

ARTICLE V.

LATER PHASES OF THE ANGLO-CATHOLIC
MOVEMENT.

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ONE of the most interesting and peculiar phenomena of ecclesiastical history may be observed in the later fortunes of the Oxford Anglo-Catholic movement. That it should display a continuous vitality and growth for half a century after the defection of its great originator and leader, and that too with him still alive and filling a most conspicuous place in the ranks of a rival communion, is certainly curious enough. One would have thought that when the legitimate *terminus ad quem* of the movement was fully shown by the secession of Newman and some hundreds of his followers to Rome, the remainder of its adherents would have been checked and silenced, and its influence soon dissipated. On the contrary, almost immediately after what seemed its overthrow, it consolidated itself into more aggressive shape than ever, found a new leader in Professor Pusey, and new blood and more sanguine spirit in the adhesion of Gladstone, J. B. Mozley, and others, and soon proceeded to greater lengths and bolder assumptions than its original projectors had hitherto ventured. The ritualistic revival that followed was apparently a surprise even to Pusey himself, and, instead of being discouraged by warnings of its peril on the Romeward side, the Anglo-Catholic party have only taken new confidence from the danger-signals they are able to keep burning, to invade the very precincts of the Romish arcana, and have gone on robbing Rome's ar-

chives of everything material save the Holy Father and the shadow of his great name.

In the words of Dr. F. C. Ewer, one of their most prominent American representatives in 1883: "The children of the Anglican Church, in ever greater numbers, are beginning to have the courage of her convictions, and are ceasing to be afraid of anything, confession, prayers for the dead, unction of the sick, or anything else 'which this church hath received from the early church.' . . . They claim the right to develop the religious orders of the church, to hold retreats and missions, to make and hear voluntary confessions. . . . They do not rank confirmation, orders, marriage, absolution, and unction of the sick with the two great sacraments; but they admit their sacramental character. . . . They believe that the plain English rubric provides that the eucharist shall be surrounded with its respectful and fitting adjuncts of vestments, lights, incense, song, and adoration. They refuse to be hindered from worshipping Jesus Christ when he is specially present in the sacrament of his body and blood."¹

Dr. Morgan Dix, the popular rector of Trinity Church, New York, boldly asserts that "the creed is held by faithful men without reservation in the Catholic sense: they revere the ministry as a priesthood, they see in the bishop the successor of the apostles. To the penitent is freely opened the way to confession with the comfort of absolution. . . . Communion is multiplied without number. Sisterhoods show us the life of the religious."²

In the view of the uninitiated, the line of demarcation between those doctrines and Romanism (without a pope), seems as imaginary as the equator, and yet they are freely accepted "without mental reservation" by the party that claims to be the largest and most influential in the Anglican and Protestant Episcopal churches to-day. Such a

¹ What is the Anglican Church? p. 5 *et passim*.

² The Oxford Movement, p. 14. Young Churchman Co. 1886.

result is certainly almost without parallel in the history of religious thought.

And then, too, this development has taken place in spite of the most powerful opposition directed against any movement in our time.

To begin with John Henry Newman, now from 1846 within the pale of the Roman Church. He had been the chosen and beloved leader of the early movement; now he was its determined enemy. He knew all the secret plans and tendencies of his former associates, and now betrayed them to the foe. He had studied all the weak places in their theological citadel from within, and now was ready to use his knowledge to overthrow it. It was he who had been wont to state their positions more strongly than any other of their advocates, and throw about them the glamour of his wonderful imagination, and all the wealth of his unrivalled style. And now, for him to make it his business, with the Damascus blade of a logical faculty scarcely equalled in his century, to sever in mid-air, like the Saracen in the "Talisman," the delicate silken fabric of his own weaving! It was almost appalling to witness such logical massacre as his controversies proved to be from time to time with the remnant of the Oxford party. He republished the essays and papers of his Oxford days, with copious annotations from his new view-point, which either completely refuted or annihilated their force, or even turned their batteries against the side they had been intended to defend. Who could have the daring again to attempt to demonstrate the catholicity of the Anglican Church when arguments more powerful than any other champion could

his "Apologia de sua Vita," in answer to sweeping and undeserved charges of Kingsley, his notes on early essays, or any of his answers to Pusey and later Anglo-Catholics. To be sure, when Pusey and Keble and most of the other old associates of Newman had recovered from their first surprise at his loss to them, and decided, from whatever reason, that they themselves could never go over to the Romish communion, it would be only natural to begin to repair breaches in the walls and strengthen themselves in a new and more bitter hostility to that church which had drawn from their ranks their noblest champion, and to warn the unwary as effectually as possible. Of course, there would be no more bitter foe to Rome than Puseyism ever afterwards. But to the more profound and logical minds of the younger generation, especially those of the Oxford school, the appeals and arguments of Newman, who had been in his university days an object of universal reverence and worship, would strike home, and lead them either to follow his own course or else to avoid the ritualistic faction altogether, and turn aside to liberalism. That such did not prove to be the case with any very considerable number after the first impulse of his example had passed away, shows that other influences were at work, stronger with most than either logic or personal loyalty.

