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Archbishop Temple's offer of a Lambeth degree to Dorothy L. Sayers¹

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This is the introduction to an edition of correspondence between Temple and Sayers, which is not reproduced here for reasons of copyright. The version is as submitted after peer review, but before copy-editing and typesetting.]

Among the papers of William Temple at Lambeth is a short correspondence from the summer of 1943 between the Archbishop and the novelist and writer Dorothy L. Sayers, in which Temple intimates his wish to award Sayers the Lambeth Doctorate of Divinity. The ensuing exchange, at the end of which Sayers was to turn down the offer, is illustrative of the views of both Temple and Sayers on the relationship between the arts and the Church of England, and stands as an epitome of many of the unresolved tensions in that relationship.²

In order to place the offer in its fullest context, a brief account of the previous six years' development in Sayers' work is necessary. For the editor of Sayers' letters, 1937 was a turning-point in her career, at which the transition from detective novelist to playwright began.³ The year saw the production of her first attempt at religious drama, *The Zeal of Thy House*, for the Friends of Canterbury Cathedral, which was staged in June. The play was successful enough to transfer to the Westminster Theatre in London, and marked a new phase; as one of her biographers has noted, views that might previously have been attributed to characters in her novels were now voiced by angels and archangels in a story of the building of a cathedral,

¹ I am indebted to Melanie Barber, Mark Greengrass, Margaret Hunt and to the staff of Lambeth Palace Library for their assistance at several stages of the preparation of this edition.

² Lambeth Palace Library (hereafter LPL), William Temple Papers, vol. 39, fos 267-80. The Sayers letters were included in the second volume of the edition of her correspondence edited by Barbara Reynolds (5 vols, Cambridge, 1995-2002, hereafter *Letters*), at pp. 429-32. It is briefly summarised in Reynolds, *Dorothy L. Sayers: Her Life and Soul* (London, 1993), pp. 372-4, and by James Brabazon, *Dorothy L. Sayers* (London, 1981), at pp. 214-15. It is not mentioned in Ralph E. Hone, *Dorothy L. Sayers. A Literary Biography* (Kent, Ohio, 1979).

³ *Letters*, II, xiv.

and as such were bound to be attributed to her personally.⁴ It was from this point on that Sayers' correspondence gradually became swollen with invitations from clergy and lay Christians to write or speak on religious matters; despite her later protestation that she had never intended to become embroiled in apologetics, or to 'bear witness for Christ', this was to be the effect.⁵ Prominent articles began to appear, such as 'The Greatest Drama Ever Staged is the Official Creed of Christendom' in the *Sunday Times* in April 1938.⁶ Sayers' profile as Christian apologist grew, and by 1939 she was receiving letters 'by every post imploring one to open bazaars at Penzance or South Shields'.⁷

At some point in the immediate pre-war period Sayers caught the attention of William Temple, at that point still Archbishop of York.⁸ Late in 1939 Temple, according to his biographer a devotee of detective fiction, wrote to J.H. Oldham exclaiming 'how magnificent Dorothy Sayers is !'⁹ Sayers turned down a request from the archbishop in the summer of 1940 to write a play for use in the diocese of York, and in November 1941 declined an invitation to be involved in a prospective religious 'Brains Trust' broadcast by the BBC.¹⁰ Temple was, however, successful in persuading Sayers to contribute to his Malvern Conference of January 1941.¹¹

Temple's offer of the Lambeth D.D. was in recognition of the impact of two works in particular: the series of radio plays *The Man Born to be King*, and the earlier book *The Mind of the Maker*. Published in 1941, *The Mind of the Maker* may fairly be regarded as Sayers' most enduring work of theology

⁴ Brabazon, *Sayers*, pp.161-2.

⁵ Sayers to John Wren-Lewis, Good Friday 1954; *Letters*, IV, 139.

⁶ *Sunday Times*, 3 April 1938.

⁷ Sayers to her son, 22 March 1939; *Letters*, II, 123.

