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principles are often on the surface. If there had been two separate writers, then the writer of either would have given rise to insuperable difficulties. But there was but one writer, and that was Moses, who, as a writer, was expert in all wisdom to use all the names as the occasion required, and as the servant of God he wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

A. BERNSTEIN.



ART. VI.—THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN PRIESTHOOD.

1. *Anglo-Catholic Position in 1878.*

A REMARKABLE work was published in the year 1878. It is called "Anglo-Catholic Principles Vindicated." The publishers were James Parker and Co., of Oxford. The principal contributors were Archbishop Longley, Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop Harold Browne, Bishop Christopher Wordsworth, of Lincoln; Bishop Cleveland Coxe, of Western New York; Dr. Hook, Dean of Chichester; Dr. Goulburn, Dean of Norwich; Archdeacon Freeman, of Exeter; Dr. Sewell, of Exeter and Radley; Dr. Monsell, of Guildford; Canon Trevor; Dr. Biber; Canon Jelf, Principal of King's College; Dr. Scudamore, of Ditchingham; and Canon Isaacson. It was intended to be a defence of the old High Church views against the new Ritualistic teaching. The extent to which a large section of the Church of England, in the mouth of some of its most popular exponents, has wandered in the brief space of eighteen years is illustrated by the following quotation:

These remarks on Absolution seem to lead to the discussion of the question of Sacerdotalism in general . . . I must content myself with pointing out how important in any such discussion is the consideration dwelt upon by the late Dr. Hamilton (Bishop of Salisbury) that priesthood is inherent in every member of Christ.

The question of the special official priesthood of the ordained cannot be profitably considered without bearing in mind the general priesthood of the whole congregation.

The priestly act of absolution is attributed by Christ to the congregation. "The disciples came to Jesus . . . And Jesus said . . . If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church, but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (It is important to remember that these words were said to the disciples generally.) (St. Matt. xviii. 17, 18.) It is generally called a priestly act, but it seems to me to belong rather to the prophetic office than the priestly. Our Lord was speaking as a prophet rather than as a priest when He said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." The ministry of reconciliation is given to us as we are prophets, speaking in God's name. "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. v. 20).

So excommunication is assigned by St. Paul *to the congregation*. "When ye are gathered together, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh" (1 Cor. v. 4).

So from the "censure inflicted of many," absolution was to be given *by many*: "Sufficient to such a man was this punishment which was inflicted of many, so that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, lest perchance such an one should be swallowed up of overmuch sorrow" (2 Cor. ii. 6, 7).

Again, the priestly act of the eucharistic sacrifice is attributed to the whole congregation: "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death."

And in our own Church the act of oblation (of alms, oblations and prayers) is the act, not of the priest, but *of the congregation*, "which we offer unto Thy Divine Majesty." It seems that at the revision of 1662 an attempt was made to introduce an oblation by the priest when placing the elements on the altar; a rubric was prepared in these words: "The priest shall then offer up and place upon the table." But the Church by a correct instinct, even at that hasty revision, preserved the great truth that it is the *priesthood of the congregation* that makes the great eucharistic oblation, and she rejected this attempted insertion.

Even the Roman Church (in its ancient Canon of Communion, on which Bishop Ridley commented favourably, and from the spirit of which it has since so widely departed) is stout in the maintenance of this sacrificial act *of the whole congregation*, for in that Canon it is said, "We, Thy servants, not only we, but Thy holy people also, offer a pure oblation." . . . It is remarkable that in masses, apparently of later date, the priest comes to speak in singular number. "Accept my service and the sacrifice which I have offered."

And *as the whole congregation* makes the oblation (of alms, oblations and prayers), so it is the prayer *of the whole congregation* that makes the Sacrament or consecrates the elements. I speak, of course, of the prayers of invocation, by which the Universal Church formerly consecrated, and does still consecrate, with the exception of the Roman branch, which has schismatically departed from the Catholic custom. Our own Prayer of Consecration is the act *of the whole congregation* "that we receiving . . . may be partakers."

"This aspect of sacerdotalism (says the writer) is worthy of the fullest consideration, for, while the priesthood of the whole people does not interfere with the fact of a special separation, by ordination, of the officers of the Church . . . yet the awfulness . . . is greatly modified . . . when it is recognised that these same supernatural or spiritual powers *reside in the congregation diffusedly*, though exercised and expressed by the officers of the Church as the executive. The difference of the aspect thus obtained from that which is advocated in some quarters is much the same as the difference between the sentiment with which a Russian serf regards his Czar, and that with which an American citizen regards his President, for it must be said, in spite of all Popes, and Henry VIII., and Elizabeth, and James I., and some few of our modern Bishops, and many of our modern lawyers, that the Church of Christ is in its nature much more like a republic than like an absolutism or a tyranny.