This suggests the next great difficulty with which the Oxford Revival had to contend from the very first. It has taken the name in history of the "Oxford Movement," as if the whole weight of the university was given to it, and all the prestige and authority of that great educational centre were employed to sustain its character, in a peculiar degree. This was not true at any epoch of its development. There were other "Oxford Movements" all along, and another movement contemporaneous with it in an entirely different direction. Even Oriel College was the seat of liberal tendencies at the very time Newman was gathering his first disciples there, and he himself was

somewhat affected by them. Milman and Thirwall, Whately and Arnold, had left the effect of their progressive views in the very atmosphere the Tractarians had to breathe. Then in the heat of the agitation in 1836, Hampden, a liberal of the liberals, was appointed professor of divinity and proved a thorn in the sides of the new party. Besides this, partly as the outcome of the teaching of Newman himself, who inspired distrust of the individual consciousness as a guide to the truth, in order to lead his pupil to take refuge in the dogmas of the church, there was gathering a band of rebels both to the external authority of the church and the authority of the Christian consciousness. F. W. Newman, brother of the great Tractarian, had left Oxford as early as 1830 refusing to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles, and was afterward to prove the redoubted assailant of the church in his widely read and influential book, "Phases of Faith," which came out in 1850. Matthew Arnold, J. A. Froude, and other future leaders were at the university in those years and received impressions wholly divergent from the prevailing Anglicanism. These thinkers, thus early made acquainted with the Anglo-Catholic leaders and their inner principles and modes of thought, would prove all the more dangerous critics and counter-workers in after days. Matthew Arnold particularly, as the apostle of culture, rival of Newman in the mastery of all the arts of expression, has exercised perhaps as great an influence in contravention of Anglican ideas as any single writer of the time. The outbreak of liberalism in the issue of the "Essays and Reviews" at Oxford in 1860 also shows how precarious a footing the Oxford movement has had in its native home. The "Broad Church" party, having its origin mainly among Cambridge men, in fact tracing its parentage as far back as the "Cambridge apostles" of 1830, with Tennyson for its poet, in comparison with whom the singer of Anglicanism, Keble, is not once to be mentioned, and with Maurice and Kingsley for its early representatives, and Stanley

and Farrar for its more recent exponents, not only caused the Anglo-Catholics much trouble of heart, but has successfully competed with them on their own ground for popular favor.

A third serious hindrance to the general acceptance of the views of Anglo-Catholic agitators was derived from the same cause that enabled them to rally from the loss of Newman and his followers,—that is the unreasoning antagonism of the average Englishman toward everything that savored of popery. The impression of Gunpowder Plots and popish scares seems to be a lasting one on the English character. It was just this blind hatred of Rome that saved most of the Tractarians from following their leader and accepting the logic of their convictions. They had set about the task of nullifying the Reformation in order to establish their own catholicity, and then it proved that the effects of the Reformation in its least praiseworthy form furnished their own safeguard against the entire dissolution of their body. But, after the noise and comment excited by the withdrawal of a portion of the school and their adhesion to the Romish communion had once called popular attention to the Romanizing tendency of their views and practices, it would be useless to protest that they were the deadly foe of the Pope, whose trade they were stealing. The English country squire has two articles always prominent in his creed, hatred of the Pope and of foreigners; and the progress of the new ritualistic practices would be regarded by him with suspicion and disgust. Then, the old High Church element would be of much the same sentiments. Many of the bishops and other higher prelates were naturally of this class at the beginning of the movement. They were in league with the Tory party in politics, and held more or less strongly Erastian doctrines of the relation of church and state. With many of these it was rather state and church, than church and state. The Anglo-Catholics from the beginning exalted church above state, and were impatient at

the slightest secular interference with ecclesiastical affairs. Accordingly the development of their doctrines has been attended with frequent collisions with civil authority. They complained that the higher clergy were against them, and even claimed that Newman and others were really forced out of the Established Church by hostile action on the part of their ecclesiastical superiors.

