

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

controversy." In a leading article upon the Rectorial Address, the *Times* points out that "Lord Curzon is rather addicted to casting political horoscopes, and the practice is fraught with many pitfalls when applied to Asia." An illustration of this is afforded in the address itself. It is interesting to place Lord Curzon's well-known estimate of the possibilities of China some fourteen years ago beside his estimate of to-day.

1896.

"The continued existence of the yellow race may be regarded as assured. But that the Empire . . . is likely to falsify the whole course of its history, and to wrench round the bent of its own deep-seated inclination, simply because the shriek of the steam-whistle or the roar of the cannon is heard at its gates, is an hypothesis that ignores the accumulated lessons of political science and postulates a revival of the age of miracles."—"Problems of the Far East," pp. 341, 342.

1911.

"The future of China in the next quarter of a century depends in the main upon the manner in which she works the new Parliamentary machine, if it be started, and on the degree to which it is found to have an astringent or a dissolvent effect within the Empire. If she can preserve her internal unity, and at the same time organize her forces for industry and commerce, she must become one of the greatest Powers in the world."—*Times*, January 26, 1911.

Perhaps, in days to come, the present statement of Lord Curzon concerning the prospects of Christianity in the East may be placed in a similar left-hand column, and a parallel modification be available to place in the right. G.



Discussions.

"THE PERMISSIVE USE OF THE VESTMENTS."

(*The Churchman, March, 1911, p. 169*).

THE moderation with which Canon Beeching pleads for a permissive use of the Eucharistic Vestments, and the obvious sincerity of his desire to contribute to the peace of the Church, give an appearance of ungraciousness to any attempt to examine critically the quotations and arguments contained in his paper. But it is very far from certain that the results which he anticipates would follow the adoption of his proposal, and it may not be amiss, therefore, to point out the disputable character of some of the statements upon which he bases his conclusions.

The question at issue is whether the legalization of the Vestments would or would not help towards a solution of the difficulties which beset the Church of England. Canon Beeching thinks that it would, his view apparently being that such a concession to the wishes of moderate High Churchmen would induce them to throw the weight of their influence against those who are assimilating the teaching and practice of the Church of England to that of the Church of Rome. It does not, we may observe, show a very exalted opinion of the loyalty of those for whom he speaks to suggest that the refusal of this concession would throw them into the arms of the extremists, and I am not altogether prepared to do them the injustice of believing that it would. There are High Churchmen who wear the Vestments without holding the sacerdotal doctrines generally associated with them, because they have quite honestly come to believe that Vestments are required by the law of the Church of England. If these men should be persuaded that they are mistaken on this point, they would without hesitation alter their practice. But the majority of those who wear Vestments are not of this class. They have adopted them because they attach a definite and important significance to them, and Canon Beeching deceives himself if he thinks their numbers are not large. The circulation of the *Church Times* as compared with that of the *Guardian* points in the opposite direction. The very fact to which Canon Beeching draws attention—that some calling themselves “moderate” are prepared to join hands with the extremists sooner than relinquish the Vestments—indicates to how great an extent they have already been permeated with their doctrines.

In truth, it is not with the really moderate men that our troubles have arisen, but with the extremists. The Vestments were introduced, not by the moderate men, but by the extremists; they have been forced upon parishes in spite of the remonstrances of worshippers, the directions of Bishops, and the decisions of Courts; and we have been told again and again, in the plainest and clearest language, that this was done on account of the doctrine which was attached to them. It does not, therefore, seem a reasonable contention that to concede this point would help to stay the Romeward advance. The Lambeth Judgment was supposed in the same way to offer the promise of peace, but the growth of Ritualism has been in no way checked by it. As a matter of fact, it has since proceeded at an accelerated pace.

The analogy from objections to the surplice in the pulpit or in the choir is hardly so strong as Canon Beeching supposes. It is easy to be wise after the event, and to say that the objectors might have reserved their protests for more important matters; but there is this to be said for them—that they feared the spread of a counter-Reformation movement, and their fears have, alas! been abundantly realized. Moreover, it has not been generally noticed that the five Bishops in their Report actually suggest that, since choirmen now wear surplices, a different dress should be adopted by the clergy—a suggestion which

shows that those who objected to surpliced choirs were perhaps wiser than they knew.

