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ART. I.—THE SACERDOTAL THEORY.

THE whole system of the Church of Rome rests upon what is called the sacerdotal theory; that is to say, that the priest under the New Testament stands in the same relation to the Church that the Aaronic priest did to the nation of Israel, acting as intercessor—a mediator offering sacrifices and pronouncing absolution. Judging from the writings of the controversial literature in the present day, there seems to be a vast confusion of thought upon this subject. The question is a very simple one. Is the Christian ministry a continuity of the Aaronic priesthood, or is there a change of the law, and consequently a change of the priesthood, that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? The Epistle to the Hebrews proves, in a very elaborate argument, that there was no connection whatever between the Melchisedecan and the Levitical priesthood, and therefore that there is no connection between the Aaronic and the Christian ministry. The Aaronic priesthood was typical; it was a shadow of good things. The Christian ministry is the substance and reality of the blessing which Christ, the Apostle and High-priest of our profession, has obtained for us. Much error has arisen from the way in which Aaron is said to be a type of Christ, and therefore the type of the Christian priesthood; but it is nowhere said that Aaron was a type of Christ. Moses was a type of Christ, for we are told very distinctly, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you like unto me;" but it is nowhere said by Aaron, "A priest shall the Lord your God raise up unto you like unto me." The truth is that Aaron was a priest, not a prophet; whereas the Christian minister is a prophet, not a priest. This will be seen by a careful study of the appointment of Aaron to his office. Aaron,

as a priest, was ordained for men in things pertaining to God; Moses, as the prophet of the Lord, was employed for God in things pertaining to men. And in the conjunction of the two brothers in their ministry to Israel we may trace the real distinction between the symbolical priesthood of the Old Testament and the witnessing and ambassadorial character of the New. For when, through weakness of faith or diffidence in his own powers, Moses excused himself from speaking for God to the people, by saying, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent; I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue," the anger of the Lord was kindled against him, and He made Aaron to be His spokesman—"he shall be unto thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be unto him instead of God." Thus the prophet Moses stood in the place of God to Aaron, giving divine revelations, authority, and influence to his words, and Aaron stood in the place of Moses to deliver the word of God to man; that was all.

This conjunction of the two brothers in their office of priest and prophet directs us to the historical inquiry as to how far the priestly office or the prophetic had any relation to the Christian ministry.

Looking, then, at what Scripture has recorded of the life of Aaron, we must regard him in the double office—first, as high-priest ordained for men in things pertaining to God, and, secondly, as the mouthpiece of Moses ordained for God in things pertaining to men; and in this point of view Aaron presents the twofold aspect of the ministry under the Old and the ministry under the New Testament—typical and temporary until the first advent of Christ in the one, a representative and testamentary ministry until the second advent of Christ in the other. Thus, in the Epistle of the Hebrews (chap. iii.), when the Apostle compares Christ with Moses, he says: "Consider the Apostle and High-priest of our profession, Christ Jesus," and illustrates his office by referring to the psalm: "To-day, if ye will hear His voice." But when he compares Him with Aaron (chap. v.), he says: "Every high-priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin." And he adds that these sacrifices had to be repeated, for they could not take away sins, and therefore perfection was not under the Levitical priesthood. There was need that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron. In the one we have the prophetic, in the other the sacerdotal, element.

A brief review of the history of Aaron will illustrate these two points.

*The Office of the High Priest.*—(1) The peculiarity of the office consisted first in the selection of a particular tribe, and of

a particular family of that tribe, and a particular individual of that family, to be the representative of the people. It was a tribal and hereditary ministry. It was Aaron's rod that budded; it was Aaron who was consecrated to be the first high-priest. He offered the sacrifices, he offered the incense; he alone went inside the vail to make intercession; he wore upon his breastplate and upon his shoulders the names of the twelve tribes; in short, everything connected with the vestments, the service, and ceremonial of the office was representative. The high-priest was the impersonation of the religion of the nation in their approach to God.

