

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

THE EPIKLESIS, OR INVOCATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ON THE EUCHARISTIC BREAD AND WINE¹

BY THE RT. REV. E. A. KNOX, D.D.
(Formerly Bishop of Manchester)

I ONCE had conversation with Dr. Pusey, having occasion to call on him on a matter of business. The business dispatched I rose to leave him, when he surprised me by saying, "You people who read the *Record* cannot answer this question, 'How is it that people who were no further in time from the Apostles than I am from my own grandfather, taught what I teach with reference to the Lord's Supper?' What have you to say to that?" A poser certainly for a young deacon of about four-and-twenty, still quite innocent of theological reading beyond the then very meagre curriculum for Holy Orders. In my confusion I fell back on a sermon which I had heard from Dr. Heurtley, Margaret Professor of Divinity, and a brother Canon of the same Cathedral as Dr. Pusey. Pusey's reply was "Pooh! Heurtley." After that I had no more to say, but humbly accepted a copy of Dr. Pusey's sermon on the words, "This is My Body." Alas! that copy is lost. It would be interesting reading now.

If I do not in this paper follow the ordinary course of producing links in a chain of evidence—catenæ as they are called—it is because experience has taught me the futility of this process. One side produces evidence of sacrificial language used by the Fathers in speaking of the Eucharist; the other produces quotations of an opposite tendency. Each says to the other—of course, quite politely—"Pooh!" The wood is overlooked, while each side examines from its own standpoint the bark of each separate tree. For our purpose it is enough that all agreed that there was a development of Eucharistic doctrine and rite spread over many centuries. Some will say that the development was due to the guidance of the Holy Spirit unfolding the true contents of the original rite. Others

¹ Being the substance of a Paper read to the Beckenham and Bromley Clerical Union.

will attribute it to the force of superstition. But it will be useful (1) to contrast (a) the original rite with (b) an Eastern Homily of the fifth century upon the Eucharist ; (2) to indicate some of the forces that contributed to the change that will be thus manifested ; (3) to examine the consistency of our own service with our Lord's own institution, and to point out the consequences that must follow the introduction of the consecratory Epiklesis.

(1) THE ORIGINAL RITE.

(a) We are accustomed to think of the Last Supper as an event in our Lord's life quite unique and designed wholly for the institution of the Eucharist. But it is quite certain that as a devout Jew with His Apostolic band He must have frequently observed the ceremony of the Kiddush, or sanctification of the Sabbath. For this purpose He would find the table spread, and on it a cup and two loaves. As Head of the Apostolic company He must have filled the cup and, after solemn thanksgiving (eucharistia), have given it to the disciples. Then followed a ceremony of washing the hands, which has left its trace in some liturgies, though with a different intention. After this another thanksgiving over the bread, which was then cut and distributed. This weekly sanctification became on the great annual feasts a yet more solemn observance, though with the same ceremonies. Nor is this all. With pious Jews every meal by the act of thanksgiving became a sacrifice, and the table an altar. It is suggested by modern Judaism that the Pharisees' objection to "eating with sinners" lay in their fear of improper or irreverent talk which would disturb the sacrificial aspect of the meal—a suggestion which illuminates St. Paul's word (1 Tim. iv. 4, 5): "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be rejected, if it be received with thanksgiving ; for it is sanctified through the word of God and prayer." We have also a clue to the recognition of the Risen Lord in His "breaking of Bread." Instead of thinking of some manual trick or habit, our thoughts are turned to the solemn thanksgiving, the word of God and prayer. Very different, we may well believe, was His thanksgiving from those that fell from the lips of a Peter, or even of a John.

Whether the Last Supper was a Passover, or eaten on the eve of a Passover, Dr. Sanday declared to be a question on which we can only acknowledge our ignorance. But for our purpose in this paper

