

THE
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ART. I.—THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE AND
CANON GORE'S BOOK.—I.

THE promised continuance of Round Table Conferences makes us look with keener eyes at the first of these Conferences, held last year, to see what has been its effect. Is the result good or bad? Has it conduced to peace or the contrary? More important still, has it led to clearer and truer views of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which was the subject of consideration? The following is a critical estimate of the Conference, and of the results from it which have as yet become apparent, which may help to a decision on these points. We must, however, guard ourselves by adding that, supposing we come to the conclusion that on the whole it was well that that Conference should be held, it does not necessarily follow that such Conferences are desirable as an institution. That is a further question, on which opinion may still differ.

The purpose of the Round Table Conference of October, 1900, was to see if grounds of agreement could be found on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper between different schools of thought, or, if not, at least a *modus vivendi*. The late Bishop of London invited eleven clergymen and four laymen to constitute the Conference, in pursuance of a resolution passed at the London Diocesan Conference of May, 1900, requesting the president "to appoint a Round Table Conference, consisting of members of the Church of England, on ritual and the doctrines involved therein."

One prominent school was represented by Canon Gore, Viscount Halifax, and Canon Newbolt; another by Dr. Barlow, Mr. Dimock, Dr. Moule, and Dr. Wace, the last of whom was appointed chairman.

As a preliminary step, the Bishop requested each member of the Conference to send him a statement of his belief on the subject of the Divine gift in Holy Communion, and these statements were circulated among the members before the first meeting. Most of them did not confine themselves to the question put before them by the Bishop, but took the opportunity of making a general statement of their beliefs respecting the Sacrament.

Of these statements, Lord Halifax's can hardly be distinguished from a statement of the Roman doctrine, for he declares his belief that the bread and wine, on consecration, "become, are made, are changed into, the Body and Blood of Christ." The change thus effected he describes as "sacramental," a word borrowed from a canon of the Council of Trent, where it is employed in contrast to the word "spiritual."¹ He appears to use it as meaning "in a sphere outside the cognizance of sense"; that is, in a supernatural manner. He also says that "Christ is, by every valid consecration, offered to the Father under the separated symbols of bread and wine, sacramentally identified with His Body and Blood." These statements seem to be no more than an informal expression of the doctrines of Transubstantiation and the Sacrifice of the Mass.

As Lord Halifax advocates the doctrine of the Latin Church, so Mr. Birkbeck maintains that of the Greek Church, or what he holds to be the doctrine of that Church, when he says that the "species of bread and wine are said to be changed, transfigured, transformed, converted, transmuted, or transelemented into the Body and Blood of Christ," and "are, after consecration, Christ's Body and Blood, which they were not before," "the presence of our Lord in His Sacrament primarily depending, not on the prayers and acts of individual men, but upon the prayers and the faith of the Church herself."

Canon Newbolt expresses the views of most Ritualists, and some High Churchmen who are not Ritualists, when he says that "We offer the same Body once for all sacrificed for us, and the same Blood once for all shed for us, sacramentally present, to the Father" (the words "offer" and "sacramentally" not being defined by him); and when he says that "The gift bestowed in the Holy Communion is the Body and Blood of Christ, which are present really and truly, but spiritually and ineffably, under the outward visible part, sign,

¹ "If anyone shall say that Christ, exhibited in the Eucharist, is eaten only spiritually and not sacramentally and really, let him be anathema" ("Conc. Trid.," sess. xiii., canon 8).

or form of bread and wine" (where "really" and "spiritually," which are opposed to each other by the Council of Trent, are again undefined); and when he says that "Christ is to be adored therein"—that is, "in the Sacrament" (without explaining whether by "Sacrament" he means the ordinance or the elements)—and that "His Presence remains *extra usum Sacramenti.*"

The views entertained by English Churchmen from the Reformation to the middle of the nineteenth century find expression in the statements of Dr. Moule, Dr. Wace, Mr. Dimock, and Dr. Barlow.

If, therefore, there is to be agreement of all the members of the Conference, a formula must be found which will comprehend or cover the Roman and the Greek views of the mystery and the Anglican view (1) as handed down from the Reformation, and (2) as taught of late years by men of Ritualist tendencies.

