









27th SEPTEMBER, 1968.

OUR DIOCESAN ANNIVERSARY

Tomorrow our Diocese celebrates its annual Festival at Vaddukoddi. It also marks the 21st anniversary of the inauguration of the Church of South India, of which our Diocese is a part. Referring to the sessions of the C. S. I. Synod which took place at Coimbatore in January of this year, the 1968 Bulletin of the proceedings of the Synod showed that the C. S. I., which when set up 21 years ago was an incredible wonder, had come to stay and was a going concern. Naturally the Synod was engaged with "matters of routine which keep Dioceses going, than with the kind of questions which used to engage its attention when the Church was new and which were of general interest". It is true that the C. S. I. has come to stay and has consolidated itself and also made progress in various directions. Even the Lambeth Conference decided at its sessions concluded recently by an overwhelming majority to examine the extension of full communion to the Church of South India immediately.

Our Diocese itself has grown in recent years. Its several Committees have proud records of work to their credit. We ought to offer our thanks and praise to the Lord of the Church for the wonderful way in which He has led us and blessed our work. However, in one important matter the members of our churches need improvement. As the Bulletin records, there has been a decline in the giving of our people towards the Diocese. In 1960 it was Rs. 12,000, last year it was only Rs. 8,007. The main cause for this decline, we agree with the Bulletin is "That the sense of responsibility of our members towards the Diocese is much less than that towards churches. The churches are a more immediate presence and their needs are felt sooner; and once members have discharged their obligation to the churches they seem to feel that they have done all that is required of them". It is really very unfortunate that thus they forget the function of the Diocese—to exercise oversight of churches, ensure that their work is carried on effectively and set things right whenever anything is wanting. And truly "if the administration of the Diocese declines, the decline of the churches follows inevitably". In the words of the Bulletin again "It is, therefore, to be hoped that the tendency we have noted will soon be corrected", and the response to our members for more giving to the Diocese will show that they know their responsibility to their Diocese.

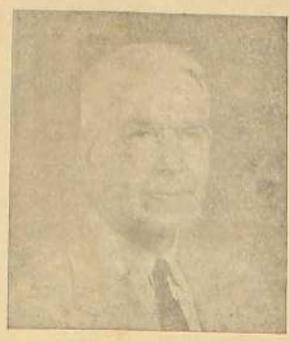
PUBLIC LECTURE ON HEART TRANSPLANT

Under the auspices of the Jaffna Y. M. C. A. Dr. G. S. Ekanayake, F. R. C. S. (Eng.), will deliver a public lecture on "Ethics and History of Heart Transplant" at the Y. M. C. A. Hall on Monday, the 30th inst., at 8.30 P. M.

Y. M. C. A. / Y. W. C. A. WORLD WEEK OF PRAYER

The July August News Bulletin of the National Council of Y. M. C. A. of Ceylon notes: "The Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. of the World over, have been observing each year in November, a special Week of Prayer and Fellowship and we are thankful to God Almighty that He has made it possible for this Week to be observed with such a track, during the past 100 years. This year the 101st Anniversary Celebrations of its observance will be held during the period November 10th to 15th; and the theme for the Week is "Listen". More work is wrought by prayer than this world dreams of. We sincerely hope that all associations would organize a full programme of activities during this Week in order that the prayer and supplications of members of 10,000 Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. would so result in our Ceylon, receiving such spiritual blessings that are most needed for the sustenance and progress of the Y. M. C. A. Movement not only in Ceylon, but throughout the World."

