

THE
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ART. I.—THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE:
I. THE REAL PRESENCE.

THE question has been frequently asked, Can any good come of the Round Table Conference?

The animated correspondence in the *Times* which immediately followed the publication of the Report seems to bear witness to the fact that it served at least to attract some renewed attention to the subjects which were discussed. And it may be hoped that this correspondence itself may not be without fruit in clearing away some of the mists clouding over ambiguities of language which are inseparable from the doctrine of the Eucharist, and which have of late too often tended to hide the doctrinal positions which should be made to stand out clearly in their true distinctness.

In the present paper I desire briefly to enforce the need of this distinctness, especially in respect of the expression "Real Presence," and this more particularly in view of certain suggestions now being put forward as likely to afford relief from the strain which is being painfully felt in the present crisis.

One of the learned correspondents in the *Times* very aptly quoted the words of Wheatley: "A real presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist is what our Church frequently asserts" ("Rational Illustration," p. 278, Oxford, 1846).

A parallel assertion will be found in the works of Archbishop Bramhall ("A. C. L.," vol. i., p. 8). Speaking of "a true Real Presence," he says to M. de la Milletière: "Which no genuine son of the Church of England did ever deny—no, nor your adversary [*i.e.*, M. Aubertin] himself."

It might be added that *this* "true Real Presence" has not only been maintained by the genuine sons of the Church of

England, but quite as strongly also by prominent Puritans and eminent Nonconformist divines.¹

But the "true Real Presence" held in common by the learned Albertinus and alike by Puritan and Church of England theologians is certainly not "the Real Presence" *in, or under the form of, the consecrated elements.*

It is a Presence belonging to the "*Unio sacramentalis*" of the theology of the "Reformed," and expressed in the well-known words of our truly great Richard Hooker: "The Real Presence of Christ's most blessed Body and Blood is not therefore to be sought for in the Sacrament, but in the worthy receiver of the Sacrament." In this view "the consecrate elements" are regarded (in the words of Bramhall, vol. i., p. 20) "as the instruments ordained by our Saviour to convey to us the merits of His Passion," and therefore claim from us "a venerable respect."

This is that which was affirmed by the martyr Ridley: "Whosoever receiveth worthily that bread and wine, receiveth effectuously Christ's Body and drinketh His Blood—that is, he is made effectually partaker of His Passion" (Works, P.S., p. 274). Consistently with this he says: "We do handle the signs *reverently*, but we worship the Sacrament as a Sacrament, not as a thing signified by the Sacrament" (p. 213). And the same was affirmed also by Latimer, who, maintaining "a Real Presence" (p. 252), says, "Every man, by receiving bodily that bread and wine, spiritually receiveth the Body and Blood of Christ, and is made partaker thereby of the merits of Christ's Passion" ("Remains," P.S., p. 285), adding, concerning the Sacramental bread, "It is now no more common bread, neither ought it to be so taken, but as holy bread, sanctified by God's Word" (p. 286).

To the same purpose Bishop Jeremy Taylor declared: "The doctrine of the Church of England and generally of the Protestants in this Article, is that, after the minister hath ritely prayed, and blessed or consecrated the bread and wine, the symbols become changed into the body and blood of Christ, after a SACRAMENTAL, that is, in a SPIRITUAL, REAL manner, so that all that worthily communicate do by faith receive Christ really, effectually, to all the purposes of His passion" (Works, ed. Eden, vol. vi., p. 13). "Verily and indeed," he says, "is *reipsa*, that's really enough. That's our sense of the 'real presence,' and Calvin affirms as much, saying: 'In the Supper Christ Jesus, viz., His body and blood, is truly given under the signs of bread and wine'"

¹ See my "Theology of Bishop Andrewes" (Elliot Stock), especially pp. 14, 17.

(p. 14). Compare Archbishop Laud's "Conference with Fisher," with quotation from Cranmer, pp. 248, 249, Oxford, 1839.

This view may be said to have been the generally accepted view of the Churches of the Reformation.

It is admirably expressed by Waterland thus: "The Body and Blood of Christ are taken and received by the faithful, not *substantially*, not *corporally*, but *verily* and *indeed*—that is, *effectually*. The sacred symbols are no bare signs, no untrue figures of a thing absent, but the force, the grace, the virtue and benefit of Christ's Body broken and Blood shed, that is, of His passion, are really and effectually present with all them that receive worthily. This is all the *Real Presence* that our Church teaches" (Works, vol. iv., p. 42, Oxford, 1843. See also vol. iv., p. 715 *et seq.*, especially pp. 716 and 718). It would be easy, but I think it needless, to multiply testimonies to the same effect.

