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Welcome Home to the Archbishop of Canterbury

THE CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

“WE POSSESS THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH”

A HUGE audience filled the Central Hall, Westminster, last Tuesday evening, to welcome the Archbishop of Canterbury and Mrs. Fisher on their return from Australia and New Zealand. The Archbishop of York was in the chair. The Prime Minister, as representative of the State, was on the platform to greet the Archbishop. The scene was one of great enthusiasm. Dr. Fisher's speech was continually punctuated by cheers and clapping.

DR. GARBETT AND MR. ATTLEE

The Archbishop of York, opening the meeting, said he thought it must be the first time that an Archbishop of York had taken the chair at a meeting in the Province of Canterbury in the presence of the Archbishop of Canterbury. “In the Middle Ages this would have caused some consternation,” he said, “and probably bloodshed!”

Dr. Garbett warmly welcomed home Dr. and Mrs. Fisher. “Not only did the Archbishop of Canterbury go to Australia as the representative of the Home Church,” he said, “it was his own personality, friendliness, ability and statesmanship which made this visit stand out as a great event in the history of the Anglican Communion.”

“It is our duty and pleasure,” said Mr. Attlee, the next speaker, “to try to draw the bonds of the Commonwealth as closely together as possible. The Archbishop left England in the spirit of one of those bonds: the bond of the Anglican Church. I think all of us can express our gratitude to the Archbishop and Mrs. Fisher, who have gone across the seas on an arduous journey. In so doing, they have done great service to all of us in the Commonwealth. It is of the essence of the Commonwealth that it is not bound together by some mere legal or constitutional device, but by a union of spirits; and it is the spiritual unity of the Commonwealth that is its great strength to-day.”

“FIRM ON THAT ROCK”

“The Anglican Communion,” said Dr. Fisher, in the course of his speech in reply, “with its fellowship of Churches, has a special responsibility at this time in the world. We have no doctrine of our own—we only possess the Catholic doctrine of the Catholic Church enshrined in the Catholic creeds, and those creeds we hold without addition or diminution. We stand firm on that rock. We know how to bring to bear on our Christian devotion and creed all the resources of charity and reason and human understanding submitted to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. So we have a freedom and embrace a faith which, in my belief, represents the Christian faith in a purer form than can be found in any other Church in Christendom.

“That is not a boast. It is a reminder to us of the immense treasure

that is committed to our charge—the immense responsibility on us in these days to maintain unshaken those common traditions that we have inherited from those who have gone before us.”

PROPER PRIDE

Nobody, he said, could go on a journey like his without coming back reinforced by his devotion for, and pride in, the Anglican Communion. The Australians had their own problems: one was that of great distances, which made cohesion difficult. But the Church in Australia should think of itself as indeed the Church in Australia and remember its unity in spite of geographical distances. The Church was trying to forge a new constitution, different from that in this country. It had, in fact, been trying for so many years that it had been tempted to give up trying. The Archbishop had told Australians: “Do not dare to stop your efforts for a constitution”; and since his visit he was glad to hear that they had renewed their efforts.

