

CAMBERWELL EXPERIMENT

Nov 1959
Ch. T.

Ordinands Will Work by Day: Study at Night

THE new Bishop of Southwark (the Right Rev. Mervyn Stockwood) has not been long in formulating the first of the pilot schemes of cautious experiment which he forecast in his enthronement sermon.

He announced at his diocesan conference on Monday that he had appointed the Rev. Eric James, chaplain of Trinity College, Cambridge, to the living of St. George's, Camberwell.

"He will, I hope, bring with him half-a-dozen graduates who will earn their living by day in industry, and go ahead with their theological studies at night. When these men reach ordination level, they may become curates in the ordinary way, or they may feel that they can be of greater use if they remain where they are, and discover their own way to a new pattern of priesthood.

"I am fully alive to the dangers of the scheme, but I am prepared to take risks in order that we shall do something to get alongside a large section of our society which has little or nothing to do with the Church."

Prayer Book Services

Dr. Stockwood, who is a member of the Liturgical Commission, said that when people went to church they had a right to find the services conducted in a way which was compatible with the Book of Common Prayer.

"For that reason, while I am prepared to agree to minor deviations, I cannot sanction any major departures, and I must ask that the Canon in the Communion Service shall be that of 1662 and nothing else." And the Bishop made it plain that he would not permit use of the Interim Rite.

But he was equally emphatic about his desire to let the Spirit move on the liturgical waters. Provided that the statutory services were held on Sundays and week-days, he was ready to allow some experiments to be made.

He hoped to set aside one church in the diocese which, under an experienced liturgiologist, would become a liturgical centre where demonstrations could be held and advice given.

New Training Plan for the Ministry Begins Next Year

Ch. T. 13.11.59

BIRMINGHAM ORDINANDS TO TAKE JOBS IN INDUSTRY

A SCHEME whereby potential ordination candidates will take up full-time work in factories and offices while continuing their theological studies is to be launched in Birmingham next Easter. The scheme is the idea of the Bishop of Birmingham (the Right Rev. J. L. Wilson).

Instead of doing all their training in a theological college, the ordinands will spend part of it living and working with other members of the community in a "down-town" district of Birmingham. The headquarters of the scheme will be St. Peter's Vicarage, Spring Hill.

The man in charge of the training will be the Vicar of St. Peter's (the Rev. Ronald Gordon). Mr. Gordon, a thirty-two-year-old bachelor, was until recently on the staff of Cuddesdon Theological College. He left at the invitation of the Bishop of Birmingham to start the new scheme, which he will combine with his parochial duties.

The Rev. G. Brown is leaving an East London parish in January to become Sub-Warden of the training scheme.

Evening Discussions

Eight students will live at the vicarage. By day they will work at ordinary jobs found for them by the industrial chaplain, some as bus-conductors or factory machinists. In the evenings they will discuss their experiences with the Warden as part of their theological studies, and at week-

ends will take part in parish work.

Mr. Gordon explained on Tuesday that the scheme will not be a substitute for the training given in a conventional theological college, but a kind of industrial "sandwich course" in conjunction with it. The students would be single men of nineteen to twenty-four, who would either live in the vicarage or in lodgings.

"The object is to give them a slice of real life before they enter the ministry. Many young ordinands have no real idea of how ordinary people think until they meet problems face to face in their first parish. National Service gave young men a wider view of life, but now that is ending we feel something else is needed to fill the gap.

New Look Needed

"We hope the scheme will give the potential clergyman an opportunity to find out what the man in the street or at the work-bench has to say for himself, how he feels about going to church, and what his attitude is to Christian doctrine and worship.

"A new look is needed in the training of clergy. A parson not only needs to know, believe and live the gospel himself, but also to know the language of those to whom it is to be preached. And, like learning a language, there is no substitute for living in the country where it is spoken."

One student, Mr. David Bracey, of Alton, who has recently completed his National Service in the Royal Artillery, has already joined the Warden to help him with the preparatory work.