(2) The high-priest was the mediator by whom atonement was made for the sins of the people. He was not *an example* of holy living. This he may have been, and no doubt, to a great extent, Aaron was so; but the golden crown and the golden bells proclaimed holiness to the Lord solely upon the principle that atonement was made by the shedding of blood for his own sins, as well as for the people's, and that the living priest, by virtue of that propitiatory sacrifice, and by that alone, had access to God.

(3) Aaron's office as high-priest was subordinate to the laws which Moses received from God and communicated to him. Moses delivered the law, and Aaron was subject to Moses. Take, for example, the account given in Lev. viii. of the consecration of Aaron. Moses performed the service on that solemn occasion. We read that when the assembly was gathered together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, Moses said unto the congregation, "This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded to be done." Then having washed Aaron and his sons with water, he put on him the holy garments, the girdle, the breastplate, the mitre, and the holy crown, as the Lord commanded Moses. He then took the holy anointing oil, and slew the bullock and the ram for a burnt-offering and the ram of consecration, and took the blood of it and put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot—as the Lord commanded Moses. Every detail of this grand and imposing ceremony was by Divine direction. No less than seven times in the chapter we have the same form of expression, and at the close of it, "So Aaron and his sons did all things which the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses."

This subordination to Moses was manifested on another great occasion, when the Lord entered into covenant with the people upon the holy mount (Exod. xxiv. 1, etc.): "And He said unto Moses, Come up unto the Lord, thou, and Aaron, and Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off. And Moses alone shall come near the Lord—but they

shall not come nigh." And then, having read the words of the covenant, and having sprinkled the blood upon the book and upon the people, Moses and Aaron and the elders ascended the mount and they saw the glory of God, and did eat and drink. And Moses went up into the mount of God, and he said unto the elders, "Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you; and, behold, Aaron and Hur are with you: if any man have any matters to do, let him come unto them. And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount." This cloud, like a veil, separated between Moses, who was in the presence of God, and Aaron. He knows nothing of the will of God but as it is revealed to him by the intervention of Moses. Holy and awful as his office was, he did not enjoy that privilege of standing in the immediate presence of God which was vouchsafed to Moses. He was the high-priest, but there was one higher and nearer to God. As the high-priest he was the representative of the people; Moses was the representative of God. Aaron could only approach God as a sinner himself and for sinners with the sacrifice of atonement; and he received all his spiritual knowledge through the mediation of the chosen prophet and law-giver of God. All this proves that the office of the high-priest was typical and temporary. For the solemn and most instructive duties of the ceremonial did not confer any supernatural grace or infallibility upon the individual who performed them. So long as he was clothed in the holy garments and was engaged in the holy services he was surrounded by the symbols of holiness, but when he was in his undress he was clothed with infirmity and sin as any other man. We have this remarkably illustrated in the history of Aaron, for while he acted in concert with, and under the eye of Moses, all was well; but when he was separated from Moses, and was left to his own counsels and responsibility, he fell into idolatry and rebellion against God, insomuch that but for the intercession of Moses he would have been destroyed. There are few passages of Scripture more touching than that in which Moses refers to this event (Deut. ix. 20): "And the Lord was angry with Aaron to have destroyed him, and I prayed for Aaron also the same time."

When, too, Aaron and Miriam murmured against Moses, saying, "Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath He not also spoken by us?" the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and He said: "If there be a prophet I will speak to him by visions and dreams; but My servant Moses is not so, with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold. Wherefore, then, were ye not afraid to speak against My servant, Moses?" By this public rebuke the Lord vindicated the conduct of Moses, and showed that the priestly office was not to take

precedence of the prophetic, or to step a single hair's-breadth out of its appointed course. Aaron's priesthood directed man to God; Moses delivered the lively oracles—the voice of God to man.