2. Bishop Lightfoot on the Ideal of the Christian Church.

These very valuable and interesting considerations prepare us for the statement of Bishop Lightfoot, that "the kingdom of Christ, not being a kingdom of this world, is not limited by

the restrictions which fetter other societies, political or religious. It is, in the fullest sense, free, comprehensive, universal. It displays this character, not only in the acceptance of all comers who seek admission, irrespective of race or caste or sex, but also in the instruction and treatment of those who are already its members. It has no sacred days or seasons, no special sanctuaries, because every time and every place alike are holy. Above all, it has no sacerdotal system. It interposes no sacrificial tribe or class between God and man, by whose intercession alone God is reconciled and man forgiven. Each individual member holds personal communion with the Divine Head. To Him immediately he is responsible, and from Him directly He obtains pardon and draws strength."

3. *Practical Modification.*

Bishop Lightfoot goes on to say that this statement alone would be only half a truth. It must be evident that no society of men could hold together without officers, rules, or institutions of any kind. The conception is an ideal which we must ever hold before our eyes, which should inspire and interpret ecclesiastical polity, but which, nevertheless, cannot supersede the necessary wants of human society, and if crudely and hastily applied, will only lead to failure. As appointed days and set places are indispensable to her efficiency, so also the Church could not fulfil the purposes for which she exists without rulers and teachers, without a ministry of reconciliation; in short, without an order of men who may in some sense be designated a priesthood.

4. *Delegation by the whole Hebrew People to the Tribe of Levi.*

The sacerdotal system of the Old Testament possessed one important characteristic (sometimes forgotten by modern controversialists) which separated it from heathen priesthoods, and which deserves especial notice. The priestly tribe held this peculiar relation to God only as the *representatives* of the whole nation. As *delegates* of the people they offered sacrifice and made atonement. The whole community is (originally) regarded as "a kingdom of priests," "a holy nation." When the sons of Levi are set apart, their consecration is distinctly stated to be due, under the Divine guidance, not to any inherent sanctity or to any caste privilege, but to an act of delegation on the part of the entire people. The Levites are, so to speak, ordained by the whole congregation. "The children of Israel," it is said, "shall put their hands upon the Levites." The nation thus deposes to a single tribe the priestly functions which properly belonged to itself as a whole.

5. *Christian Restoration to the whole People.*

The Christian idea was, therefore, the restitution of this immediate and direct relation with God, which was partly suspended, but not abolished, by the appointment of a sacerdotal tribe. The Levitical priesthood, like the Mosaic law, had served its temporary purpose. The period of childhood had passed, and the Church of God was now arrived at mature age. The covenant people resumed their sacerdotal functions. But the privileges of the covenant were no longer confined to the limits of a single nation. Every member of the human family was potentially a member of the Church, and, as such, a priest of God.

6. *Effect in History, though imperfectly understood.*

Consciously or unconsciously, this idea of an universal priesthood, of the religious equality of all men, which, though not untaught before, was first embodied in the Church of Christ, has worked, and is working, untold blessings in political institutions and in social life. But the careful student will also observe that this idea has hitherto been very imperfectly apprehended; that throughout the history of the Church it has been struggling for recognition, at most times discerned in some of its aspects, but at all times wholly ignored in others; and that, therefore, the actual results are a very inadequate measure of its efficacy, if only it were allowed due prominence, and even allowed its free scope in action.

7. *No new Judaizing delegation.*

As fixed days and places of worship were established, but were not allowed to interfere with the spiritual idea, which was always kept in view, so also it was with the Christian priesthood. For communicating instruction and preserving public order, for conducting religious worship and for dispensing social charities, it became necessary to appoint special officers. *But the priestly functions and privileges of the Christian people are not* (as had been the case in the immature Jewish Church) *regarded as transferred or even delegated to these officers.* They are called stewards or messengers of God, servants or ministers of the Church, and the like, *but the sacerdotal title is never once conferred upon them.* The only priests under the Gospel, designated as such in the New Testament, are the saints, the members of the Christian brotherhood. "Under the law," says the ancient commentator Hilary, "priests were born from the race of Aaron the Levite; now, however, all are born of the sacerdotal race, for Peter the Apostle says, 'We are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood.'"