THE REV. DR. S. K. BUNKER



When the Rev. John Bicknell died suddenly in December, 1936, as I wrote in the History of Jaffna College from 1922 to 1947 in the Jubilee Number of the College Miscellany, "It was indeed a loss—some space in our sky that his death left, and we began to ask, with a sense of hopelessness, 'Who can ever take the place of this mighty man?' And we had forgotten for the moment that God takes away His workers but carries on His work, and that He fulfills Himself in many ways." One of these ways was to provide another leader to suit the situation. Such a man was the Rev. Dr. S. K. Bunker. Young though he was when he took charge as Principal—only 33 years of age—he proved himself in the changing conditions and the various pressing demands of the times to be the man for the occasion. He faced equally well the various problems like the growing numbers in the College, the reorganisation of the institution into two Departments (Undergraduate and High School), the changes in the educational and the political systems of the Island, the making of the Board of Directors of the College more representative, the shifting of emphasis in the conception of the relation between the Church and the institution, and the devolution of fuller power into the hands of the nationals through the integration of the Mission and the Church Council.

This he was able to do because he was essentially and truly a Christian Democrat, with a liberal outlook, a genuine sympathy for our national aspirations, and a willingness to identify himself with our people as fully as he could. On the very first occasion he met in Colombo the Alumni of the College at Tea on the same afternoon he set foot on our shores, he told them that his idea of running the institution was not through a dictatorship, but on principles of democracy and co-operation. These principles he adhered to throughout the 29 years he served as the head of the College. These were the secret of the success of his stewardship. They helped materially the development and progress of the institution as a whole and of each Department individually. Never craving for personal prestige or power, he rallied round him his associates in the administration, his staff, the Alumni, the parents and friends, and the Directors of the College for the task of fostering its cause. As a result, both the High School and the Undergraduate Department did register commendable progress during his regime.

The various important happenings of these years have been noted by me in the history I have referred to above and in my article appearing in the latest issue of the Miscellany (December 1967) on 'The Bankers-Sinhala Partnership'. Hence here I want to make particular mention of only two of them: the regaining of real College status by the institution with the establishment of the Undergraduate Department including degree classes in 1947 and the inauguration of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society in 1959 under the auspices of the College. That both these are playing a necessary and significant role not merely in the North, but in the rest of the country too would be generally admitted.

Essentially a thinker, another guiding principle which characterized Mr. Bunker's life was his insistence on the search

for Truth. The first article he contributed to the Miscellany within a month of his arrival in Ceylon was on "The Search for Truth". In it he said: "The formal test of our success at Jaffna College will be how many passes we get and how many matches we won. We have to recognize this fact and adjust ourselves to it. But let us remember that the real test is: how many have found here a better method to make our ideas correspond with the way things really are—a method which they can use throughout life; and also how many have found the courage and determination to follow the truth discovered wherever it may lead." In all his dealings at College—in his chapel talks, sermons and addresses, in the meetings of the staff, in his daily relations with the staff and students—he strove to inculcate this method. He thus helped many to develop determination and courage to follow the Truth. In this task he never yielded to the temptation of diluting the tenets of the Christian Faith.

He was a tower of strength to the Church in the country. In our own Diocese Mr. Bunker found himself in the midst of historic and important changes being effected to bring about the integration of the Mission and the Church Council. In the meetings of the Committee of Review, which was working at a constitution for a new organisation, his understanding help and wise guidance were appreciated deeply. The speech he made at the first meeting of the new Diocesan Council, when the Mission transferred its work to it, was an evidence of his unalloyed faith in the wisdom of the integration and in the ability of us nationals to carry on this great work. He also identified himself with the rest of the Protestant Church and the Roman Catholic Church in the land, and worked tirelessly in the movement for Church Union.

One accusation is often made, and most so in the present time in our country, that missionaries are denationalising agencies and they are out to spread their Western influence. This charge cannot be laid against Mr. Bunker. It is true that he was an American combining all the best in American Liberalism and the cultured dignity of a cultivated Englishman. To these two streams of culture—the American and the English—that contributed to the making of Mr. Bunker, a third was added during his years here—the Tamil stream. Often he used to speak of "We Tamils" and to identify himself with our national aspirations, but never forgetting to point out our lapses.