The claim is put forth on behalf of the Vestments that they are the "historical dress" for the ministration of Holy Communion. But in what sense can they be called historical? The history of the last 350 years and the agitation attending their late and partial revival show that the Vestments have not been the dress of ministration during that period. The history of the first 300 years of the Christian era shows that the clergy then performed their sacred ministrations in the ordinary dress of everyday life. And the history of the next 600 years shows that during the course of those centuries there were no distinctive Vestments reserved for Eucharistic use. The last-mentioned fact is important, since it is as a distinctive Eucharistic dress that the Vestments are being contended for. Thus we have only a period of roughly about 650 years during which the Vestments were employed as a distinctively Eucharistic dress, and those were the years which witnessed the full development of the doctrine of the Mass. It must be evident, therefore, that to describe the Vestments as "the historical dress of the minister in that celebration" (*i.e.*, Holy Communion) is a misleading use of terms.

A more important question arises when we come to consider the last revision of the Prayer-Book, in 1661-62. In Canon Beeching's opinion, it was the intention of the revisers to leave the door open for the ultimate restoration of the Vestments. But we may well ask, Where is the evidence of this? He speaks of the "reinsertion" of the Ornaments Rubric, but makes no reference to the fact that it was very materially altered. As it stood, it contained a perfectly unambiguous direction to the effect that "*the minister shall use in the church such ornaments,*" etc. These words were removed, as also the words which made a distinction between the time of the Communion and other times of ministration, and the words "at all times of their ministrations" were added. Had different vestures for different ministrations been intended, it should have been, as Canon Trevor pointed out, "at the several times," etc. There is no indication that any Bishop then on the Bench had the least desire for the Vestments, notwithstanding the passages from Cosin's earlier notebooks, quoted by Canon Beeching; certainly no Bishop ever wore them or required them to be worn. We have the Visitation articles of nearly every one of the Bishops of the time, and they all agree in enforcing the surplice, and only the surplice. Moreover, they demanded the surplice "in the ministration of the Sacraments"—a demand which, so far as the Holy Communion was concerned, would have been illegal, on the theory that the new rubric revived the use of Edward's First Prayer-Book. It is little to the purpose to speak of the impossibility of exacting the use of the Vestments when there was difficulty in obtaining that of the surplice. The leading nonconforming clergy were ejected, to the number of 2,000; and the authorities who secured the passing of the

Corporation Act, the Act of Uniformity, and the Five-Mile Act, were not likely to be lenient in their demands upon tender consciences. Had there been any cases of the Vestments being worn, or had even one of the Bishops required them, even though unsuccessfully, there would have been more to be said for Canon Beeching's theory that the Bishops desired them; but this complete and absolute non-use, and the uniform official enforcement of another and contradictory use, is as complete a refutation of it as in the nature of things we could have.

It may, however, be said that the "Notes" which constitute vol. v. of the "Works" of Bishop Cosin do furnish an indication that he at least believed the Vestments to be required by law, and Canon Beeching quotes from p. 42 a sentence to this effect. But he has overlooked a parenthesis at the end of the paragraph, where, in a later hand, Cosin has added: "But the Act of Parliament, I see, refers to the canon, and until such time as other order shall be taken." Canon Beeching gives a longer quotation from pp. 439-40, where it is also stated that vestments, copes, and albs "are still in force." Here, as in the former quotation, we should have been informed that these "Notes" are simply a number of quotations, comments, etc., in a manuscript book and interleaved Prayer-Books, which served as commonplace books. They were begun about 1619, when Cosin was only twenty-four years of age, and they abound in mistakes, as anyone who goes carefully over the footnotes furnished by the editor of the volume, Dr. Barrow, can see for himself. The editor, in his preface, says that they are to a great extent collections rather than original annotations, and warns the reader that the statements respecting ecclesiastical antiquities are derived from works which are of little or no authority, and cannot be relied on as matter of historical truth. Commonplace books of this character, never intended for publication, and dating from twenty to forty years before he became Bishop, are not exactly the sources to which we should look for the views of *Bishop Cosin* in 1662. It would have been more to the point to quote from his Visitation articles of that date, as expressing his mature opinions. In them he asks:

"Have you a large and decent Surplice (one or more) for the Minister to wear at all times of his publick ministration in the Church?"