But there is another aspect in which, apart from his sacerdotal office, the ministry of Aaron, in its conjunction with Moses, shadows out the principles of the Christian ministry: First, in his call to the work, we find him following the secret intimation of the Divine will when he went in search of his brother in Midian. The Lord had revealed to Moses that his brother was coming to him; the Lord had revealed to Aaron where he could find Moses. The two are brought together providentially and supernaturally, as much as St. Peter was brought to Cornelius, in order that the distinct Divine call and appointment of Aaron might be manifested. In this we trace the arguments of the Apostle in Heb. v. 4: "No man taketh this honour unto himself but he that was called of God as was Aaron." And this calling does not imply simply that there was some external or providential call, for this he might have disregarded through unbelief or disobeyed through fear; but it was evidently an inward call, leading the elder brother to submit to the younger, and producing that self-denying humility and separation from the world which constitutes the primary element of fitness for the ministry. "And the Lord said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses; and he went and met him in the mount of God and kissed him." Where shall we find in the history of the Church—whether in the call of the Prophets or of the Apostles, or of their successors in the ministerial office—a more perfect illustration of a distinct call and separation to the ministry? And this our Church recognises in the question put in the Ordination Service: "Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office and administration?"

Then, further, the special duty which he had to discharge as the mouthpiece of Moses suggests another mark of the Christian ministry. "He shall be thy spokesman unto the people. And he shall be, even he shall be to thee, instead of a mouth; and thou shalt be to him instead of God. And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel, and Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people." Here we may note that this method of oral instruction did not originate with or arise out of the office of the high-priest, but it was the conjoint act of Moses and of Aaron—the one supplying the matter, the other the mouth for its utterance. I will not say that Aaron's part was mechanical, but it was set in motion and limited by the inspired revelations which he

received from God. Aaron could only speak as he was moved and taught by the Holy Ghost. It involved no small attainment of courage and of faith to rebuke the king and to proclaim the will of God to a nation living in the midst of the attractions of the idolatry and fleshpots of Egypt; and it is in this way we recognise the Apostolic precept, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God," and find its counterpart in the last of the prophetic warnings to Israel: "The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts."

And, further still, when we see Aaron in action apart from his stated duty in the tabernacle, we trace the same prefiguration of the Christian ministry. For when Korah, Dathan and Abiram murmured against Aaron the saint of the Lord, and the plague had gone forth for the punishment of those wicked men and of those who were led away by their rebellion, Moses commands Aaron to go forth and make an atonement for them. How was this to be done? Was it by offering a fresh sacrifice or sacrifices, or by some extemporized ceremonial which was to propitiate the anger of God? No; Aaron was to take his censer with a living coal from the altar, with incense, and to run quickly into the congregation, and then, with the blood-stained coal burning with fresh incense, to stand between the living and the dead, and thus the plague was stayed. Who can fail to see in this the position of the minister of the New Testament, not of the letter which killeth, but of the Spirit, which giveth life? No renewal of the one Sacrifice offered once for all is required, but a lifting up of the precious name of Jesus—a sacrifice of sweet-smelling savour—in prayer and faith—the preaching of the Cross, which is to them that perish foolishness, but to them that are saved the power of God. This wondrous key of the kingdom of heaven, this living coal of fire, this blood-sprinkled truth, this burning zeal of love, opens and shuts, locks and unlocks hearts. This incense of the sacrificial altar is unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish—to the one a savour of death unto death, to the other a savour of life unto life. *The minister of the Gospel stands between the living and the dead.*

Nor is this all; for if we follow Aaron to the close of his career, we find him divested of his official distinctiveness previous to his death and his burial upon Mount Hor. He might have expected that when the death of the first high-priest in Israel was to take place it would have been connected with the insignia of his office or within the precincts of the tabernacle, and that no pains or expense would have been spared to surround the memory of the great and good man with the pomp and magnificence becoming his rank and station; but there is

nothing of this. He was not permitted even to die in his priestly robes, nor was he buried in his priestly robes. Moses stripped Aaron of his garments and put them upon Eleazar, his son, and Aaron died there on the top of the mount.