the question is not very material. What is material is that we shall not think of the solemn thanksgiving or of the breaking of the bread, of the pouring out of the wine, or of their distribution, as constituents of a wholly new and unknown service. The element of novelty was the use of the words, "This is My Body which is given for you : this do in remembrance of Me. This cup is the New Testament in My Blood which is poured out for you " (St. Luke xxii. 19-21). About the exact form even of these words we cannot be certain. But we cannot doubt that our Lord did use the equivalent of the words, "This is My Body. This is My Blood of the covenant." Nor can we doubt that these words pointed to His atoning Sacrifice about to be accomplished on the Cross of Calvary—a sacrifice which was to be the basis of a new covenant. It is equally certain that He did not institute a new service, but added a new and solemn meaning to that sacrificial element which the pious Israelite found in every family meal. We cannot separate the words "This do," from the words, "As oft as ye drink it." A sacrifice there was, in so far as every meal was a sacrifice, and every Israelite a priest in his own home. This domestic sacrifice of thanksgiving was made the occasion of remembering our Lord's unique sacrifice of Atonement on the Cross. The Bread and Wine were made channels by which the Lord imparted to the faithful the spiritual food of His precious Body and Blood, that is, of union with Himself. May we not find in this fact an explanation of the comparative silence of the first century with reference to the Eucharist? References to Holy Baptism are abundant in the New Testament. References to the Eucharist are comparatively rare. In the Epistle of Barnabas Baptism is dwelt upon with emphasis, but the Eucharist is not mentioned. The same is true even of the Shepherd of Hermas half a century later. This silence does not mean that our Lord's command was disobeyed. St. Paul tells us quite clearly that it was obeyed. But its association with daily meals and the continuance of worship in the Temple (Acts ii. 46 ; iii. 1, etc.) would naturally keep the Eucharist in the category of family worship in Jerusalem ; and to some extent in the Gentile cities also, if, and wherever, a Christian household "broke bread" as they had been taught to break it by the Jewish Apostle or missionary to whom their Church owed its conversion. Holy Baptism would be an extraordinary assembly, and the Eucharist in comparison with it ordinary. The

first mention of it as a sacrifice (*thusia*) occurs in the *Didache* which belongs to the first half of the second century. There it bears a closer resemblance to what we call "a service." "On the Lord's Day assemble ye, and break the bread and give thanks, confessing your sins that your sacrifice (*thusia*) be not defiled." But even this service was often as truly a sacred meal as a gathering for worship. The Eucharist was still even in the third century, in Alexandria, an incident in a meal.

THE EASTERN HOMILY.

(b) I suggested that we should contrast the original institution with a later development. Let us pass on, then, to the fifth century Homily, the Homily of Narsai of Nisibis, commenting on one of the earliest complete liturgies that we possess, in which the Invocation of the Holy Spirit on the Bread and Wine for purpose of consecration occurs. You will ask why this particular Homily, belonging to a Nestorian Church, and not altogether in agreement with some other contemporary Churches of the East, is selected. Let me answer in the words of Mr. E. Bishop: " (We should notice) the rapidity of ritual development in this Syriac Church (i.e., of Nisibis) as compared to some extent even with the Greek-speaking Churches, but most remarkably with the West. Just as, e.g., the Syriac Church had in the fourth century advanced in the cult of the Blessed Virgin in a way which we find but just being entered on in the West in the seventh; so, too, in regard to the Eucharist, the common, the ignorant, vulgar are, at the end of the fifth century, at least according to the rite followed by Narsai, already in possession, not merely of full ritual splendours, but also, as it were, through physical acts that must strike the eye of every beholder, in actual possession of that certitude as to the 'moment of consecration' which was only to be acquired by the common people in the West in the twelfth century or, at earliest, in the eleventh. To the ritual of this Syriac Church may be applied the sentence, 'being perfected in a short time it fulfilled a long time.' . . ."

In other words, the Syriac ritual, owing to the rapidity of its development, has preserved for us precisely what we want to know, that is, the nature of the force or forces from without which wrought to change the sacred meal into the consummation of a sacrifice offered by a priest on behalf of a non-communicating congregation.