8. *Confusion of Language.*

On no subject more than this, says Bishop Lightfoot, has more serious error arisen from the confusion of language. The word "priest" has two different senses. In one it is a synonym for the New Testament presbyter or elder, and designates the minister who presides over and instructs a Christian congregation; in the other, it is equivalent to the Latin *sacerdos*, the Greek *ιερευς*, the Hebrew offerer of sacrifices, who also performs other mediatorial offices between God and man. In the New Testament the Christian minister is always the presbyter.

9. *Office of Presbyter adopted from the Synagogue.*

Though the diaconate was a new institution, not borrowed from the Levitical order nor from the synagogue, the office of presbyter was directly adopted from that of ruler of the synagogue. The duties of the office were twofold—governing and teaching. The third office, that of the episcopate, was not a continuation of the apostolate, but a development out of the presbytery. The office was first established in Jewish Churches, and afterwards spread to those of the Gentiles, mainly under the influence of St. John in Asia Minor. A Bishop was still called a fellow-presbyter, by Irenæus and Clement of Alexandria; even in the fourth and fifth centuries bishops still gave themselves that designation. The sacerdotal autocracy of the Bishop, the sacrificial prerogatives of the presbyter, were imported into the Church by Cyprian, out of hints which he found in his master Tertullian the Montanist.

10. *Universal Priesthood in Apostolic Language: Total Silence as to Particular Priesthood.*

The sacerdotal functions and privileges which alone are mentioned in the apostolic writings pertain to all believers alike, and do not refer solely or specially to the ministerial office. If to this statement it be objected that the inference is built upon the *silence* of the Apostles and evangelists, and that such reasoning is always precarious, the reply is that an exclusive sacerdotalism, a sacerdotalism implying a substantial identity between the Jewish and Christian priesthood, such as is often now urged, *contradicts the general tenour of the Gospel*. But, indeed, the strength or weakness of an argument drawn from silence depends wholly on the circumstances under which the silence is maintained. And in this case it cannot be considered devoid of weight. In the pastoral epistles, for instance, which are largely occupied with questions connected

with the Christian ministry, it seems scarcely possible that this aspect should have been overlooked, if it had any place in St. Paul's teaching. The Apostle discusses at length the requirements, the responsibilities, the sanctions, of the ministerial office; he regards the presbyter as an example, as a teacher, as a philanthropist, as a ruler. How, then, it may well be asked, are the sacerdotal functions, the sacerdotal privileges, of the office wholly set aside? If these claims were recognised by him at all, they must necessarily have taken a foremost place. The same argument applies with not less force to those passages in the Epistles to the Corinthians where St. Paul asserts his Apostolic authority against his detractors. Nevertheless, so entirely had the primitive conception of the Christian Church been supplanted by this sacerdotal view of the ministry, before the Northern races were converted to the Gospel, and the dialects derived from the Latin took the place of the ancient tongue, that the languages of modern Europe very generally supply only one word to represent alike the priest of the Jewish or heathen ceremonial, and the presbyter of the Christian ministry.

11. *Convincing Evidence of the Epistle to the Hebrews against Particular Priesthood.*

The Epistle to the Hebrews speaks at great length of priests and sacrifices in their Jewish and their Christian bearing. It is plain from this Epistle, as it may be gathered also from other notices, Jewish and heathen, that the one prominent idea of the priestly office at this time was the function of offering sacrifice, and thereby making atonement. Now, this Apostolic writer teaches that all sacrifices had been consummated in the one Sacrifice, all priesthoods absorbed in the one Priest. The offering had been made once for all; and, as there were no more victims, *so there could be no more priests.* All former priesthoods had borne witness to the necessity of a human mediator, and this sentiment had its satisfaction in the Person and Office of the Son of man. All past sacrifices had proclaimed the need of an atoning death, and had their antitype, their realization, their annulment, in the Cross of Christ. This explicit statement supplements and interprets the silence elsewhere noticed in the Apostolic writings.

Strictly accordant, too, with the general tenour of his argument is the language used throughout by the writer of this epistle. He speaks of Christian sacrifices, of a Christian altar; but the sacrifices are praise and thanksgiving and well-doing, and the altar is apparently the Cross of Christ. *If the*

Christian ministry were a sacerdotal office, if the holy eucharist were a sacerdotal act, in the same sense in which the Jewish priesthood and the Jewish sacrifice were sacerdotal, then his argument is faulty and his language misleading. Though dwelling at great length on the Christian counterparts to the Jewish priests, the Jewish altar, the Jewish sacrifice, he omits to mention the one office, the one place, the one act, which on this showing would be their truest and liveliest counterparts in the everyday worship of the Church of Christ. He has rejected these, and he has chosen instead moral and spiritual analogies for all these sacred types. Thus, in what he has said and in what he has left unsaid alike, his language points to one and the same result.