When the minister of Christ dies, he can claim nothing in the way of merit from the dignities of his office, whether bishop, priest, or deacon : he must go out of the world as he came into it, and stand in his own personal individuality before the Judge of the whole earth. The succession of the priesthood and the succession of the Apostleship point to the one High-Priest and Apostle of our profession, Who abideth a Priest for ever, and Who can have none to succeed Him. Aaron had lived in public, and he must die in public ; and all who saw him bow the head upon that mountain realized that death was the penalty of sin, and that redemption from its curse was not to be obtained by the office, authority or merits of the Aaronic priest, but by Him alone in Whom Aaron believed, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world—the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

The lessons to be drawn from this brief review of the character of Aaron are twofold :

I. The importance of drawing a broad and clear line of distinction between the Aaronic priesthood and the ministry of the New Testament.—The former was ordained for man in things pertaining to God : the offering of sacrifice, the act of intercession ; the public and representative duties of the office foreshadowed the one High-Priest who should arise after the order of Melchisedec. In itself, therefore, it was simply typical and temporary ; it was a shadow of good things to come, and not the substance. But the ministry of the New Testament is ordained from God to men : "As my Father sent Me, so send I you. Ye shall be my witnesses in Judea and Samaria, and unto the ends of the earth. Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : and lo ! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Here nothing is typical : there is not a single ordinance or ceremony under the Gospel ministrations which is typical ; we have signs, not types. The preaching of the Word is for the salvation of sinners. Baptism is a visible sign and seal of the Christian profession, and of our adoption to be the sons of God. The sacrament of the body and blood of Christ is for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby. There is the very life and power and presence of the Holy Ghost, ministered in every service to the faithful disciple ; and through his ministry, as one called and sent of God, the faithful may look for the direct

bestowal of those spiritual gifts which have been promised by the great Head of the Church. Thus if the Word is preached, it is not a delivery of the letter of the law, but the ministration of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. If baptism be administered, it is not the laver in which the Aaronite priesthood washed, nor is it the water of Bethabarah where John baptized, but it is the appointed sacrament by which the Holy Ghost does convey grace and blessing to all who rightly receive it. It is not the washing away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God. And in the Holy Communion there is not a carnal feast upon the flesh which has been offered up in sacrifice, but the body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the supper after a heavenly and spiritual manner: and the means whereby it is received and eaten is faith. The Aaronic priest might offer up sacrifices and repeat the sacrifices day by day, and year by year, which could never take away sin; but here is no repetition: "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show forth the Lord's death"—not repeat it—"until He come." The life in Aaron's rod that budded was not more real than the life which quickens, strengthens, and sanctifies the ministry of the Word and sacraments under the New Testament. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many, are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread" (1 Cor. x. 16-17).

II. The awful responsibilities of the Christian minister.—Whether we consider his call to the work, or the manner in which he delivers the message of the Gospel, or in his life and influence, we see him as a man living by faith, and insufficient of himself to do or think anything of himself; his whole sufficiency is of God. He cannot satisfy himself or others, as the Aaronic priest, by the discharge of a prescribed routine of service. It were easy for any man to put on the beautiful dress, to trim the lamps and sprinkle the blood, to observe the feast days and fast days; such manual formalities, such bodily exercise, might be performed without much intellectual or moral effort; but to wear the garments of humility and self-denial, to hold forth the light of truth, to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, to be a fisher of men, wise to win souls, apt to teach and well instructed in the kingdom of God, to sympathize with the flock in joy and sorrows, and to give himself wholly to the Word of God and to prayer—this requires the special grace of the Holy Ghost. These are graces which are not learned by books and breviaries, but are the spiritual gifts bestowed by the Holy Ghost on the faithful minister. It is

this which puts a holy unction upon his sermons and a power of influence upon his ministrations. He needs not the cloak of the confessional or the figment of sacramental absolution to give him authority in his personal intercourse with his flock. The man of God, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, carries his own credentials with him, and will habitually realize that it is not by his own work or wisdom, but by the grace of God, the work of God is done. "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Deeply, most deeply, must we realize the tremendous responsibility of our office when we remember Whose we are and Whom we serve. Well has Herbert drawn the picture in his quaint but devout words :