And, after enumerating the various Church services, including the two Sacraments prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer, he further asks:

"Doth he [your minister] all these without omission, addition, or alteration of any of them, using all the Rites and Ceremonies appointed in that Book?"

"Doth he alwaies at the reading or Celebrating any Divine Office in your Church or Chappel, constantly wear the Surplice, and other his Ecclesiastical Habit according to his degree? And doth he never omit it?"—*Report of Ritual Commission, 1868, p. 601.*

It is practically impossible to believe that, if Cosin then held the view that albs, vestments, and copes were among the rites and ceremonies appointed in the Prayer-Book, he would have demanded only the surplice and hood.

It may be observed by way of a conclusion, that we find the Vestments emerge as a distinctively Eucharistic vesture at the time when the theories which afterwards developed into Transubstantiation and the Mass were beginning to meet with popular recognition. When the Mass was abolished they were abolished with it, and, except for the brief interlude of Mary's reign, they disappeared completely for 300 years after the Reformation. When the Mass was reintroduced by the Ritualists the Vestments reappeared with it; and Lord Halifax, speaking for his party, has told us that they value the Vestments, other reasons apart, because they are a witness to the fact that the Lord's Supper is neither more nor less than the Mass in English! How, then, can it be supposed that to legalize the Vestments will not promote the advance of those who are introducing the Mass into the Church of England? As Bishop Butler said, "Things and actions are what they are, and the consequences of them will be what they will be. Why, then, should we desire to be deceived?"

W. GUY JOHNSON.

The "Vestment controversy" is before us to-day in a new setting. For the first time in its recent history, it can be discussed without suspicion being aroused that one side or the other is disloyal to the authority of law. This change of setting is more than a cause for thankfulness; it is also, as I desire to point out, of profound importance in relation to the future conduct of the discussion.

In what does the change consist? In this: that whereas we have been busy disputing hitherto as to the meaning of an old law, we are concerned now with the terms of a new one. When in the past we have disagreed on the question whether the Ornaments Rubric authorized the use of the Vestments or not, our attention was concentrated, strange to say, on the endeavour to discover rather what had been considered good for our forefathers than what was now good for ourselves. This is not, of course, the whole truth, for it was usually held that the two goods must necessarily coincide. But the assumption was not argued, for, in fact, it was not in question; and thus the inquiry was focussed upon the past. On the other hand, the matter presents itself to us to-day in connection with the revision of the Prayer-Book, and hence it is considered on the hypothesis that here, as elsewhere, change and adjustment may possibly be needed. Thus, even if the whole Church of England could reach a unanimous opinion as to what our present Ornaments Rubric requires of us, that opinion would not be the only, would scarcely be the chief, factor of the result of our questioning at the present time. It would still remain to be

considered whether modern beliefs as to the significance, or value, or risk in the use of the Vestments coincided with those which prevailed in 1662.

Moreover, it cannot be denied that there is disagreement in many quarters as to the competence of the Privy Council to act as the highest tribunal of the English Church, and this division of opinion has helped to make past discussion fruitless and bitter. But the jurisdiction of the Privy Council is no longer a main issue; the focus of the investigation is shifted to the present; and therefore in our inquiry it is as unfair for those who wish for the Vestments to charge their opponents with mistaking the authority of the Advertisements as it is for the latter to charge the former with disregard for law. Even one who heartily believes that Vestments are permitted by the present Rubric may conceivably wish to see them unambiguously forbidden; while, on the other hand, one who heartily believes that they are forbidden may conceivably, without being guilty of lawlessness, wish to see them duly allowed.

The historical inquiry of late years is not, then, at present chiefly before us, as it would be if we were trying only to confirm or overthrow the Ridsdale Judgment. At the most it is only a part of our task. For we are asking, not whether Vestments were permitted in 1662, but whether they ought to be permitted in 1911.