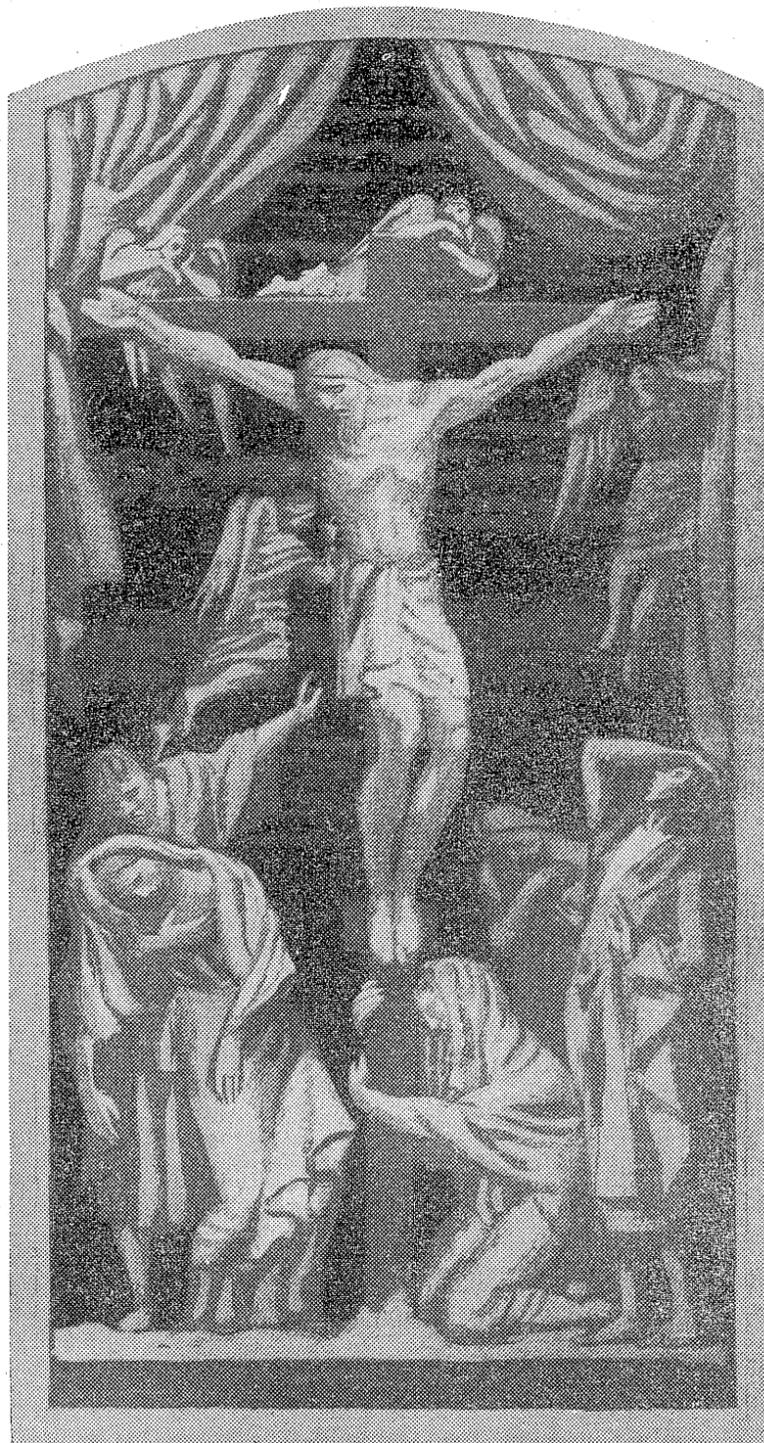
“I cannot exaggerate,” said Dr. Fisher, “the strength of the British tradition as it exists in Australia and New Zealand. It is good for an Englishman to go there and be reinforced in his own faith in that tradition.” Sometimes people in this country were somewhat lukewarm in expressing their devotion to it; they were sometimes even apt to forget it. “But you cannot go to Australia and New Zealand without realizing the inheritance we have in the British way of life. The people were aware, all the time, of the gravity of the international situation, and I was impressed by the way they trusted our leaders to do the right thing in these days, to be firm against aggression, yet always to be peace-makers. They have a prevailing sense of trust in this country.”

HUNDRED AND THIRTY SERMONS

The Archbishop had travelled thirty thousand miles during the four months of his tour. In sixty-five days he and Mrs. Fisher had been 1,400 miles by sea, 1,734 miles by air, 1,560 by train and 3,700 by car. In that time he had given a hundred and thirty-eight addresses and sermons. On an average, he had travelled a hundred and thirty miles a day and had spoken more than twice daily.

Accounts of the Archbishop's visits to various cities in Australia and New Zealand will be found on page 75.