⁸ Sayers was guest of honour at a luncheon of the Old Queens Society, chaired by Temple in February 1938. *Times*, 7 February 1938.

⁹ F. A. Iremonger, *William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury. His Life and Letters* (London, 1948), p. 477; quoted in a letter from Oldham to Sayers, dated 28 December 1939, in Brabazon, *Sayers* p. 188.

¹⁰ Sayers to Temple, 30 August 1940, *Letters*, II, 177; Sayers to Temple 24 November 1941 (*Letters*, II, 321). On her view of the existing BBC programme of that name, see Sayers to James Welch, 2 January 1941; *Letters*, II pp.217-221.

¹¹ Sayers' paper on 'The Church's Responsibility' was included in *Malvern 1941. The Life of the Church and the Order of Society* (London, 1941), pp. 57-78. The conference itself is described in Iremonger, *Temple*, pp. 428-33.

proper.¹² Temple clearly thought highly of it, describing it as ‘a really original approach to the doctrine of the Trinity, of great theological and apologetic value.’ (4) V.A. Demant thought the work to be of ‘inestimable value’, having ‘as to method, in my opinion, revived theology as it should be written in any constructive and seminal sense’.¹³ Developing ideas already present in *The Zeal of Thy House*, it contains an extended analogy between the creative work of the Trinity and human creativity.¹⁴ In so doing, it lays out a doctrine of the status of work of the highest possible dignity, and makes some very trenchant claims for the independence of the artist and the importance of works of art in and of themselves; views which, it will be argued, were in part behind her decision to refuse the Lambeth degree.

If *The Mind of the Maker* was quietly successful, *The Man Born to be King* was a sensation. Before the plays were even broadcast, agitation had begun in the press against Sayers’ use of modern speech, and against the direct portrayal of Christ by an actor, since any such portrayal was still disallowed on the stage under the censorship powers of the Lord Chamberlain. The greater impact, however, unfolded as the plays were broadcast at monthly intervals between December 1941 and the following October.¹⁵ In his foreword to the printed edition of the plays, James Welch, Director of Religious Broadcasting, reproduced a sample of the hundreds of letters of thanks he had received, showing, in his view, that the plays had been massively successful in reaching the majority of the listening public who were not regular churchgoers, and who had not been reached hitherto by the more standard BBC provision of broadcast services and religious talks.¹⁶ As Welch put it whilst suggesting the idea of the Lambeth degree to Temple

¹² On the work’s originality, see John Thurmer, ‘The Theology of Dorothy L. Sayers’, *Church Quarterly Review*, 168 (Oct.-Dec. 1967), 452-62. See also several of the pieces in Thurmer, *Reluctant Evangelist. Papers on the Christian Thought of Dorothy L. Sayers* (Hurstpierpoint, 1996).

¹³ Demant, ‘Analogy of Creation’ [a review], in *Christendom. A Journal of Christian Sociology*, XII;45 (March 1942), 49-53; 49.

¹⁴ *The Zeal of Thy House* (London, 1937), p. 110-11.

¹⁵ The making, broadcasting and reception of the play are described in depth in Kenneth M. Wolfe, *The Churches and the British Broadcasting Corporation 1922-1956. The Politics of Broadcast Religion* (London, 1984), pp. 218-38.

¹⁶ Foreword to Dorothy L. Sayers, *The Man Born to be King* (London, 1943), pp. 12-15. The printed version had itself gone through some 24 impressions by 1969.

in June 1943, ‘these plays have done more for the preaching of the Gospel to the unconverted than any other single effort of the churches or religious broadcasting since the last war’. (1) Cyril Forster Garbett, Archbishop of York and chairman of the BBC’s Central Religious Advisory Council at the time, later described the plays as ‘one of the greatest evangelistic appeals made in this century’.¹⁷