On what ground shall we base our answer? We have the principle asserted in the Prayer-Book that certain ceremonies were therein retained "as well for a decent order in the Church . . . as because they pertain to edification, whereunto all things done in the Church . . . ought to be referred."¹ To this principle we shall probably assent. The Vestments ought to be permitted or not, according as they do or do not "pertain to edification."

Now, it may be conceded that the Eucharistic Vestments have not always been regarded as symbolic of doctrine which the Church of England repudiated at the Reformation. Any statement to the contrary effect is at once disproved by the undisputed fact that they were authorized between 1549 and 1552, and again between 1559 and 1566. So far, then, Canon Beeching is right in directing attention to the non-significance of the Vestments in themselves. But it follows from what has been said above that the question in this connection is not "Have the Vestments always symbolized non-Anglican doctrine?" but rather, "Do they do so to-day?"

On this point the view has been upheld in the *CHURCHMAN* that they do,² and the present writer shares this view. We may willingly admit, with Canon Beeching, that many persons desire the revival of the Vestments on the ground of their emphasizing the historic continuity

¹ Preface, "Of Ceremonies."

² See, for example, the January number, pp. 4, 5.

of our Church, and yet believe that in at least as many cases they are valued also for the help which they afford in popularizing a doctrine of the Church, the Ministry and the Eucharist, which the Church of England has set aside. So far as this is so, it cannot be claimed that they "pertain to edification."

The controversy, as between loyal Churchmen, is therefore as follows: Some persons, whose desire is to emphasize the historic continuity of the Church, wish for them; others, whose desire is to maintain purity of doctrine, are opposed to them. Canon Beeching has himself elsewhere¹ described these two classes as "those who wish to carry into the future as much as possible of the things of the past, and those who wish to test all things by the line of truth." But, surely, when the two tendencies are opposed, there can be no question as to which should prevail. The Reformation determined that once for all. The ancient practices of the Church were retained, in so far as they did not conflict with truth; but when any such conflict was involved, the practices were discontinued. From this rule, it is scarcely possible to think that anyone—High Churchman or Evangelical—would dissent. To suggest, as Canon Beeching seems to do,² that these tendencies can ever be allowed an equal footing in the Church of England, is to mistake altogether the fundamental principle of the Reformation.

Canon Beeching asks, in conclusion: "Do [Evangelicals] expect to convince the High Churchmen, or do they propose to prosecute them?" This seems to indicate that in his opinion the latter are not likely to give way. But is not this fatal to his contention that the Vestments are desired on historic grounds alone? Let it once appear that the opposition to them is due, not to a dislike for their witnessing to the continuity of the English Church, but only to a determination to adhere to our reformed doctrine, and it must be perceived that this opposition is made in obedience to a higher law than that which authorizes the desire for their revival. And we can hardly take the suggestion seriously that we should be willing to disobey the higher law because other people insist upon obeying the lower.

We have argued hitherto on the assumption that the Vestments have at least this in their favour—that they emphasize the historic life of the English Church. May we not ask, finally, whether it is, after all, a worthy notion of historic continuity which is shown by such an uncompromising devotion to externals? Is not the continuity of the Church seen best in its Apostolic doctrine and its Apostolic activity? Is not the proposed revision of the Prayer-Book itself an illustration of the truth that historic continuity must be sought in the inner life, and not in the outer form? And may we not reasonably appeal to High Churchmen—to those High Churchmen, at least, who, as Canon Beeching tells us, have no desire for a counter-Reformation, and value

¹ "The Desirability of Revision" (Prayer-Book Revision Series, No. 1), p. 19.

² *Loc. cit.* He is careful to add that to the operation of these tendencies a limit must be set by loyalty (p. 20); but in that case, how can "those who wish to test all things by the line of truth" represent only a party among Churchmen?

the Vestments solely from their historical significance—to give up their demand for a mere external symbol of that which we all alike value, seeing that, to our thinking, whether rightly or wrongly, it involves the greater question of fidelity to truth?

C. F. RUSSELL.

CAMBRIDGE.

“SUGGESTIONS TOWARDS REUNION.”

(*The Churchman*, February, 1911, p. 119.)