"In the heraldry of heaven goodness precedes greatness, and so on earth it is more powerful." The goodness of Mr. Bunker has been the secret of the numerous friendships he has gained and of the place of respect and affection he has earned in the hearts of the College, the Church he has served, of the community in which he has lived, and of the larger community in other parts of the Island, which has known and loved him.

While we convey our heartfelt sympathy to Mrs. Bunker, who was such an understanding and valuable helpmate to him, and their two daughters, we thank God for the life of utter devotion and unstinted service which he gave to his people and his King, will save

Devotional VISION WITHOUT WHICH PEOPLE PERISH

Taken from a Sermon by the Rev. Dr. James S. Mather

What is this Vision without which people perish? The Bible says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish," the Book of Proverbs 29: 18. The Prophet Isaiah wrote about "the valley of vision"; the Prophet Micah spoke, "Ye shall not have a vision," as a punishment from God for bad leadership, see his Book, 3: 5-6. When Stephen was stoned and killed, he saw a great vision, and when Peter was in a crisis, God opened his eyes to a new vision, see the Book of the Acts of the Apostles 7: 55; 11: 5. Paul says that a vision appeared to him, when he went on a missionary journey, and called him to go to Macedonia, see the same Book 16: 9. He had a vision again in Corinth, see same Book 13: 9.

Without physical eyesight this life will be dark and gloomy, difficult in many ways, and life will be deprived of many opportunities for development as well as for fruitfulness. More so, man needs Spiritual Vision. Living in darkness is a danger, and spiritual blindness is a far greater danger. St. Paul referred to it in his Epistles, see II Corinthians 3: 14; 4: 4; Ephesians 4: 18; I Thessalonians 5: 4. In the Old Testament it is said that Elisha and his servant were in a city in Jordan, when the enemy surrounded them with horses and chariots, but the Prophet had a vision, and he said, "They that be with us are more than they that be with them," see II Kings 6th Chapter.

The wonderful vision of Jesus is seen in the four Gospels. For instance, look at His words, "The harvest is plenteous," in St. Matthew 9: 37. In that Chapter, you read about the bitter opposition He had from the Pharisees, see verse 11; about the indifference of the two blind men who were healed, they were asked by Jesus not to let others know about it,—evidently He wanted them to go home, and be in-doors for some time,—but they took no notice of His request, see verses 30 and 31. Jesus was accused in Verse 34 by His enemies that He cast devils with the help of the Prince of the devils. But surrounded by all these, Jesus spoke of the harvest that was plenteous, and it was His vision.

"One World, One Family"

Jesus was deeply influenced in all His teachings, by the vision He had of "One World, One Family." The two great ideas He sowed in the minds of all His hearers were that God is Father, and God is King. Since God is Father of all, the people in this world are all brothers and sisters and they should love, care for, and do all they can, towards the well-being of other people; and since God is King, all people should submit to His will and plan, and become citizens of His Kingdom, which meant dual citizenship, of this world, and of the spiritual world. The present hostilities among the nations and races in several parts of the world are very disturbing. Look at the hostilities in the Middle East, between Egypt and the Arab States on one side, and Israel on the other; and then look at Vietnam, Hongkong, South Africa—between the Africans and the white immigrants now in power, in the U. S. A. between Negroes and the whites, nearer home between India and Pakistan, and here in Ceylon look at our own communal prejudices and animosities. All these are clear indications of the result of the failure of the world, to accept and implement the great vision of our Lord Jesus Christ, of "One World, One Family." Till the Nations accept this great Vision, they will continue to suffer and try to destroy one another, hoping wrongly that by pushing others down, they could push themselves up. Only a united world, where all people are members of one family, and their common Father and King, will save

OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN CHURCH AND HOME LIFE

In Relation to our Christian Discipleship Today

Intended as a Basis for discussion with Questions for consideration

The Rev. Celestine Fernando (Continued from last issue)