Holiness on the head,  
Light and perfections on the breast,  
Harmonious bells below raising the dead,  
To lead them unto life and rest :  
Thus are true Aarons drest.

Profaneness in my head,  
Defects and darkness in my breast,  
A noise of passions ringing me for dead  
Unto a place where there is no rest ;  
Poor priest, thus am I drest.

Only another head,  
I have another head and breast,  
Another music making 'live, not dead :  
Without whom I could have no rest.  
In Him I am well drest.

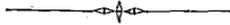
Christ is my only head,  
My alone only heart and breast,  
My only music striking me e'en dead,  
That to the old man I may rest,  
And be in Him new drest.

So holy in my head,  
Perfect and light in my dear breast,  
My doctrine turned by Christ who is not dead,  
But lives in me while I do rest :  
Come, people, Aaron's drest.

All this teaches us the immense amount of blessing we may expect from the ordinance of preaching. We are beginning to learn this. We have made too much of the man: we have worshipped gifts. We have to learn the power of simplicity, earnestness, and freshness in the preaching of the Gospel, and personal contact with the flock in our ministry. Whence is it that more souls have been gathered into the Church during the last twenty or thirty years than we have known for years past? There have been missions, and special services, and prayer-meetings, and after-meetings, in addition to the reverence, and order, and life, which has been brought into the services of the Church. The very heart of England has been stirred; and in

this moving of the waters we are called not to go back to the old ceremonial of the Aaronic priest, but to follow in the steps of the great Melchisedec: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: Thou hast the dew of Thy youth" (Ps. cx. 3).

W. R. FREMANTLE.



## ART. II.—A. CENTURY OF REVOLUTION.

*A Century of Revolution.*—By WILLIAM SAMUEL LILLY. London: Chapman and Hall. 1889.

IT is but natural that the celebration of the centenary of the French Revolution should have produced a host of books, pamphlets, and papers in the periodicals, bearing on this far-reaching event in modern European history. In the volume before us we have one of the most thoughtful of these recent reflections on the French Revolution. No one appears to have noticed that the bicentenary of the "Revolution Settlement" of 1688 in this country passed away without even the breath of a suggestion of duly celebrating it, though in these days we are inundated with such celebrations, engaged as we are constantly in commemorating the dead, and in our life at high-pressure, as it were, trying to join these celebrities as speedily as possible. This omission suggests a vast difference between the revolutions in the two countries: one mainly political and national, but, though local, influencing other nations indirectly; the other social and international in its tendencies—as Mr. Lilly observes: "French, indeed, in its origin, but œcumenical in its influence, which has shaken to the foundation the political order throughout Continental Europe, and which aspires everywhere to remake society in its own image and likeness." Hence the profound earnestness with which it has been studied ever since. Our author approaches the subject from the purely religious standpoint—for the first time, we believe, that the attempt has been made in this country—and, as in his "Chapters on European History," proves himself thoroughly competent to deal with such topics in the light of the philosophy of history.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps we ought to mention, as an exception, the valuable work of Prebendary Jervis on "The Gallican Church and the Revolution," though its value consists chiefly in conscientious historical research, and the subject is treated here more from the ecclesiastic, than from the standpoint of philosophy, of history and religion, as now understood. See an article on "The Gallican Church before and after the Revolution," by the present writer in the *Foreign Church Chronicle and Review* for June, 1883.