Welch’s confidence that Sayers would be delighted with such an offer was not borne out by her first response. (6) Whilst professing herself honoured, and recognizing that the degree was not intended as a ‘certificate of sanctity’, she nonetheless expressed doubt as to whether she was enough of a ‘convincing Christian’, and not simply ‘in love with an intellectual pattern.’ Her letters contain ample evidence of this diffidence, which clearly ran much deeper than a conventionally humble declaration of *nolo episcopari*. The opening words of her address to the Malvern Conference gave some warning of her view: her feelings on treating any question relating to the church were of embarrassment, since ‘I am never quite sure how to identify it or whether, in anything but a technical sense, I feel myself to belong to it.’¹⁸ Sayers later professed herself personally unsusceptible to religious experience or emotion, but instead sustained by a purely intellectual conviction; a theme that recurred elsewhere in her correspondence.¹⁹ As she put it to Temple, part of her was perhaps trying to preserve a ‘bolt-hole’; an insurance against an irrevocable public step of personal commitment.

There is in addition some evidence of a degree of personal lassitude in her own attendance at public worship. Brabazon has noted an infrequency at public worship when visiting Sayers’ parental home in Cambridgeshire.²⁰ There also survives amongst the Lang Papers evidence that this had come to

¹⁷ Charles Smyth, *Cyril Forster Garbett. Archbishop of York* (London, 1959), p. 211.

¹⁸ *Malvern*, p. 57.

¹⁹ Sayers to John Wren-Lewis, Good Friday 1954: *Letters*, IV, 136-7; Sayers to L.T. Duff, 10 May 1943, *Letters*, II, 401. See Marjorie Lamp Mead, ‘Rejoicing in Truth: Dorothy L. Sayers and the “Good of the Intellect”’, in Christopher Dean (ed.), *Further Studies on Sayers. Essays presented to Dr Barbara Reynolds on her 90th birthday* (Hurstpierpoint, 2004), pp. 23-30.

²⁰ Brabazon, *Sayers*, p. 118.

the attention of the archbishop himself. In 1941 George Bell, Bishop of Chichester had been warned by a clergyman in his diocese, on the basis of confidential information from clergy in Essex where Sayers lived, that she was apparently not a communicant member of her own parish church. It would be kindest therefore, suggested Bell, not to press Sayers too far forward as a spokesperson for the church, but to allow her the space to make up her own mind. Lang professed his surprise, but had noted rumours of an apparent movement towards Rome in any case, and continued ‘[b]ut apart from this I have lately been thinking that the Church of England tended to make too much of her and put her too much on its front-window’.²¹ It is not clear whether or not Temple was aware of this correspondence when making the offer of the degree.

Sayers’ first response also made the point that as a mere ‘common novelist and playwright’, she could not guarantee in the future to abstain from writing ‘secular, frivolous or unbecoming’ work, full of the language of the ‘rude soldiery’ or descriptive of the less respectable passions; ‘I shouldn’t like your first woman D.D. to create scandal, or give reviewers cause to blaspheme.’ (6) Temple evidently took the lightness of tone at face value, responding with a quip about the detective novels of Cyril Alington, Dean of Durham. (7) It seems probable, however, that behind the apparent levity was a fear, of which Temple could have had no notion, of the possible disclosure of details of Sayers’ private life. Brabazon has suggested that the one doctrine of the church with which Sayers was in emotional engagement was that of sin, and in her case, the consciousness of the church’s certain view, were it to know of it, of her marriage to a divorced man.²² Even more pressing was the matter, known only to her and a handful of others, of her illegitimate son, John Anthony, born in 1924 and being raised by Sayers’ cousin, Ivy Shrimpton.²³ Barbara Reynolds has suggested that these private

²¹ Correspondence between J.A. Bouquet, Bell and Lang, at LPL, Bell Papers, vol. 208 ff.245-8: Lang to Bell 16 May 1941, f.248. Such a move to Rome was apparently mooted from time to time in the Roman Catholic press; Sayers to V.A. Demant, 2 October 1941, *Letters*, II, 306.

²² Brabazon, *Sayers*, pp. 214-15. See also Sayers to John Wren-Lewis, Good Friday 1954; *Letters*, IV, 137.