4. The Image of the Church of God

It is in the light of the Gospel of the Incarnation and Redemption, of what Christ's coming to the earth means, for the national situation in Ceylon that we must look at the Image and Vocation both of the Church and the Home in Ceylon. For both are called to be intensely personal communities which are related to one another and which together are of deep significance for all its members and those among whom they dwell. Neither the Church nor the home can ignore the haunting Biblical questions:

"Where is your brother?" (Gen. 4: 9) "Who is your neighbour?" (Lev. 19: 34)

And so how do we understand the Church which has a special vocation here? What kind of "image" does it provide? To the world around us—in our land

The Church consists of a comparatively small group of people, with representatives in many towns and a few villages in Ceylon, who believe in a God who was proclaimed by Western missionaries who, largely because they were supported by foreign and colonial Governments, were able to influence people and specially young children in the schools. Because of foreign money and government aid, they were able to open such schools in many parts of the land, places and opportunities of influence. By means not very acceptable to many people in our country today, these missionaries and the nationals who followed their traditional religious beliefs wearing them from the true spirit of our country—which ought to be always Buddhist—and to which every Sinhalese should be loyal—or which in the North and the East ought to be always Hindu—and to which every Tamil should be loyal.

The Christians, many of whom have with the coming of independence given up these foreign religious professions and few of whom now participate in public life, are chiefly a middle class group with middle class prejudices primarily concerned with their own comfort. They are islands of irrelevance at a time of grave national need.

Few even take part in public worship—or in Church activities—or behave as if they are very sincere or zealous about their beliefs. They may be credulous and proclaim belief in a living Church. But they do not take Him seriously either in their home-life or in their Church-life. Certainly to them "God is dead"—and

us from wars and suffering, and give us happiness and prosperity. This is the Vision, the Bible presents to the world, "the Vision without which people perish."

has been so, for many years before some modern Theologians showed their eagerness to announce His funeral. They say that the Bible speaks of a Kingdom of God—but they prefer to obey the government or the call to materialistic ways of life rather than their own King. They speak of a new life with faith and love, justice, freedom and joy—but they themselves seem to be quite defeated by the problems they have to face in the building of a New Society and even in their own Homes. Apart from the fact that too many of them are aloof from popular national and communal movements, their lives do not seem to be any different from those of others. They lack the spiritual power and character that the followers of Jesus appear to have had according to their Scriptures. They seem to have too much of a minority complex, forgetful of the fact that creative minorities are the salt of the earth.

And yet the Scriptural image of the Church is so very different. According to the Bible the Church is a Divine-Human family called by God. It is God's creation for witnessing to His redeeming Love and Forgiveness and to the victorious and joyous character of those who live in Fellowship with Him in the world. It is primarily a family charged with expressing "family values" in and for the world. It is an organism in which the Spirit of God lives and inspires not just an institution or an organisation able to run on ordinary notions of discipline and efficiency. It is not sinless but is a body of forgiven sinners who are called to proclaim God's love and forgiveness for all sinners—for "all men have fallen short of the glory of God". It is thus also an Evangelistic Community. It not only has a mission—it is a mission: serving all people in many complex needs. As Archbishop William Temple has said: "It is the only organisation which does not live for itself". As Christ was a Man for others, so it is a Church for others. Its very existence is a call to people who do not know God to come to Him and live lives of discipleship in Christ bringing more and more people who do not know Him into the fellowship of Grace and Spiritual Power. For man's greatest need is for love—to love and to be loved; and the Church exists to declare God's love and abundant life through Him. But the Church must undergo radical changes if it is to be true to its Scriptural image.

So let us first get our perspectives and proportions correct. The Church may not reflect the image proclaimed by Holy Scripture—and yet it is not wholly evil or indeed dispensable. There is very much in it that is meaningful, powerful and relevant. There is very much in what has done for man's redemption. We must become aware of what has happened in Church History and in our own day in various places in the Church if we are to make a fair judgement.

(To be continued)

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