

EDITORIAL

With its second biennial residential conference behind it and a membership now of more than 400, the Society may truly be said to have come of age.

The enthusiasm and interest which have marked the response of those who have joined the Society since its inauguration at Cambridge in March 1987, have clearly shown that the frequently expressed *cri de coeur* of Bishop Kemp and Chancellor Garth Moore for a society committed to the study and practice of Canon and ecclesiastical law was well merited. It is now up to the Society to show that it can rise to the challenge they threw out.

Concern has long been expressed at the absence of any teaching in these subjects in our universities and colleges and it was heartening to hear at the Nottingham Conference of the decision by members of the Law Faculty in the University of Wales to provide the opportunity for study in this field. I am delighted to set out the text of the resolution which was carried unanimously by those present at Nottingham in these terms:

“The Annual Conference of the Ecclesiastical Law Society learns with pleasure of the proposed establishment of courses in the Cardiff Law School leading to the award of a Diploma in Canon Law and other qualifications and expresses the hope that the College and University authorities will implement these proposals.”

What Wales proposes today, let England follow tomorrow!

In this connection members will I am sure be delighted to learn that Professor David McClean is to represent the Society at a Workshop of European Professors of Ecclesiastical Law in Milan in October when he will be presenting a paper on the financing of churches and religious denominations out of public funds, a subject of considerable importance with the continuing debate concerning state aid and the ecclesiastical exemption in this country. We look forward to reading a promised article from him in the next issue of the Journal by which time General Synod will also be in the middle of its consideration of the legislation designed to implement the recommendations of the Faculty Jurisdiction Commission. With 1992 fast approaching, perhaps we can look forward to the establishment of a European Ecclesiastical Law Society!

The range of topics which have been featured in articles in the Journal has been wide and varied and it is to be hoped that they will encourage members to engage in sustained study in the Working Parties and elsewhere, leading to positive action in the life of the Church as it grapples with applying well established doctrine and teaching to our contemporary situation. We particularly appreciated the Archbishop of York's lecture at Nottingham on Ethics and the Role of Law which we hope to follow up by considering some of the difficult and developing areas of scientific study in the light of our Christian heritage.

At the one-day Conference in London next March, it is proposed to include two or three short talks by members who have papers they would like to deliver on topics of their choice. If you would like to be one of them, would you please let me know as soon as possible.

Members may like to know that the Society has a stock of the reprints of Issues 1 and 2 of the Journal in one volume, and also of Issues 3 and 4. Copies of these are obtainable at £5 each.

As I have said before this Journal will welcome “Letters to the Editor” on any topic you wish to raise. They should be sent to me at Parkside, Dulwich Common, London SE21 7EU.

MICHAEL GOODMAN

Editorial Committee: Chancellor Goodman (Chairman), Professor John Baker, Timothy Briden, David Harte, Raymond Hemingray and the Ven. Hughie Jones.