²³ *Letters*, II, 437-41.

considerations played no part in her decision to refuse, and that the reasoning expressed in the letter was sufficient.²⁴ The point clearly cannot firmly be established one way or the other. However, being the first female recipient of the Lambeth D.D. whilst continuing to work in the still morally ambiguous environments of secular literature and the theatre would have brought pressures of which she was surely likely to have been sensible, and which cannot but have been a factor to have been considered.

There may well have been therefore very pertinent personal issues behind Sayers' initial reluctance. Temple was not however deterred, and took further advice from Oliver Quick, regius professor of divinity at Oxford, as to whether his intention could be as well fulfilled by the award of a D. Litt., which Sayers had suggested instead. (6), (7). Oliver Quick's advice, in a letter that has not survived, appears to have been that a D. Litt. would not quite have the same import, and so Temple returned to the subject once again, hoping that Sayers might accept. (8) In fact, the D. Litt. had been awarded only once before in the twentieth century, and not on that occasion for the sort of 'Letters' that Sayers had in mind.²⁵ After a request for more time, Sayers responded on 24 September with her longest statement, which Temple accepted, professing that he should do the same in her position. (9), (10). Her letter made two main points, which shed much light on the position of both the Christian apologist and the Christian artist in relation to the institutional church in this period.

The first concerns the effect, deleterious in Sayers' view, of too close an association between the apologist and the Church. Almost from the beginnings of Sayers' growing involvement as an apologist, her letters show a persistent sense that both the amount and the profile of such involvement

²⁴ Reynolds, *Sayers*, footnote to p.374. The judgement is offered without any (to this author) compelling evidence to discount the suggestion, which has been made by Brabazon, *Sayers*, pp. 214-15.

²⁵ Francis Carolus Eeles, secretary of the Central Council for the Care of Churches, was thus honoured in March 1938. The D.Litt. was not awarded again until May 1962, to the first female recipient of any Lambeth degree, the ecclesiastical historian Margaret Deanesly. The register books of degrees are to be found at LPL, Faculty Office, FVI/1/3 and F VI/1/4 (1931-53 and 1953-74 respectively.) Separate summary lists exist at Faculty Office F VI/2/7A (1947-70) and MS 1715 pp.89-113 (1848-1948.)

ought carefully to be controlled, lest its effectiveness be blunted. As early as January 1939, she wrote to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Nottingham that she was already trying to avert the risk of her ‘perpetual appearance in the pulpit’ detracting from the force of what she might have to say.²⁶

Archbishop Lang’s caution in this regard has been noted above, and at least one observer of the national scene agreed, arguing in 1941 that the church had mishandled its reception of T.S. Eliot, having ‘worked his name to death in our propaganda as we are now doing also with Miss Dorothy Sayers.’²⁷ By December 1942, it had become clear to her that, despite her best efforts, she had already come to be viewed as ‘one of the old gang, whose voice can be heard from every missionary platform’; it was therefore time to withdraw somewhat.²⁸ So it was that she explained to Temple that the status of outsider was necessary in the ‘present peculiar state of public opinion’, in order to avoid becoming, in the phrase of the Daily Herald, “the pet of the bishops”.

Sayers’s second point in this final letter would appear to be simply a restatement of her earlier fear about future writing on secular subjects proving an embarrassment to Temple in the future. However, an examination of her other writings reveals that her fear of ‘a sort of interior inhibition in the handling of secular work’, here phrased very gently, was part of a much more robust view of the independence of the artist, and of the record of the church’s patronage of the arts up to that point.

The Mind of the Maker, to which Temple was concerned to give recognition, contained in the chapter on ‘The love of the creature’ a gentle insistence on the artist’s duty to protect, as it were, the interests of their creature.²⁹ This conviction was more strongly expressed when challenged, as in the case of a protracted and bitter disagreement with the BBC over editorial intervention

²⁶ Sayers to Neville S. Talbot, 25 Jan 1939; *Letters II*, pp.116-7.

