

EDITORIAL

The Society is, I am glad to report, continuing to grow, not only in numbers but also in stature. The Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay, whose recent address to the Society appeared in the Journal (3 Ecc LJ 201) has accepted honorary membership and states that he will 'certainly try to attend one or more of our conferences'. The Archbishop of Wales, whose predecessor was a founder-member of the Society in 1987, has agreed to become a Vice-Patron, as have the Archbishop of Armagh and the Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church. We hope this will encourage lawyers and clergy in those Churches to join the Society, although there are already quite a few members from the Church in Wales. In this connection members may have seen a reference to the Society and the Journal in a report in 'The Times' on 22 November 1994 about those taking part in the highly successful LL M course administered by Dr. Norman Doe through the University of Wales Law School in Cardiff.

We are also delighted to welcome other Christian lawyers to membership or to share our interests and concerns in other ways. Indeed one of our members, Fr. Robert Ombres, O.P. who is also a member of the Editorial Advisory Board, has suggested that a series of public lectures, to be called Lyndwood Lectures, should be sponsored jointly by the Society and the Roman Catholic Canon Law Society and it is hoped to include news about this venture in the next issue of the Journal. As Fr. Ombres says, the lectures would provide ecumenical occasions for members of both societies and others to meet and the lectures would 'help put canon law on the general map.' The name Lyndwood would be highly appropriate as he was 'the best known of all medieval English canonists', as Professor Baker described him (2 Ecc LJ 268). If members know of any other Christian societies with similar aims and objects to ours with whom we might liaise, it would be good to hear about them. In the Anglican Communion we, of course, already have links with the Church Law Association of Canada through one of our members, Chancellor William Hemmerick.

At a recent meeting of the General Committee concern was expressed on behalf of Chancellor Spafford that General Synod has not yet taken any steps to follow up the report of the working party on Statute Law Reform (2 Ecc LJ 42, 305, 399). Brian Hanson explained that recent heavy commitments had made it impossible for Synod staff to make progress on this topic. Nevertheless the Committee was convinced that the task of bringing ancient legislation up to date and rationalising it in the light of changed circumstances was and remained important even if there might soon be major changes in ecclesiastical law following the work being undertaken on Clergy Conditions of Service (page 270). A letter was therefore sent to the Standing Committee of General Synod commending an enlightened consideration of ecclesiastical statute law as soon as possible.

Finally may I draw your attention to a new book on ecclesiastical law by one of our members, Mark Hill, published by Butterworths. It will be reviewed in the next issue.

Editorial Committee: Michael Goodman, Timothy Briden, Rupert Bursell, Norman Doe, David Harte, Hughie Jones, Raymond Hemingray, Peter Moore, David Scott, Thomas Watkin.

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