In the first session of the Conference the same question was considered and discussed as had been set before its members by the Bishop; that is, What is the Divine gift bestowed in the Holy Communion? The discussion turned almost entirely on the point whether it were the sacrificed Body of Christ or His glorified Body which is received by the faithful communicant. The former view—that it is the sacrificed Body—was held by Mr. Dimock, Dr. Moule, and Dr. Wace; the latter—that it was His glorified Body—by Canon Gore and Lord Halifax. Had Jeremy Taylor been present, he would, I think, have said—for he has said—that the Sacrament was given "not to be, or to convey, the natural Body of our Lord [which he describes as "carried from us into heaven"] to us, but to do more and better for us—to convey all the blessings and graces procured for us by the breaking of that Body and the effusion of that Blood; which blessings, being spiritual, are therefore called His Body spiritually, because procured by that Body which died for us, and [those blessings] are therefore called our food, because by them we live a new life in the Spirit; and Christ is our bread and our life, because by Him, after this manner, we are nourished up to life eternal" ("Worthy Communicant," i. 3).

Following the lead given by Jeremy Taylor, I venture to think in all humility that the right answer to the question proposed as to what is the Divine gift in the Holy Communion would be, The application to ourselves of the benefits wrought for man by the sacrifice of the death of Christ upon the cross, provided that we are penitent, faithful, and loving.

So far, the Conference agreed (1) that there is a Divine gift in the Holy Communion (that is, none held the view, truly

or not attributed to Zwingle, that it is a bare memorial in which no grace is given), and (2) that that gift is called the Body and Blood of Christ. But there was no agreement as to the meaning of the term "Body and Blood of Christ" in this connection, nor how they were received; nor, indeed, was much help given towards an understanding either of the expression or of the mystery, the most illuminating words on the subject being the singularly expressed statement of Mr. Dimock: "We feed on the remission of sins." I should have preferred the phrase: "We feed on the benefit that we receive from Christ's having become man and suffered for us; namely, the reconciliation with the Father, one consequence of which is the remission of sins."

I believe that, since the publication of Archdeacon R. I. Wilberforce's book on the Holy Eucharist, too much stress has been laid on the distinction drawn by Dr. Bigg, and accepted by the Conference and by most of us, between the *Res Sacramenti* and the *Virtus Sacramenti*, which are not formally distinguished by early theologians. Even Thomas Aquinas, speaking for the Schoolmen (*Summa*, Part III., Suppl. 73), and, following him, Liguori ("Theol. Mor.," vi. 3), say that the *Res Sacramenti* is the grace that refreshes and sustains the soul, of which the bread and wine, which sustains the body, are the *sacramentum*, or sign. Here the *Res Sacramenti* and what we have come to call the *Virtus Sacramenti* are identified. And this identification is not nullified by their also calling the Body and Blood of Christ at once *Res Sacramenti*, as signified by the bread and wine, and *Sacramentum*, as signifying the grace given. Of the *Virtus Sacramenti* as a technical term they say nothing, but call it *Res Sacramenti*.¹ Our own definition of a sacrament is "an outward and visible sign," not of an inward and spiritual thing, but "of an inward and spiritual grace," and we

¹ In omnibus sacramentis tria distinguuntur, nempe (1) sacramentum tantum, (2) res tantum, et (3) sacramentum ac res. (1) Sacramentum tantum est illud quod significat; (2) res tantum est id quod significatur, sive effectus sacramenti; (3) sacramentum ac res simul est id quod significatur ab uno et significat aliud. In hoc autem Eucharistiæ sacramento (1) sacramentum tantum sunt species consecratæ, quæ tantum significant animæ refectioes; (2) res tantum est ipsa refectio; (3) res et sacramentum est corpus Christi, quod significatur a speciebus et gratiam significat.