²⁷ ‘Clericus’, *The Crisis in the Church. An Open Letter to the Archbishop of York* (London, 1941), p. 23. ‘Clericus’ was apparently an Anglican clergyman based in London.

²⁸ Sayers to Eric Fenn (BBC), 14 December 1942; *Letters II*, p.382.

²⁹ *The Mind of the Maker* (London, 1941), pp. 102-7.

in the scripts for *The Man born to be King*.³⁰ One particular letter to Welch justifies an extensive quotation:

... I am bound to tell you this: that the writer's duty to God is his duty to the work, and that he may not submit to any dictate of authority which he does not sincerely believe to be for the good of the work. He may not do it for money, or for reputation, or for edification [...] or for any consideration whatever. [...] The writer is about his Father's business, and it does not matter who is inconvenienced or how much he has to hate his father and mother. To be false to his work is to be false to the truth: "All the truth of the craftsman is in his craft."³¹

Such a high view of the duty of the artist to God and to his work had added force when considered alongside Sayers' jaundiced view of the relationship between the church and the arts; a view shared by many other artists, as the present author has shown elsewhere.³² As early as 1938, Sayers had been sufficiently aggrieved by the lack of financial support from the church for the provincial tour of *The Zeal of Thy House*, 'a play written and performed for her honour', that she was prompted to write to the *Times* about the matter.³³ However, the problem ran much deeper than mere parsimony, and was a constant theme in Sayers' correspondence. The church was widely associated, in her view, with 'artistic frivolity and intellectual dishonesty'.³⁴ It had seemed unable to grasp that 'the divine Beauty is sovereign within His own dominion; and that if a statue is ill-carved or a play ill-written, the artist's corruption is deeper than if the statue were obscene and the play blasphemous.'³⁵ What was necessary was 'a decent humility before the

³⁰ The dispute is described in Wolfe, *Churches and the BBC*, pp. 220-3. Sayers' side of the correspondence is at *Letters*, II, 196-236.

³¹ Sayers to Welch, 2 Jan 1941; *Letters*, II, 217-21. The final quotation is from *The Zeal of Thy House*, voiced by the Prior in scene III, 59.

³² Peter Webster, 'The "Revival" in the Visual Arts in the Church of England, c.1935-c.1956', in Kate Cooper and Jeremy Gregory (eds), *Revival and Resurgence in Christian History* (Studies in Church History, 44, 2008), pp. 297-306.

³³ *The Times*, 24 Nov. 1938.

³⁴ Sayers to the Revd. G.E. Wigram 14 Jan 1943; *Letters*, II, 383.

³⁵ *Malvern*, p. 75.

artist', and an absolute insistence that a work of art must be good in itself, before it could possibly be good religious art.³⁶ Sayers, in common with several of her contemporaries in the arts, suspected the church of holding to an inadequate understanding of the absolute necessity of beauty.

This point is more precisely focussed if one considers for what exactly it was that Sayers was to be honoured. Amongst the muniments at Lambeth survives some guidance, from the time of Archbishop Davidson, on the award of Lambeth degrees. It stipulated, in line with the practice of Davidson's predecessors, that degrees be awarded only to 'persons eminent' in the various fields, and in practice, in the case of the D.D., to those 'in the Foreign and Missionary Work of the Church by some special service, generally of a literary character; e.g. translating the Scriptures into a new language'.³⁷ Despite the fact that, in practice, the D.D. had been awarded almost exclusively to clergy, *The Man Born to be King* would seem to be just such a 'special service' of a literary character for the mission of the Church. Welch's initial suggestion was clearly that it was as the author of *The Man Born to be King*, a 'work of Christian evangelism' that Sayers might be offered the degree. (1) Temple agreed that the plays were 'one of the most powerful instruments in evangelism which the Church has had put into its hands for a long time past'; the 'most effective piece of evangelistic work, in my judgment, done in our generation,' (2), (4) Oliver Quick agreed, and suggested that C.S. Lewis might also be offered a degree: 'They are the two people who seem really able to put across to ordinary people a reasonably orthodox form of Xty.' (3)