In reading the Homily we are at once confronted with the name, "the Holy Mysteries"—a significant name, as we shall find presently. The Church, Narsai tells us, is first cleared of all who may not communicate; "the hearers" or catechumens being allowed to guard the doors. "In that hour . . . let us see Jesus Who is being led to death on our account. On the paten and in the cup He goes forth with the deacon to suffer. The bread on the paten and the wine in the cup are a symbol of His death. A symbol of His death the deacons bear, and when they have set it on the altar and covered it they typify His burial." Then enter the priests in beauteous adornment. The celebrating priest bears the image of our Lord, and like Him performs a mediation. The other priests in the sanctuary represent the apostles, and the deacons with their fans are a symbol of the angels at the head and feet of the tomb. The faith of the Fathers is recited. Prayer is bidden. "Pray, brethren, over the oblation which we offer, that it may be acceptable to God to Whom it is offered, and that by the brooding of the Holy Ghost it may be consecrated that it may become unto us a cause of life in the Kingdom on high. The priest now offers the mystery of the redemption of our life, full of awe and covered with great fear and dread. . . . Trembling and fear for himself and for his people lie upon the priest in that dread hour. . . . (See) the awful King mystically slain and buried, and the awful watchers, standing in fear in honour of their Lord. The ranks of watchers surround the altar in that hour, as Chrysostom has borne witness who saw them." Then follows at length a description of the Pax, and after that the reading of the Diptychs (the two sets of the names of the living and the dead). After a solemn call by the herald "the dread mysteries are being consecrated by the priest: let every one be in fear while they are being performed," the priest uncovers the adorable mysteries. The removal of the veil is the rolling away of the stone from the tomb. "Lift up your hearts." "Unto Thee, O Lord, our minds are lifted up." "The acceptable and pure oblation, lo, is offered to the Lord. . . . It is sacrificed that it may blot out and forgive your sins. . . . Lo! it is offered for the dead and for the living. Lo! it is offered to the God of all as a pledge that He will save us from the torment of Gehenna. The people answer, 'It is most right and worthy . . . to offer this oblation for all creatures.'"

Then follows a silence. "The mysteries are set in order, the lamps are shining, the censers are smoking, the deacons are hovering. The priest prays secretly. He adds (aloud), All the watchers are standing in fear to praise the Father, the Son and the Spirit. The angels, too, offer up their worship, the Cherubim applaud, the Seraphim sanctify . . . all at once cry and say to one another. And the people answer, 'Holy, Holy, Holy.'" Another silence follows, during which the priest communes with God, recounting in memory incidents in the life of our Lord, including the institution of the Lord's Supper, but all is said in secret. He raises his voice at the end, and the people say, Amen. Then the priest makes earnest supplication to God that He will accept the sacrifice that is being offered to Him, and after this he summons the Spirit to come down and dwell in the Bread and Wine and make them the Body and Blood of King Messiah, and make the congregation worthy to receive them. "Three bows does the priest make before God, and by them he openly adores His Majesty . . . with one he prays, with one he gives thanks, with one he calls down the Spirit to dwell and light down upon the oblation. Three days did our Lord remain in the bosom of the earth : and on the third He arose in great glory. And in like manner the priest bows three times, and *by the third bow he symbolizes the resurrection of our Lord Jesus.*"

Without this analysis of the Homily it would have been difficult to convey any real sense of the significance of the Eastern Eucharist in this Syriac Homily of the early fifth century. We are assisting at mysteries in which the dead and buried body of Christ is brought into the Church. They are then offered by the priest as an act of mediation with God, the words of Institution being recited secretly at this stage. The culmination of the mystery is the bringing down of the Holy Spirit to quicken the dead body into life. That is the moment of Consecration. In the Eucharist the Western Liturgy leads up to the Crucifixion, in the Eastern to the Resurrection. In the Western the moment of consecration is the recital of the words of Institution. At that moment the mystical Person of our Ascended Lord is on the Altar. He is presented to the Father in the Anamnesis, in the words recalling all that He did for us. By the priests' consumption of the elements the sacrifice is slain and consummated. In the Eastern Church, as in the Western, the Person of Christ, but of the dead Christ, is laid on the altar and offered in the Anam-

nesis to the Father, but after that brought to life by the Holy Spirit that His Life-giving Person may minister life to the communicants. In both Churches the Bread and Wine cease to be bread and wine. They are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. The Western Church adores the Crucified, the Eastern the Risen Lord.