Species in Eucharistia non habent aliud munus quam sacramenti; significant enim et non significantur: ad differentiam corporis Christi, quod est sacramentum simul et res; nempe quod significat gratiam et significatur a speciebus (Liguori, "Theol. Mor.," vi. 3, 189, 190). Thomas Aquinas's teaching is the same, and in almost the same words (*loc. cit.*). According to their teaching, therefore, the *Res Sacramenti* is the grace signified by the *sacramentum*, and that is the refreshing of the soul.

say that the two *parts* of a sacrament are "the outward visible sign and the inward spiritual *grace*." When, therefore, we teach that the inward *part* in the Lord's Supper is the Body and Blood of Christ received by the faithful, we must mean by the Body and Blood of Christ a spiritual *grace*, designated the Body and Blood of Christ, and explained, as we have seen, by Jeremy Taylor as "the blessings and graces procured for us by the breaking of that Body and the effusion of that Blood," which work in us who partake of them "the strengthening and refreshing of our souls" as their special "benefit." Here, then, again we find the *Res Sacramenti* and the *Virtus Sacramenti* identified as the *grace* flowing from the sacrificed Body of Christ, whether called, from its cause, the Body and Blood of Christ, or, from its effect, the refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ.

At the second session the question proposed was, What is the relation between the Divine gift and the consecrated elements? Here Lord Halifax advocated the doctrine (not the word) of Transubstantiation, saying, "He wished to be understood as stating simply that the bread and wine became the Body and Blood of our Lord," without guarding himself even by the limiting words "to us," which the Roman Missal still retains; and referring to his previous statement that "the bread and wine are sacramentally identified with His Body and Blood."

Canon Newbolt maintained, as I understand him, the doctrine which the Archbishop of Canterbury has rightly declared identical with Consubstantiation, though not so acknowledged by those who hold it; namely, "That while the elements of bread and wine retain their natural substances, an addition is made to them by virtue of which the Body and Blood of Christ are present really and truly, but spiritually and ineffably, under the outward visible sign or form of bread and wine." He believed that they were thus present in the bread and wine which our Lord distributed to His Apostles.

On the other hand, Dr. Wace "was obliged to offer an unqualified denial to the belief indicated" by Lord Halifax and Canon Newbolt; and Dr. Moule "recalled the phrase of Ratramnus, 'Non in veritate sed in figura,' and that Ratramnus appealed to previous patristic teaching as wholly with him in his protest against the 'corporeal presence' taught by Paschasius."

On the point under discussion the Conference determined that no agreement could be come to.

The sacrificial aspect of the Holy Communion was the subject for consideration in the third and part of the fourth

session, but it was not more than lightly touched, from a feeling probably entertained that differences on it were vital and views incompatible. No definition of "sacrifice" was attempted, and no effort was made to come to an understanding as to *what* was sacrificed or offered, except that Lord Halifax declared it to be in his belief "the bread and wine sacramentally identified with our Lord's Body," meaning apparently by "sacramentally identified" supernaturally made one with the Lord's Body. Canon Gore used the same expression "sacramentally identified," but he allowed that "down to the time of St. Thomas Aquinas inclusive the memorial of our Lord's death made in the Holy Communion is regarded as commemorative only, and is not connected with any idea of actual immolation," and that Mr. Dimock was right in saying that the early Christians, when they spoke of sacrifice in the Eucharist, meant for the most part the offering of the elements for acceptance by God. This led him to introduce the theory of a heavenly altar at which the elements are supposed to be consecrated and changed into the Body and Blood of our Lord. On the present occasion he did not say that he adopted this theory himself, but he attributed it to Irenæus on the quite insufficient ground that Irenæus speaks of our altar and temple and tabernacle, where our alms and offerings should be made, as being (not on earth, like the Jewish altar and temple and tabernacle, but) in heaven; that is, that they have a spiritual existence only ("Adv. Hær.," iv. 18).

Dr. Moule reminded the Conference of the vital truth that the ordinance was instituted that "sacred gifts might be given *by* God *to* us, not offered *from* us *to* Him." After a valuable citation from Dean Field by Dr. Wace, the discussion passed to the consideration of a statement drawn up by Lord Halifax, which he hoped might afford a basis of agreement, in which hope he subsequently declared himself disappointed.

Before leaving the subject of Sacrifice, I think we may lay down the proposition that no one can make or offer a sacrifice except of what is his own. Therefore we can offer ourselves; we can offer of our substance; we can offer our thanksgivings, prayers, and praises—nay, we can offer the unconsecrated bread and wine, if we bring them with us, as the early Christians did, and present them for the service of God; but we cannot dare to say we offer the Son of God to His Father without claiming Him as our individual possession; and not only that, but a possession which we are willing to divest ourselves of and "profess that we will own Him no more" (Field).