12. *Real Functions of the Christian Ministry : Tertullian.*

Christian ministers are priests (metaphorically) in another sense : as having a Divine appointment, as representing God to man, and as representing man to God. The minister's function is *representative* without being *vicarial*. He is a priest, as the mouthpiece, the delegate, of a priestly race. His acts are not his own, but the acts of the congregation. Hence, too, it will follow that, viewed on this side as on the other, his function cannot be absolute and indispensable. It may be a general rule, it may be, under ordinary circumstances, a practically universal law, that the highest act of congregational worship shall be performed through the principal minister of the congregation. But an emergency may arise when the spirit and not the letter must decide. The Christian ideal will then interpose and interpret our duty. The higher ordinance of the universal priesthood will overrule all special limitations. (The layman at a crisis may perform Holy Baptism.) The layman will assume functions which are otherwise restricted to the ordained minister. "*Are not we laymen,*" wrote Tertullian, "*also priests? It is so written, 'He hath also made us a kingdom and priests to God and His Father.'* It is the authority of the Church which makes a difference between the Order of the People and his authority, and the consecration of their rank, by the assignment of special bounties for the clergy. Thus, where there is no bench of clergy, you present the eucharistic offerings, and baptize, and are your own sole priest. For where three are gathered together, there is a Church, even though they be laymen."

13. *The Ordination Service.*

There remain the words of the Ordination Service :

Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven ; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained.

We will hear what Hooker has to say about them :

If, then, our Lord and Saviour Himself have used the self-same form of words, and that in the self-same kind of action, although there be but the least show of probability, yea, or any possibility that His meaning might be the same which ours is, it should teach sober and grave men not to be too venturous in condemning that of folly, which is not impossible to have in it more profoundness of wisdom than flesh and blood should presume to control. Our Saviour, after His resurrection from the dead, gave His apostles their commission, saying, "All power is given Me in heaven and in earth ; go, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them," etc. In sum, "As My Father sent Me, so send I you." Whereunto St. John doth add farther that, having thus spoken, He breathed on them, and said, "Receive the Holy Ghost." By which words He must of likelihood understand some gift of the Spirit—not miraculous power—which they did not then receive, but a holy and ghostly, that is, spiritual, authority over the souls of men ; authority, a part whereof consisteth in power to remit and retain sins : "Receive the Holy Ghost ; whose sins soever ye remit, they are remitted ; whose sins ye retain, they are retained." Whereas, therefore, the other evangelists had set down that Christ did before His suffering promise to give His apostles the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and, being risen from the dead, did promise moreover at that time a miraculous power of the Holy Ghost, St. John added that He also invested them even then with the power of the Holy Ghost for castigation and relaxation of sin, wherein was fully accomplished that which the promise of the keys did import. Seeing, therefore, that the same power is now given (*viz.*, ministerial power and authority), why should the same form of words expressing it be thought foolish ? The cause why we breathe not as Christ did on them unto whom He imparted power is, for that neither spirit nor spiritual authority may be thought to proceed from us, which are but delegates or assigns, to give men possession of His graces." (Hooker, "Ecl. Pol.," v. 77.)

14. *Presbyter and Minister Synonymous in the Prayer-Book:*
Mr. Dyson Hague.

Presbyter and minister in the Prayer-Book are practically synonymous. The minister, it has been pointed out, reads with a loud voice ; the "priest" pronounces the absolution ; the "minister" says the Lord's Prayer ; the "priest" (why the priest ?) the Gloria ; the "minister" reads the Creed, and says, "Lord, have mercy upon us" ; the next moment it is the "priest" using almost precisely the same form of words. So in the Communion office. Now it is "minister," now "priest," and from the usage of the terms it is impossible to make any distinction. The "priest" says the Ten Commandments, but the priest is in the same action called the "minister" ; the "minister" giveth warning about the celebration of the Lord's Supper ; the "priest" says the exhortation. The "priest" consecrates ; the same person, the "minister," receives the Communion, and then delivers to the bishops, "priests," and deacons. The priest, the minister ; the minister, the priest. A more remarkable case is the Baptismal Service, a service