It is not, of course, suggested that the exposition of Narsai is that which would have been given in all Churches of the East, for, as has been already pointed out, the development of doctrine and ritual was far more rapid in this Church than in other churches, Western as well as Eastern, which used the Epiklesis. Thus, Cyril of Jerusalem, half a century earlier than Narsai, and the first who teaches explicitly the change of the elements effected by the Invocation of the Holy Spirit, does not, so far as I have discovered, explicitly distinguish, as Narsai does, the dead Christ from the risen Christ in the Sacrament. Yet his language carefully examined goes a long way in that direction. "We offer," he says, "the Christ Who was slain on behalf of our sins." But with this statement Narsai, in fact, agrees. It is the slain Christ that he *offers* to God, but it is the risen Christ, raised by the Holy Spirit in response to the Invocation, Whom he adores and receives as spiritual food. So Cyril teaches that in the figure of bread is given the Body, and in the figure of wine is given the Blood, that by partaking the Body and Blood of Christ we may become of one body and one blood in the Christ—assuredly he means with the living Christ. The bread, he says plainly, is not bread, and the wine is not wine. "Cannot He Who changed the water into wine, change wine into blood?" It is the official teaching of the Greek Church to-day that the change of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ takes place "through the Holy Ghost in exactly the same way as our Lord became flesh from the Holy Virgin through the Holy Ghost." But that way was a way of life, not of death. The Holy Spirit is the Lord of Life. With life He fills the Baptismal Font. With life He fills the Body and Blood of the crucified Lord, that have been offered as a propitiatory sacrifice by the priest.

It needs no profound theological training to discern a vast difference between the Last Supper in the Upper Room in Jerusalem and the awe-inspiring mystery that first offers to God the crucified Christ and then calls down the Holy Spirit to bring Him to life again. But here let me anticipate an objection. It may be asked

whether the Eucharistic development is really greater than that which separates the Nicene Creed from the New Testament? Have we not in both cases the play of false doctrine upon the mind of the Church, clearing it of its haziness, giving sharpness to its definitions, purging its dross, bringing out of God's treasury the truth that lay hidden there until the time came to bring it to light through the action of the very forces that would have destroyed it? This is a question which cannot really be answered by quotations from the Fathers, for even they were liable to error and were not always consistent with themselves. The Creed, as Lord Balfour points out, was not an attempt to explain or define what is not explained or defined in Scripture, but to hold fast to all that Scripture has taught: not an attempt to explain how the Godhead and Manhood were united in Christ, but to express faith in Jesus Christ perfect God and perfect Man; not an attempt to show how God could suffer or how the buried Christ could rise from the dead, but to affirm the truth that it was indeed Jesus Christ, God and Man, Who verily suffered, was buried and rose again the third day. The Creed was not moulded to suit philosophic thought or to offer metaphysical explanations, but to assert the Gospel revelation as against such influences, and to keep it pure from them. Can we say the same of the development of Eucharistic doctrine and ritual? Up to a certain point—roughly the end of the third century—we can.

Dr. Swete (*J. Th. S.*, III, p. 176) sums up the Eucharistic belief of the Church in the second and third centuries thus: "There is a significant absence in the Anti-Nicene monuments of any reference to the adoration of Christ in the Eucharist; indeed, it is scarcely possible that Eucharistic adoration can have been practised by an age which sent the Eucharist from Church to Church, kept it in private houses for daily use, and in emergencies was prepared to convey and administer it to the dying by the hands of a child. The Anti-Nicene Church took Christ's words as true, and revered the Bread and Cup which He called His Body and His Blood; but so far as our evidence extends, it does not lead us to conclude that she based on this belief and reverent attitude a system of practical devotions such as that which was afterwards built upon them. She was satisfied with the knowledge that in the Holy Eucharist she had an unfailing supply of the Bread of Life."

There was, in fact, a good and sufficient reason, arising out of the controversies of the time, and acting strongly, to prevent any attempt to explain the Eucharistic gift by a change wrought in the elements through consecration.

During the second and third centuries the controversies of the Church were mainly with Docetics, Gnostics and Manicheans. At the root of all these heresies was the conception that matter was evil, and that the Incarnation was fundamentally inconceivable. The Church appealed to the Eucharist as an assurance that our Lord had linked up the highest blessings in His bestowal with material Bread and Wine. Ignatius always speaks when he can of the Flesh of Christ and the Blood of Christ, where he might have said simply Christ. Thus he writes: "Create yourselves anew in faith, which is the Flesh of the Lord, and in love which is the Blood of Christ." The famous passage in Justin Martyr, interpret it how you will, and there are many interpretations, has in view the correspondence between the Eucharist and the Incarnation: "We do not receive these as common bread and wine. But as Christ our Saviour was made flesh by the Word of God, so the nourishment that has received Eucharistic benediction by prayer and the Word of God proceeding from Him is the Flesh and Blood of Jesus made Flesh." It was essential to the soundness of this argument that the bread should be real bread, as the Flesh of Christ was real flesh. Conversion of the elements into something else would have been fatal to the whole analogy.

