (185 pp., £1.00). This was first published in 1964 and deals with Frith, Barnes, Rogers and Bradford. The more recent policies of Evangelicals in the Church of England are criticised in *The New Evangelicalism in the Church of England* by David N. Samuel (Protestant Reformation Society, 46 pp., £0.20). The chief target

is Dr. Packer and *Growing into Union*, but the booklet includes a reply to criticisms in which Dr. Packer shows he can take care of himself.
R.E.N.

Letter from the Accountants' Christian Fellowship

DEAR SIR,

BOOKS AND ACCOUNTS OF CHURCHES AND CHARITIES

It has been suggested to the Committee of the Accountants' Christian Fellowship that there is a need within the field of accountancy which we could help to meet.

Professional advice and assistance is available to the larger organisations, but there seems to be an absence of any publication which could be used by people not trained in these matters who nevertheless are responsible for the finances of local Churches, Missions and small Charities.

We think we may be able to help by issuing booklets in non-technical language on such subjects as (1) Cash handling and recording, (2) Banking and the control of expenditure, (3) Simple forms of accounting statements, (4) General financial management, (5) Audit, (6) The advantages of giving by deed of covenant and how to administer the same.

Before proceeding with this project we should like to be assured that there is such a need and would therefore be glad to hear from any of your readers involved in this work. The briefest of comments or detailed suggestions would be much appreciated and should be addressed to the undersigned at 53 Downsview Drive, Wivelsfield Green, Haywards Heath, Sussex RH17 7RN.

Yours sincerely,

J. BARCLAY ADAMS, *Chairman.*