But the remarkable fact is that in spite of all opposition and every hindrance arising from untoward circumstances, the movement has seemed to go steadily forward and under different names to maintain substantially the same character until the present. It is claimed by Bishop Ellicott and others that there have been two divergent tendencies in it from the beginning, a Romanizing and a purely Anglican element. Possibly the latter has in later years come more to the front. But the recent writings of the school do not differ much from the tone of the first Oxford Tracts, except as regards advance in ritualistic practices. Since the first commotion attending the suppression of the Tracts and the subsequent withdrawal of the Newmanites, the history of the Puseyites has been comparatively uneventful, their strength being made manifest only on occasion of some popular excitement or opposition. To give a brief summary:—

In the midst of the agitation following the condemnation of Tract No. 90, and the retirement of Newman from St. Mary's, Pusey preached before the University in 1843, his sermon on "The Holy Eucharist a Comfort to the Penitent," which was speedily condemned for alleged Romish opinions, and he was silenced for two years. This drew popular attention to him in a marked degree. Eighteen thousand copies of the sermon were immediately called for: he became at once the head of the movement, which took from that time the name of Puseyism. While not of the natural temper of a popular leader, being of a somewhat reserved and unsocial habit, he had exactly the intellectual qualities suited to please his party

and rally its scattered forces. Of a vast, though somewhat undigested learning, able to use "the appeal to antiquity," as the Tractarians called it, in its most artful form (meaning to select whatever in the writings of the ancient Fathers seemed favorable to their cause and to obscure and explain away the rest), happily blind to the profounder principles of logic which Newman saw so clearly, but which would only hamper and confuse Pusey in his position, sincerely and earnestly thinking himself to be reasoning toward the final truth when he was only defending preconceived positions with cloudy verbiage and subtle sophistries, assailing an opponent with a perfect storm of evidence, careless whether strictly admissible or not, —no more unpleasant controversialist could be met with by the ordinary debater. As the Tractarians were in an illogical situation, an illogical, disputatious, vehement mind was best fitted to give them comfort. When the two years of his suspension had expired, he boldly reiterated his doctrine of the real presence, this time without protest, showing that he had won his spurs as the knight of the cause. In 1850 occurred the celebrated Gorham case, in which a candidate was refused institution into his office as vicar, on the ground of denying the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, but this decision of the Bishop was overruled, on appeal to the higher courts, thus leaving the question open. The greatest agitation was at once excited; the whole Oxford party was thrown into alarm; and a number of the most advanced Tractarians were precipitated at a blow into Romanism, including Manning, two of the Wilberforces, and several other men of note. To cap the climax, the Pope, who misunderstood as usual the temper of the English people, expecting a general exodus of all the High Church section, prepared to welcome the returning prodigals, by dividing the kingdom into twelve dioceses and appointing Cardinal Wiseman Archbishop of Westminster. Whereupon the prime minister of England, Lord John Russell, of a hasty

and passionate temperament, wrote a public letter inflaming popular feeling to the highest pitch, and raising a veritable "No popery" commotion like those of the "good old times." The Anglo-Catholics seemed at their wit's end, not knowing how many more of their numbers might go over to Rome, and having to bear the odium of having incited the action of the papal curia. In this crisis Pusey was the man of the hour. He preached a sermon, entitled, "The Rule of Faith as Maintained by the Fathers and by the Church of England," which stemmed the current of secessions to Rome, and convinced the people at large that the Puseyites were almost as bitter against the Holy Father as the prime minister himself. Though in the controversy with Newman into which he was led by the publication of his *Eirenicon*, he proved himself no match for his former associate in pure reasoning faculty, yet he had the immense advantage of appealing to those who were in love with a theory rather than pure logic, and who could give no fair hearing to anything Newman might say after embracing the tenets of Romanism. When the "Essays and Reviews" of 1860 threw the theological world again into a ferment, Pusey was again in his element, coming forward as the champion of orthodoxy in 1863, preferring charges of heresy against the liberals before convocation, as a kind of poetic justice for the condemnation of his sermon just twenty years before. His party was able to make great capital out of the general alarm over latitudinarian views and was visibly strengthened during that period. When questions regarding ceremonial came to the front, the prominence of Pusey in his party became somewhat obscured, and his name was dropped for that of "Ritualism." Discussions as to the form of church service were but incidental effects of the original Oxford movement, and Pusey was never especially identified with them. But the party was exactly the same; after the theological controversies had somewhat abated, devoting itself more