Despite Welch's description of the work as Sayers' 'magnum opus', conspicuously absent from this exchange was any broader sense of the plays being honoured *as plays*; any sense that there was some worth in a play that was well crafted, regardless of its 'effectiveness' as an evangelistic tool. It was, however, precisely this (apparently) instrumental view of the arts that

³⁶ Sayers to Brother George Every, 21 May 1941; *Letters*, II, 261

³⁷ Printed leaflet on 'Lambeth Degrees', LPL, MS 1715, pp.vii-ix; p.vii.

so exercised Sayers. The commissioning practice of ‘asking writers to produce stories and plays to illustrate certain doctrine or church activities’ showed how little such ‘pious officials’ understood of the mind of the artist. In these productions doctrine was not allowed to emerge spontaneously from the inherent dynamic of a narrative imagined by the artist; instead, action and characters were inevitably distorted for the sake of the doctrine that had been preordained for exposition, with disastrous consequences.³⁸ As Sayers told the Malvern conference, the Church was thus guilty of fostering corruption ‘by condoning and approving a thing artistically vicious provided that it conforms to moral sentiment.’³⁹ However, no sooner than Sayers had sat down after having ‘harangued’ the Conference thus, George Bell (as she later recalled) ‘toddled amiably onto the platform and said: “And I do agree with Miss Sayers that the Church must manage to get hold of the Arts again”. - Oh, dear ! The C. of E. does suffer a great deal from her bishops.’⁴⁰ The notion of the Church ‘getting hold of’ the arts clearly rankled, as it appeared in later letters, and Sayers was to restate her point, in gentler terms, at the conference on ‘The Church and the Artist’ that Bell himself convened in Chichester in 1944.⁴¹ In accepting Bell’s invitation to that conference, she named as the ‘text’ for her oration a phrase of Charles Williams: ‘Religion itself cannot order poetry about; the grand act is wholly autonomous.’⁴²

It may well be argued that Sayers’ view of the church was too negative, and did not take into account the work of a number of key figures. Bell himself was capable of defending the freedom of the artist against opposition, as in the case of John Masefield’s play *The Coming of Christ*, for Canterbury Cathedral in 1928. His agency in the setting up of the subsequent Canterbury Festival plays was by this point well-known, and Sayers could

³⁸ Sayers to Brother George Every, 21 May 1941; *Letters*, II, 261.

³⁹ *Malvern*, p. 75

⁴⁰ Sayers to Count Michael de la Bedoyere (editor of the *Catholic Herald*), 7 Oct 1941; *Letters*, II, 309

⁴¹ See Sayers to an unidentified correspondent, 28 November 1941; *Letters*, II, 334. Bell’s notes on the proceedings of the conference are at LPL, Bell Papers, vol. 151, fos 190-6.

⁴² Sayers to Bell, 4 September 1944; LPL, Bell Papers, vol. 151, fo.169. The text is from Charles Williams, *The Figure of Beatrice. A Study in Dante* (London, 1943).

hardly have been unaware of it.⁴³ It was also the case that both Temple and Quick held much more developed views on the relationship between theology, the church and the arts than the tone of their letters here reproduced would suggest.⁴⁴ However, even if Sayers were aware of this work, the accumulated record of the wider church in its actual patronage (as opposed to theological writing) meant that the balance was overwhelmingly negative. Sayers was in fact to return to the theme some ten years later, in an article entitled ‘Playwrights are not evangelists’, and a sense that little progress had been made can be detected amongst other commentators in the 1950s and beyond.⁴⁵