WITH reference to the questions raised in the article entitled “Suggestions towards Reunion,” it is of the utmost importance for us to know exactly what we mean by the term “Episcopacy.” Much confusion is caused by the failure to perceive that the word stands in our minds for two ideas that are quite separate and distinct—Apostolical Succession and Constitutional Monarchy. In fact, the functions of Episcopacy are twofold: there is the transmitting function, which stands for the preservation of the Apostolical (or legal and organic) Succession of Orders; and there is the governmental function, which stands for a particular type of ecclesiastical government and organization. These two functions may in theory be separated. In fact, in the actual practice of the Celtic Church they were (where the unit of organization was not diocesan, but tribal); and such a separation is necessary in the solution of certain problems of the present day. For the necessities of Christian Reunion do not require that Episcopacy, *as a system of government*, be forced upon Presbyterians or Nonconformists, but only that these Churches be given Catholic authority to *transmit* priestly Orders. It is not enough for Presbyterians to prove that their first ministers were in priest's Orders, lawfully derived from the Medieval Church; they must go on to prove that they had the power to transmit the same. The whole point of the Catholic position is that no man can exercise an authority or power never imparted to him. Accordingly, no ministry can be recognized as possessing Apostolical Succession (and thereby forming a branch of the one historic or Catholic Church) unless it derive its authority from men authorized to transmit authority. It would be quite immaterial as to whether those men were Bishops (*i.e.*, men possessing both of the functions distinguished above) or bishop-Priests (*i.e.*, men possessing only the first function). This consideration will show that the problem of the recognition of Presbyterian Orders stands outside, and beyond, the vexed question as to the origin of Episcopacy. For, were Churchmen to prove their own view of its origin, they would yet, before being able to condemn Presbyterian Orders, be obliged to face the possibility that the Presbyterian priesthood might prove to have acquired (by lawful delegation) the Episcopal power of transmission, while yet choosing to do without the Episcopal form of government; and, on the other hand, were Presbyterians to prove their assertion

that Episcopacy is a development from a system of bishop-Priests (priests with the power of transmission of Orders), they would yet have to prove that their own elders were priests possessing this power. When, therefore, without waiting for the Presbyterians to prove to us this latter point, Mr. Ferguson demands full "recognition of the ministry . . . of the Presbyterian Church," he is asking us to give up part of our Catholic heritage. For although, as he rightly points out, our Church has laid down no *theory* of the ministry, yet she has clung fast to the all-important *fact* of the preservation of full Apostolical Succession. We cannot, therefore, recognize Presbyterian Orders till it is proved that those Orders are in the line of the Apostolical Succession, unless we are fully prepared to accept the principle such action would involve, namely, that in default of the granting of Episcopal and Catholic authority for the exercise by Presbyterian ministers of the transmitting function, the action of the whole Presbyterian body acting corporately as a Christian Ecclesia is to be considered as granting sufficient authority and validity to such exercise, in view of the manifest blessing of the Holy Spirit shown ever since upon the work of Presbyterian ministries.

H. T. MALAHER.

"GAINS AND LOSSES."

(*The Churchman*, February, 1911, p. 89.)

BISHOP WALPOLE, in the February number, endeavours to confine the "Resurrection," in which all Christians believe, to "the just," and suggests that "the resurrection of the unjust" may not mean "anything more than their immortality" (p. 95). This is not the doctrine of the three Creeds, especially the "Quicumque Vult," which says that "*all men shall rise again with their bodies*"; and surely he must have overlooked the plain words of our Lord in St. John v. 28: "The hour is coming in the which *all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth*—they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment."

G. F. W. MUNBY.



Notices of Books.

THE CONSTITUTION AND LAW OF THE CHURCH IN THE FIRST TWO CENTURIES.

By Adolf Harnack. Translated by F. L. Pogson, M.A. Edited by H. D. A. Major, Vice-Principal of Ripon Clergy College. London: *Williams and Norgate*. Price 5s. net. Pp. i-xiv, 1-349.

Harnack's last book is not as brilliant and as lucid as his *St. Luke and Acts*, but it exhibits in equal degree the painstaking and whole-hearted devotion to truth which makes his work, as it made Hort's, so wonderfully