(2) FORCES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE CHANGE.

What, then, were the forces which combined in the fourth century to transfer the sacrificial idea from that of a sacred family meal to that of a sacrifice offered by a priest upon an altar? And, further, to fix upon a particular moment as the moment in which what had been food consecrated by the family thanksgiving ceased to be material food and became, by Divine action duly invoked, what it had not been before.

We must distinguish between (a) the culmination of agencies previously at work; and (b) the operation of agencies acquiring a new power.

(a) Agencies previously at work. One of the chief of these

was the necessity of making a plain distinction between the Church and the heretics. Lightfoot tells us that between the first and second of the Apostolic Fathers, Clement of Rome and Ignatius—there is “a wide chasm.” “The interval of time, indeed, is not great. Twenty years at the outside separated the Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians from the letter of Ignatius. But these two decades were a period of exceptionally rapid progress. . . . There are epochs in the early history of a great institution, as there are times in the youth of an individual man, when the increase of stature outstrips and confounds by its rapidity the expectation founded on the average rate of growth.” The insidious poisons of Gnosticism and Docetism forced the Church to such positions as that taken by Ignatius, that there could be no Eucharist without a Bishop. That position tended to convert the sacred meal into a Church service. The Bishop could not preside at a number of meals in a number of households in one day. As the meal took on the character of a service, so a formal offering of bread and wine began to replace the contribution by each communicant of his own share, and piety would soon construe this formal offering into the bringing in the Lord Himself into the assembled congregation.¹

Another agency at work before the fourth century was the growing insistence of the Church on the value of the Old Testament. As the heretics depreciated it so, the Church found in it a Divine barrier against Gnosticism, a bulwark of monotheism. Also, as its Psalms and prophecies spoke more and more plainly to the Church of Christ, it was not unnatural that types of Him began to be suggested in the services of the Temple, types all the more dear when the Temple had been destroyed. From this it was but a step to identify the Christian with the Mosaic priesthood. That step was all the easier when Alexandria became a school of divinity. The very name Eucharist would, in Alexandria, contribute to sacerdotal interpretation. For in Alexandrine Greek—in Philo,

¹ An interesting survival of the transition from the meal to the service and of the connection between the two is to be found in the practice of sending a portion of the consecrated element of bread (*fermentum*) from the Pope's Mass to all the chief churches of Rome in order to connect the Mass said in all the other churches with the Pope's Mass. It needs very little exercise of imagination to perceive how by such a practice as this the Ignatian rule of “no eucharist without a Bishop” could be reconciled with the necessity of domestic eucharists that must have been felt often enough in times of persecution. The unity of the Eucharist could be maintained without superseding altogether the “house to house” breaking of bread.

though not in the LXX or New Testament—*eucharistein* was to “offer a sacrifice,” and *eucharistia* was “a victim.” Something also must be put down to the sorely misinterpreted passage of Malachi—used, we doubt not, by our Lord in its proper sense, but alienated from that sense to serve a point of controversy with Judaism.¹ These were some of the transforming tendencies at work in the second and third centuries.

(b) But with the fourth century came another momentous epoch in the development of the Church. The end of persecution brought in a flood of untrained adherents, carrying with them their old beliefs and practices. New forms of heresy became rife, new pressure was exercised by surviving relics of superstition.

The controversies of the fourth century turned upon the essence of the Godhead, and the relations of the Three Persons or Hypostaseis of the Godhead to one another. These controversies established in a new manner the distinctness, if such a term may be used in connection with the Blessed Trinity, of the Holy Spirit and a defining of His action. Correspondences were sought between His action in the Incarnation, in Holy Baptism and in the Eucharist. The whole tendency of the inquiry was contrary to that which had insisted on the reality of the elements in the Eucharist. It is not unlikely that the Pneumatomachian controversy, i.e., the controversy as to the Godhead of the Holy Ghost, contributed to give a new emphasis and new meaning to older forms of Invocation of the Holy Spirit.