In passing Sayers suggested an alternative way in which the Church of England might usefully honour artistic work.(11) Rather than attaching the accolade to the individual, she suggested a scheme more analogous to the *nihil obstat* commonly attached to Roman Catholic publications, but more honorific in intention. Attaching the approbation to the individual work would both free the artist later to range across genres and subjects which may be ‘descriptive of the less restrained and respectable passions’, and at the same time protect the church from association with such work. The present author has described elsewhere a tension between different approaches in Anglican patronage of the arts in this period, between the individualistic approach of a patron such as Walter Hussey, later Dean of Chichester, and the more institutional approach characteristic of George Bell.⁴⁶ It may have been that Temple’s approach was the only way in which, under the pressures of war-time, he could conceive to use the limited institutional tools at his disposal. It would seem that he had not the time to pursue Sayers’ idea, or to explore it any further privately, and the

⁴³ See Peter Webster, ‘George Bell, John Masefield and “The Coming of Christ”: context and significance’ in *Humanitas. The Journal of the George Bell Institute*, 10;2 (2009) 111-24; on a later instance of Bell’s defence of the artist, see Paul Foster, ‘The Goring Judgement: Is it still valid ?’ *Theology*, 102 (1999), 253-61. On the probability of Sayers’ awareness of Bell, see Hone, *Sayers*, p. 84. On Bell’s work in general, see Webster, ‘The “revival” in the visual arts’.

⁴⁴ See, by Temple: *Mens Creatrix* (London, 1923), ch. 10 (‘The Nature and Significance of Art’, pp. 93-128) and *Nature, Man and God* (London, 1934), pp. 135-65. See also Quick, *The Christian Sacraments* (London, 1927), ch. 2 (‘Aesthetic Sacramentalism’), pp. 19-42.

⁴⁵ ‘Playwrights are not evangelists’, *World Theatre* 5 (1955-6), 61-66. Webster, ‘The “revival” in the visual arts’, pp. 297-8, 306.

⁴⁶ Webster, ‘The “revival” in the visual arts’, p.302.

suggestion does not appear to have gained any traction with his successors or indeed anywhere else in the Church of England.

Temple's offer, had it been accepted, would however have been greatly innovative amongst Lambeth degrees. It would have been the first award to a woman, the innovative nature of which becomes apparent in light of the fact that the first subsequent award to a female candidate (of the lesser degree of M.A.) was not made until 1958, and the first doctorate (a D.Litt.) not until 1962.⁴⁷ The lack of a ready means by which to honour 'freelance' writers and apologists was further demonstrated by the hesitation by Archbishop Fisher over awarding a doctorate to the writer Leslie Paul; he was, after much internal consultation, awarded the M.A. in 1959.⁴⁸ It also remained the case that no easy means was found to honour artists. The Lambeth degree of Mus.Doc. had long been awarded to senior cathedral organists and also to composers such as Martin Shaw (1932), and had achieved a status as a professional qualification, being awarded on the testimony of others in the field.⁴⁹ It is a measure of the difference between the church's relationship with church musicians and that with practitioners in the visual and dramatic arts that the first award for work in the arts (other than music) was not made until 1971, to the theatre director Martin Browne whose first dramatic collaborations with George Bell in the diocese of Chichester had begun in the early 1930s.⁵⁰ The whole exchange remains an highly revealing episode in the relationship between the Church and the arts.

⁴⁷ LPL, Faculty Office FVI/1/4. Register Book 1953-74. The M.A. was awarded to Diana Mary Snow (Mother Clare of the Deaconess Community of St Andrew) and Mrs Mildred Betty Ridley, in both cases 'in recognition of conspicuous services in the Church of England'.

⁴⁸ LPL, Fisher Papers, vol.223, fos 154-64.

⁴⁹ On the existence of a church-musical 'establishment', see Ian Jones and Peter Webster, 'Anglican "Establishment" Reactions to "Pop" Church Music in England, 1956-c.1900', in Kate Cooper and Jeremy Gregory (eds), *Elite and Popular Religion* (Studies in Church History, 42, 2006), pp. 429-41, 430.

⁵⁰ LPL, Ramsey Papers, vol.207, fos 12-14. R.C.D. Jasper, *George Bell, Bishop of Chichester* (London, 1967), pp. 121-2.