to matters of worship. The first case of what is called "Ritualism" in recent times occurred at St. Thomas' Church, Oxford, in 1850; the first suit at law was decided in 1857 when the whole matter was referred back to the first prayer-book of Edward VI., and so the question of vestments was practically left open. A number of prosecutions occurred from time to time without much result down to 1874, when a desperate effort was made "to crush the Ritualists," and the "Public Worship Act" was passed, requiring the complaints of only three persons in the parish, not necessarily communicants, to institute a prosecution. The law, in spite of its *animus*, has mainly proved a dead letter; a number of suits have ensued, but have been mostly dismissed, except in a few instances where over-zealous ritualists, seeking for martyrdom by persistent defiance of the law, have gotten themselves sent to prison. On the whole, the outcome of legal interference has been usually regarded as a victory for ritualism. The success of the party is shown by a vast increase of ceremonial in the Anglican churches both in the Old World and the New. This fact being inseparably connected with advanced views of sacramentarianism, furnishes the most patent evidence of the general prevalence of Anglo-Catholic teaching.

At this point three inquiries naturally present themselves: Wherein lay the real strength of the Anglo-Catholic movement? What has been its effect upon the activities of the English Church? and finally, What is its relation to the future?

1. The real strength of the movement has lain largely in its appeal to the imaginative and devotional elements of religion. Some one has said that the great value of Keble's poetry consisted in its making English church life poetical. The dry formalism of the stiff and cold High-Churchism of the eighteenth century had seemed to wither up all tenderness and poetry. The evangelical revival would have supplied this much needed element,

but it was never cordially accepted as a true development within the Anglican Church, but has found its natural home among the Nonconformists. The Oxford movement in its beginning was really an importation of new spiritual life directly from evangelical sources. Newman, Pusey, Faber, Manning and the Wilberforces, had all received their early training in this school, and after discarding its tenets, none the less retained much of its devotional spirit. The Oxford revivalists were really the Wesleyans of the nineteenth century. A parallel between the university career of John Wesley and his disciples and that of the Newmanites of 1833 could easily be drawn in many particulars. The English churchman who could not be induced to accept the original Methodism, may find it in its new Anglo-Catholic distillation more palatable. The old evangelicalism had not exalted the church so much as the individual Christian life, its emotionalism found its fountains within the soul; the new Oxford reformers made the church the central spring of hope and inspiration. To restore and embellish and exalt her, they took upon themselves as their great mission. To remove from her the stain and the scandal of seeming to depend for her origin and existence upon the cupidity and lusts of Henry the Eighth, to repudiate the Protestant Reformation, and the name Protestant altogether, to trace the life of the church back to the primitive days of Christianity in England,—this was the beginning of their chosen task. The sense of the historic continuity of Christian experience, the glow of glad emotion that comes from a feeling of communion with the blessed dead of all the ages of Christian history, and the inspiring memory of their heroism and faithful service, is an element which any religious body cannot too much cultivate; and the purely secular arrangement which the English Reformation is often made to appear, must be a serious bar to the comfort of an ordinary churchman in this respect. To make the "Reformation" signify a gradual process extending

over centuries would evade this difficulty, and to show a continuous current of religious life flowing down from the first ages to the present and all within the sacred channels of the church was surely a beautiful conception. With this starting-point, it is evident how useful the theory of apostolical succession, the exaltation of the sacraments, and the restoration of the more elaborate ritual of past centuries, would appear to these new High Churchmen. All these points if they could be established would seem to show that the Church of England, instead of a secular contrivance of human origin, was in reality the truest branch of the "holy catholic and apostolical church of Christ." With this preconceived scheme, it would be easy to see how the archives of the past and the writings of the Fathers, stored with every kind of ecclesiastical rubbish, would furnish whatever kind of evidence the zealous churchman like Pusey might choose to select. Then, when this Anglo-Catholic idol was once set up, the average religionist would be only too ready to fall down and worship it, not venturing to open his eyes to look behind the scenes to investigate its composition. The ordinary communicant, accepting on principle the teaching of his spiritual advisers, sincerely embracing this new theory of the church, would undoubtedly derive great comfort from it. The church edifice restored from the glaring abominations of eighteenth century architecture to a more primitive and chaste style, the service performed with more reverential devotion, with enrichment of ceremonial and priestly dress, new to the worshipper, but declared to be sacred from antiquity, multiplication of holy days and church festivals, the placing in his hands of a new literature of devotion, making the religious life as plain as possible,—the effect of all these things, say what we please about their legitimacy, would be an undoubted increase and advance of the religious life of a people like the English. And no doubt some such movement was sadly needed. To read the history

of the condition of practical religion, both among the clergy and the laity, half a century or more ago, and then compare it with the present in districts where the new Anglican ideas prevail, is sufficient to convince any candid mind that the Oxford movement has been in a true sense a revival of real religion as well as of ecclesiasticism.