which has always been permitted to a deacon, where the words are, beyond all controversy, used as interchangeable terms. The same is the case in the Marriage Service, the Visitation of the Sick, the Churching of Women, the Communion Services, and, above all, in the Burial Service. In the Burial Service the term "minister" is never used, the word "priest" always, though, as everyone is aware, the Deacon, if not the layman, may validly perform the service. In fact, the terms are employed all through the Prayer-Book so interchangeably as to bewilder anyone who would seek to explain their employment on any other ground than that of their practical convertibility. The word "priest" simply denotes the person who performs the sacred service at the time, and cannot refer to a sacerdotal as distinguished from a non-sacerdotal order, for it is used in certain places, as we have seen, to signify the officiating minister when he may be only a deacon. Whatever were the distinctions made by the Laudian divines, and introduced as far as they possibly could, it is certain that, from the standpoint of the Reformers, and the Prayer-Book, as they compiled it, the terms are interchangeable, and presbyterus is the highest meaning to be attached to the word "priest." Two weighty authorities may be here adduced, the Second Book of Homilies, and the learned and judicious Hooker.

(1) The Second Book of Homilies :

In the first part of the Homily, on the worthy receiving of the Sacrament, it is said that to acknowledge Christ as one's own personal Saviour, etc., is to make Christ one's own, etc. "Herein thou needest no other man's help, no other sacrifice or oblation, *no sacrificing priest*, no Mass, no means established by man's invention." If words prove anything, they prove that in the interpretation of the Church of England, the minister or presbyter in the Holy Communion is no "sacrificing priest."

(2) Once more let us consult Hooker :

The view of this learned divine may fairly be received as the view of the Church in that age, from the standpoint of one whom all schools and parties delight to honour. His reasoning is conclusive as to the fact that the word "priest," like "presbyter," cannot convey any sacrificial meaning. "Touching the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the whole body of the Church being divided into laity and clergy, the clergy are either presbyters or deacons. I rather term the one sort presbyters than priests, because, in a matter of so small moment, I would not willingly offend their ears to whom the name of priesthood is odious, though without cause. For as things are distinguished one from another by true essential forms . . . so if they that first do impose names did always understand exactly the nature of that which they nominate, it may be that then by hearing the terms of vulgar speech, we should still be taught what the things themselves are." But, as he proceeds to show, words have so many different senses that it is difficult to determine the precise idea

that is attached by each man to them in common use. Generally, however, names have regard to "that which is naturally most proper," or to "that which is sensibly most eminent in the thing signified," or, as is the case in the word "priest," to the thing personified. In its proper ecclesiastical sense, a priest is one whose "mere function or charge is the service of God." "Howbeit, because the most eminent part, both of heathenish and Jewish service, did consist in sacrifice, when learned men declare what the word 'priest' doth properly signify, according to the mind of the first imposer of that name, their ordinary scholies do well expound it to imply sacrifice. Seeing, then, that sacrifice is now no part of the Church ministry, how should the name of priesthood be thereunto rightly applied?" Because, he replies, "even as St. Paul applied the name flesh" to the substance of fishes, "although it be in nature another thing," so the Fathers of the Church called "the ministry of the Gospel priesthood in regard of that which the Gospel hath *proportionable* to ancient sacrifices, namely, the communion of the blessed body and blood of Christ, *although it have properly now no sacrifice*. As for the people, when they hear the name, it draweth no more their minds to any cogitation of sacrifice than the name of senator or alderman causeth them to think upon old age, or to imagine that every one so termed must needs be ancient." (Hooker, "Eccl. Pol.," v. 78.)

15. *Christ's True Minister better than Hebrew or Pagan Priest.*

To the clergy I would say, Your function is as noble and responsible as the humility of feeble and fallible man could ever by the grace of God maintain. When you were ordained the Bishop said to you, "We exhort you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you have it in remembrance into how high a dignity, and to how weighty an office and charge ye are called; that is to say, to be messengers, watchmen and stewards of the Lord, to teach and to premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's family, to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for His children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through Christ for ever." Not a word of an exclusive Jewish sacrificial priesthood. In Christ's name, I urge you to be content with the office laid upon you by the New Testament, to be thankful with all your hearts for its restoration in all original purity and simplicity by the holy Reformation which God's mercy permitted to this country, to rest satisfied with the consummate and impregnable learning of Hooker and Lightfoot, and not to follow the retrogressive teaching of those who, for reasons which are no doubt convincing to themselves, would once more bring the glorious and beneficent reformed Catholic Church of England into line with the developed and non-Apostolic dogmas of the unreformed Church of Rome.

WILLIAM SINCLAIR.