Still, we cannot help asking ourselves how it came to pass that while the doctrine of the Godhead of the Holy Ghost was received alike in East and West, and at the same time, the liturgic effect of the change was more rapidly visible in the East, and more far-

¹ Malachi i. 11 from its use among the “Testimonia” may very probably have been one of the Scriptures which our Lord quoted in His discourse with His disciples. Its meaning is not very different from what our Lord said to the woman of Samaria, “the hour cometh when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father. The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.” So Malachi taught that “God had at that time His worshippers, His true sacrifices, His true incense offering even among the Gentiles.” To Christian Israelites scattered among the Gentiles, after the destruction of Jerusalem, this verse easily adapted itself to their eucharist sacrifice—although the prophets and surely our Lord Himself had in mind that which was in a sense more wonderful than any Eucharist—the existence of God’s Israel among the heathen, and in spite of their heathenism, even before the coming of the Christ.

reaching in its implication. The answer must be found in the stronger survival in the East of what Dr. Dill calls "the surging spiritual energy which in the second and third century was seeking for expression and appeasement in the Mystery religions," the religion of the Great Mother from Phrygia, of Isis from Egypt, and of Mithra from the Far East. Common to all of these was the mystery of life out of death. Defiled as they were by licentiousness, and hated by Christian apologists for their licentiousness and their travesties of Christian truth, as, for instance, in the Taurobolium (the cleansing bath of bull's blood), they made their appeal also to a better side of humanity, to that very side which ultimately gave its triumph to Christianity. Mr. T. C. Lawson, who has made a profound study of Greek religion, after pointing out in its modern rites and religious customs many survivals of primitive folklore, goes on to speak of the mysteries and says (*Primitive Folklore and Modern Greek Religion*, p. 566): "Let us suppose that the general assurances openly given concerning both the Eleusinian and other mysteries are fairly summed up in the promise of being God-beloved and sharing the life of the gods. Such a promise appealed to those innate hopes of the whole Greek race, which manifested themselves in their constant striving after close intercourse and communion with their gods; in other words, the happier hopes concerning the hereafter, which the mysteries sought to appropriate and to reserve to the initiated alone, had for their basis the natural religion of the Hellenic folk." It was inevitable that the far-spread Greek world in Asia, as well as Europe, should seek to find in Christianity what they had found in the mysteries. The very word mystery was carried over to the Eucharist. From the Eucharist the unbaptized (the uninitiated) were excluded. The elements of awe and solemn fear were accentuated. In holy procession, in the Eucharist as in the mysteries, the god who had been slain was borne. Around him was the gorgeously robed attendance of priests (hierophants). It was impossible for Greek religion that such a mystery as this should not culminate in a resurrection from the dead wrought by the descent of the Holy Spirit. Mr. Lawson gives a vivid description of the celebration of Easter in a Greek village. No one can read it without being impressed by the resemblance between the modern Easter and the ancient festival of Demeter. The influence of ancient superstition on Christian ceremonial is undeniable. It is true that

the ceremony which Mr. Lawson describes is not a Eucharist, but it has wonderful resemblances to the Homily of Narsai.

THE CONSISTENCY OF OUR OWN SERVICE.

What, then, is the conclusion of the whole matter? It is this. The introduction of the invocation of the Holy Spirit in the prayer of consecration is a far more serious doctrinal change than it is commonly supposed to be. It is commonly argued that our Baptismal Service contains a prayer for the consecration of the water, "sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin." No one, it is said, has argued in consequence of this prayer that the element of water is changed. Why, then, should a prayer for the consecration of the bread and wine involve any doctrine of transubstantiation, or other theory of the conversion of the bread and wine into something that they were not before?

In this argument are involved many errors. In the first place, the prayer in our Baptismal Service is not an invocation of the Holy Spirit upon the water, nor even a prayer to God the Father that the water may be sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In this respect it is strongly contrasted with the pre-Reformation prayers for the consecration of the Font, which did definitely ask that the element of water might be purged from all evil influences and become living water, regenerating water, purifying water. Oil and wax were poured upon it with prayer that "the virtue of the Holy Spirit might descend into the fulness of the water and fertilize the whole substance of this water with regenerating power." The water so consecrated was to be kept till the font was corrupt, and not till then was it to be renewed, and renewed with the aforesaid ceremonial. It is clear that even in the case of baptismal water there was room for superstitious ideas consequent upon or growing up with invocation of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of consecration.