"None but Christ," says Bishop Jolly, "could make this oblation of Himself, once offered. The real substance, the very Flesh and Blood of God incarnate—it is the most horrible presumption to think that any the most exalted creature could present to God with acceptance" ("On the Eucharist," iii.).

The subject of the fourth session, which was the Expression of Eucharistic Doctrine in Ritual, was even more slightly touched upon than the doctrine of sacrifice. A very sensible statement of Dr. Robertson, deprecating the introduction of novel rites, and declaring that the Church universal possesses no ritual law, was taken for a basis of discussion, and some general conversational remarks were made, from which it appeared that Canon Gore was in favour of each congregation having a right to determine the limits of ritual within the general order of the Church, while Dr. Moule was in favour of one general use; and Lord Halifax argued that the old Mass vestments were ordered under the Ornaments Rubric. Being asked whether by Mass vestments he meant those authorized by the first book of Edward VI. or those of pre-Reformation times, he made no recorded answer to the question, but referred to his proposal to make the alternative use of the First Book legal, which he believed would be a means of "promoting ritual obedience," adding that, if the proposal was accepted, "such a Society as the English Church Union might be dissolved"—a conclusion which no way seemed to follow from the premiss; and we may assure ourselves that it would not follow, nor would ritual obedience be promoted.

This finished the discussion, and was succeeded by a speech from the chairman, whose tact and forbearance was throughout admirable, lamenting that time did not allow the consideration of "some important questions of ritual, such as Adoration and Reservation and the position of the minister, whether eastwards or otherwise."

The proceedings were at this point interrupted by a protest made by Dr. Sanday and others on behalf of Lord Halifax against a statement of Mr. Dimock's, that Lord Halifax's position, as stated by himself, if tenable by a layman, was not tenable by a clergyman, and was inconsistent with loyalty to the Church's formularies. Lord Halifax argued that that was not the case, because his views were those of the undivided Church, and the Church of England appealed to the teaching of the undivided Church; which, however, is a mistake, for though the Church of England appeals to the primitive Church—that is, at the utmost, to the Church of the first five centuries, it does not extend that appeal to the next four centuries—nor does it rest it on the ground that the Church was undivided, but that, being primitive, it was as yet un-

corrupted. If the English reformers had rejected the theory of "a sacramental identification of the sign and the thing signified" and of "the bread and wine being in the supernatural sphere the Body and Blood of Christ," they would have acted, he held, *ultra vires*, because that was the teaching of the Universal Church, a point assumed, and not proved by a reference to the rhetorical, because extemporaneous, addresses of the Semi-Arian Bishop Cyril of Jerusalem, delivered when he was a young man. Lord Halifax declined to admit or discuss the possibility of abandonment of ritual "till the doctrinal question is cleared up"; that is, no doubt, settled in his favour, in which case the ritual that he advocates would be recognised as suitable.

In the final meeting it appeared that no agreement could be come to on the second, third and fourth subjects of discussion—that is, on the relation between the Divine gift and the consecrated elements, the sacrificial aspect of the Holy Communion and the expression in ritual of the doctrine of the Holy Communion. With respect to the first subject, which was the nature of the Divine gift in the Holy Communion, Canon Robinson took up a suggestion of Canon Gore's, and proposed that the conference should adopt some words of Hooker. But it was objected by Dr. Barlow and Dr. Moule that the words were highly rhetorical and technical, and would be misleading; which certainly would be the case unless at the same time Hooker's conclusion was stated, that a real presence of Christ was to be found nowhere except in the soul of the communicant, and that the bread and wine were not Christ's Body and Blood through change or co-existence, but "instrumentally a cause of mystical participation" on being received.

All that could be done, then, was to recite a statement by Dr. Moule, a statement by Lord Halifax, and a statement by Canon Gore, none of which had met with the Conference's assent.

F. MEYRICK.



ART. II.—MESSAGES FROM THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

V.—*Hebrews viii.*

THE person and greatness of our High Priest are now full before the readers of the Epistle. The paragraph we now enter, after one more deliberate contemplation of His dignity and His qualifications, proceeds to expound His relation to the better and eternal Covenant. We shall find here also messages appropriate to our time.