FOR THE FESTIVAL CHURCH



Sketch for the mural on the east wall of St. John's, Waterloo-road. It is the design of Mr. Hans Feibusch

Two Thousand on Pilgrimage to Canterbury

Two thousand people took part in the pilgrimage to Canterbury organized by Lord Craigavon on the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. Its purpose was to make a Christian demonstration against the evils of Communism and materialism.

Each pilgrim wore a plain gilt shield. Some had come from as far as Scotland, others from abroad.

The pilgrims prayed silently: “Pour light into the dark places of the world, give courage to the oppressed and drive out hatred, fear and all the evils which thrive in darkness. Inspire our nations to put on the whole armour of God. . . . Help me and all who make this Christian pilgrimage to become channels through which thy grace and power may flow. . . . Strengthen the Church, and deliver it from those false teachers who mislead and confuse the unwary.” The prayer was written by an anonymous layman.

The Archdeacon of Maidstone, the Ven. J. Bickersteth, welcomed the pilgrims. The Dean was unable to be present; he was confined to his house, recovering from influenza and shingles. Later, pilgrims attended Evensong.

CALVARY FOR ST. JOHN'S, WATERLOO RD.

UNDER the direction of Mr. Thomas F. Ford, the church of St. John, Waterloo-road, is being restored expressly to serve as the “Exhibition church” for the Festival of Britain. Mr. Hans Feibusch has been commissioned to provide a mural painting for the wall behind the high altar, and a panel for the reredos.

The mural—Mr. Feibusch's preliminary sketch for it is above—will take the place formerly occupied by an east window and will cover an area of fifteen by seven and a half feet. The panel in the reredos, the subject of which is not yet decided but which will probably be an Adoration, is to be about four and a half by three feet.

St. John's was one of the churches built to commemorate the Battle of Waterloo. It is in the Greek style and the colours of the capitals and ornaments, green and terracotta, are being used by Mr. Feibusch as the basis of his colour-scheme.

Mr. Feibusch, whose murals are to be seen in churches in Brighton, Eastbourne and Dagenham, as well as in secular buildings, was one of the artists whose work was banned and destroyed by the Nazis in 1933. A one-man exhibition of his easel-paintings opens on Thursday next at the Lefevre Gallery, Bond-street, London.

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QUEEN MARY AT CHURCH HOUSE, WESTMINSTER

THE first act at the spring session of the Church Assembly last Monday was the formal opening of the newly restored Assembly Hall in Church House by Queen Mary. She had laid the foundation stone of the House thirteen years ago.

The Hall and its gallery were filled to capacity. The Archbishop of Canterbury awaited Queen Mary's arrival at the Dean's Yard entrance to Church House.

Queen Mary, a regal figure in familiar royal blue velvet coat and toque, added a touch of homeliness to the ceremony as she passed the front bench of bishops. There she paused, and spoke to three diocesan who had been appointed by King George V.—the Bishops of Gloucester, Lichfield and Norwich.

A short service was held at the rostrum. The hymn, “Holy, Holy, Holy,” was sung, unaccompanied, by singers who work in the offices of Church House. Five collects, the Our Father, and the General Thanksgiving were said.

Queen Mary unveiled the two commemorative panels behind the rostrum. These record the building of the Assembly Hall, its destruction by enemy action, and the present formal reopening. She stood for a few moments with the Archbishop, speaking of the excellence of the restoration. Then, with a bow to the House, and accompanied by loud applause, she left with the Primate for a tour of the building.

NEW VICAR OF ALL SAINTS', MARGARET STREET

We hear, with pleasure, that the Rev. Kenneth N. Ross, vicar of Malden, Surrey, has accepted the incumbency of All Saints', Margaret-street. This famous London church will receive, in Fr. Ross, a priest of distinction, devotion and capability. He took a First in Classical Moderations at Oxford, a Second in Greats and a First in Theology. From 1939 to 1941 he was vice-principal of Sarum Theological College. In Malden he has ordered a large parish with efficiency and success for the past ten years. A commentator has said that he “is about the ablest priest now working in the diocese of Southwark.”