In the next place the argument suggests that the object of the introducing an invocation is that of setting apart the elements of bread and wine from common use and dedicating them or fitting them to be channels of mystical union with our Blessed Lord. If anywhere the proper place for the introduction of such words is in conjunction with the petition that we may be partakers of the Body and Blood of Christ, or in the prayer of consecration *before* the words of Institution. Words in such a position, limiting the object of consecration

by the Holy Spirit to the object and purpose of reception, would be in accordance with some ancient liturgies. But there has been no proposal, so far as I am aware, at all events no successful proposal, to introduce an invocation of this sort. Yet this is the kind of invocation which may fairly claim to be universal—the kind of invocation which may reasonably be compared with the consecration of the baptismal water. Though it may be doubted whether even here the omission of the words “by Thy Holy Spirit” is not desirable, in consequence of the controversies that have arisen respecting the substance of the consecrated Bread and Wine. Is it not because use of the consecrated elements for *adoration* is, in fact, desired, that consecration in this form has found no supporters?

On the other hand, the introduction of an invocation of the Holy Spirit into the prayer of consecration, at the point where it is proposed to introduce that invocation, cannot really have any such, may we say, “innocent” meaning. Liturgies have their history. We cannot rid them of it. A consecratory invocation after the words of Institution has, and must have, the implications of its history, and we only take advantage of the liturgical ignorance of the average Englishman, and of some 70 per cent. of the clergy, when we pretend that the words at this particular point in the consecration service have no other meaning than their surface meaning. The invocation of the Holy Spirit at this point can only be for the purpose of consecration. This consecratory invocation is neither original nor universal (see Cabrol's *Dictionary of Archaeology and Liturgy*, article “Epiklesis”). There is no instance of it before the middle of the fourth century. When it was introduced it marked definitely the moment of consecration, and led on rapidly to theories of conversion of the elements, and to acts of adoration. It would be *absolutely legitimate* to contend that its introduction now into the prayer of consecration was for the same purpose, and that our Church intended those consequences to follow which did follow from its original use.

Further, the introduction of the words would not bring us one step nearer to the Eastern Church, unless we used them with the intention with which the Eastern Church uses them, that is, of publicly proclaiming to the congregation that the Bread and Wine have been changed into the Body and Blood of Christ, and changed by the same action of the Holy Spirit as that which brought about

the Incarnation in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. To use the words in any other meaning would not be a *rapprochement* to the East, but a condemnation of it.

At the same time we should be throwing ourselves into the controversy between East and West, and whether we so intended or not, we should be pronouncing all Western consecration of the elements, and all our own up to the present time, to be defective.

What is here said is greatly strengthened by the proposal to introduce words recalling the Death, Passion, Resurrection and ascension of the Lord immediately after the invocation, or, as the Report of the National Assembly has it, after the words of Institution. For these words are, in fact, the old anamnesis, which is the presentation to the Father of the Body and Blood of Christ, into Which the Bread and Wine have been converted. Here, again, the attempt to represent these words as having no more than their surface meaning is really a trading upon the liturgical ignorance of the average Englishman. They are words of the highest import. They are the signal for elevation, genuflexions, censing, and acts of adoration. They will be so used, and the clergy and congregations who so use them will be liturgically correct. It is in vain to pretend that they will not. The official pronouncement of the Church of England will be in favour of practices and doctrines discarded at the Reformation. Those who attach to them some other private meaning of their own will be disloyal to the Church, and, as clergy, will be receiving its pay while not teaching its doctrine.

The only release from this position will be that for a time use of the present Prayer Book will be lawful and the Articles unchanged. "The Church will be comprehensive and tolerant of varieties of opinion." Now, it is true that as long as the State decides that the Church shall be comprehensive, the Church will have to submit, as a condition of retaining its status and endowments. But the position will not be a very honourable position. It will give enormous advantages to the Roman controversialist, who will not fail to point out that our Church has no consistent, no defensible, doctrine of the Eucharist, that its Eucharistic services are not in agreement one with the other, and that one of the services is violently at variance with the official teaching of the Church. If there is any such quality as ecclesiastical self-respect the Church will have to escape from this position at any cost. For a Church to be unable to teach her children the meaning of the Eucharist is the lowest humiliation. The only true toleration is that which the Prayer Book already accords, that is—the prayer of consecration which, pointing to the Cross, prays that our Lord will give all that He would have us receive, when He instituted and ordained these holy mysteries, and recalls the solemn acts and words of Institution. Here we are united on what He did, and are left free in our interpretation of His act. It is when we force our explanation on others by significant rite and ceremony that we are divided. The present Liturgy of our Church is the only liturgy that can claim to be truly primitive and catholic.