2. The next inquiry is regarding the effect of the Revival upon the activities of the English Church. No separate statistics can of course be adduced. We can only examine the present condition of the church as compared with that of 1833, and ask whether a revival of interest in church work dates from that time, and whether any great measures indicating progress have been brought forward with the suggestion or assistance of the Tractarian school. It is evident at once that a change as from death to life has been wrought. To begin with the revival of Convocation. This, the highest council of the church, had not been called together for discussion since 1711; the Tractarians were the first and most persistent in advocating its restoration. After repeated attempts to have a call issued, the first meeting was held in connection with Parliament in 1861. Important questions were at once brought before it, the "Essays and Reviews" were condemned, and meetings soon came to be held every year. The benefit of this reform in developing the unity of the church is untold. A Pan-Anglican Conference with delegates from America and all the English colonies was held in 1867 for the first time, and others since. Church congresses, gatherings of laymen as well as clergy, were established in 1861; diocesan conferences and synods have been revived; guilds, confraternities, penitentiaries, orphanages, missions, "Retreats," "Quiet Days," etc., have been multiplied almost without limit. All this has been just in the line of the new movement and largely a result of its working. The work of the church has extended wonderfully in the colonies; the number of colonial bish-

ops being increased within the present period from 6 to over 80. Records of communicants are not reported in England, but the number of clergy has increased from 14,600 in 1841 to upward of 23,000 in 1886. The estimated expenditure for improvement of church property in the past forty years equals about \$200,000,000, or \$5,000,000 a year. The average stipend of curates has been raised from \$400 to \$750, and the value of benefices has developed still more. The Anglican Church has expended in the work of elementary education alone more than \$140,000,000 since 1811, more than nine-tenths of this sum in the past fifty years. In this period the church has established over thirty colleges, mainly for theological and missionary education.¹ It is true, all these figures may doubtless be equalled in proportion, and possibly exceeded by reports from the Nonconformist bodies in the same period. Still in comparison with the Anglican Church herself in former epochs, the advance is certainly unprecedented; and while great credit must be given to all branches of her adherents, the Oxford Revival must be regarded as having had a leading share in it.

3. On the last inquiry, What seems to be the relation of the Anglo-Catholic movement to the future of the Church of England? a few words only are left us. In the first place, the new leaven seems to be working in connection with other influences toward disestablishment of the national church. To be sure, a great portion of the school look with horror upon the possibility of reduction to the same level before the state as the dissenting bodies, and regard the disendowment of the church revenues as positive sacrilege. But none the less, their hostile attitude toward whatever they consider as state interference, and their determined support of ritualistic infractions of the law, tends no doubt to foster a coldness between the liberal elements of Parliament and the entire establishment. If so, with the Evangelicals, Dissenters, and a

¹ The Church in England (Hore. London 1886), *passim*.

portion of the Broad Church ready for a change, the present *status quo* would seem to be doomed. Suppose disestablishment to come, in any shape, what would be the probable effect upon the Anglo-Catholics? Evidently a considerable loss of power and prestige, an outburst of anguish of spirit, and a feeling of fierce hatred against the state altogether. Pride in the national elements of their faith might suffer a fall; and with new emphasis upon their chosen title "Catholic" the "Anglo" prefix might lose its charm. In other words, they might be driven still further toward Romanism. Then, if the prophecy of the recent writer in the *Contemporary Review* should be verified, the Papacy delivered from Italian control (in which lies the greatest barrier to its obtaining English converts), even transplanted to British soil (if such a thing could be imagined), the wholesale secession of the entire ritualistic faction might be reasonably expected.

In any case, the spiritual earnestness of the present movement, it would seem, cannot be lasting, zeal for a church in place of the love of Christ and loyalty to the Christian Scriptures, must sink, ere very long, back to something like the formalism and spiritual paralysis of the High Church of the last century.

Finally, for history is ever repeating itself, a new evangelical revival, of greater breadth of spirit and less pietistic tone than its Methodist predecessor, led by the Non-conformists, in union with elements both Low and Broad from the national church, will, let us hope, in the near future, be largely instrumental in leading England back to "the true faith of the fathers."