This doctrine of "a real Presence" is obviously to be quite clearly distinguished from another doctrine, the maintainers of which would seem to claim for it the exclusive right to be called the "*Real Presence*," a doctrine which, from our point of view, is simply an unwarrantable and untrue definition of the *mode*. Of *this* doctrine, I think, Archbishop Bramhall would have said that "no genuine son of the Church of England did ever" *maintain* it. According to this doctrine, the "Real Presence" is to be found *in* the consecrated elements (or *under their species*), "considered in themselves," and (however spiritual and *supra-local* in manner) is *there* (wherever the Sacrament is); and *there* (on the altar) is an object of supreme adoration.

It is surely not to be wondered at if this distinction of doctrines led up to a felt need of a distinction of terms. The two views of "Real Presence" represent doctrines which have points of essential antagonism one to another. Our Reformers were strong upholders of the one. The denial of the other was the primary charge on which some of the most esteemed among them were condemned to the flames.

Hence it came to pass that by degrees a change of phraseology prevailed, and English divines were led very generally to use the word "Corporal Presence" to express the doctrine they rejected, while holding to a "Real Presence" to signify the doctrine they accepted. The reason for this use of the term "Corporal Presence" may be gathered from the words of that strong upholder of "Real Presence," Bishop Jeremy Taylor: "That which seems of hardest explication is the word *corporaliter*, which I find that Melancthon used . . . which manner of speaking I have heard he avoided after he

had conversed with Ecolampadius, who was able then to teach him and most men in that question" ("Real Presence," Sect. I., § 8; Works, vol. vi., p. 17, ed. Eden, where the Bishop holds that even *this* expression "may become warrantable, and consistent to our doctrine." See also Laud's note on "Corporaliter" in "Conference with Fisher," p. 248).

Need we, then, go further for an explanation of the change of language made in the Black Rubric when it was reinserted in 1662, and which has had so much weight laid upon it as having an important doctrinal significance? The change from "real and essential" to "Corporal Presence" was just what the changed use of language may be said to have asked for.¹

We may be thankful that the Church of England has not adopted the novel term "Real Presence" in any of her formularies. It is a term of which, I believe, it may be truly said, that it was bred of false doctrine.

But we may also be thankful that the Church of England has twice declined to condemn (or to seem to condemn) the use of the expression, as if it could only be used to signify the doctrine she has rejected, an expression to the use of which (according to Bishop J. Taylor, vol. vi., pp. 15, 16) we have a much better right than those who hold the Corporal Presence.

To suppose that the Black Rubric as added to the Book of 1552 was intended to exclude any other doctrine than that which would afterwards have been called the "Corporal Presence" would be to do a grievous wrong to the memory, not of Cranmer only, to whom it is probably indebted for its language, but of John Knox² also, to whose influence it almost certainly owes its insertion in (or rather its *appendage to*) the second Book of Edward.

To suppose that the Rubric as reinserted in 1662 was meant to admit the Real Presence in the *Corporal* sense would be a scarcely less grievous wrong to the Episcopal divines of that date, who, in Parliament at least, acquiesced in its acceptance. This would be to suppose a change of doctrine indeed. Such a change is scarcely credible. The singular view of Gunning—however explained—can hardly be alleged as any evidence *ad rem* in this matter.

Let it be observed that, writing before the last Review, Hamon L'Estrange (a strong upholder of "that real presence,

¹ For further evidence on this point, I may refer to my "Eucharistic Presence," pp. 578-586.

² See Perry's "Declaration on Kneeling," p. 112 *et seq.*; and Lorimer's "John Knox and the Church of England," chap. iii., especially p. 132 *et seq.*, also pp. 144, 145.

which all sound Protestants seem to allow," see p. 323) spoke of this "protestation touching the gesture of kneeling" as "this excellent rubric" ("Alliance of Divine Offices," p. 329, "A. C. L.").

Still more important it is to observe (though it seems to have strangely escaped observation) that the Bishops at the Savoy, speaking of the unchanged Rubric, assert that "the sense of it is declared sufficiently in the 28th Article of the Church of England." It is impossible, therefore, that the Episcopal Commissioners (including Bishops Sheldon, Morley, Henchman, Cosin and Sanderson, and among the Coadjutors Doctors Pearson, Gunning, Sparrow, and Mr. Thorndike) could have been desiring to make a real change in its doctrine. Indeed, this statement of the Bishops (five of whom were afterwards on the Revision Committee, which committee, however, had probably nothing to do with the insertion of the Rubric) clearly amounts to a declaration that in their view the adoration of any "real and essential Presence there being of Christ's natural flesh and blood" would imply a belief which is "against the truth of Christ's true natural Body."

The account, therefore, of this change in the "Protestation" might very well be given in words of Wheatley, who says that, at the last Review: "It was again added, with some little amendment of the expression and transposal of the sentences, but exactly the same throughout as to the sense, excepting that the words *real and essential* Presence were thought proper to be changed for *corporal* Presence" (p. 278, Oxford, 1846).

Let me add one brief word concerning the two Prayer-Books of Edward VI. Since the fruitful researches of Dr. F. A. Gasquet¹ it can scarcely, I think, be any longer questioned that our leading Reformers had already relinquished the faith of the Real Presence (in the *Corporal* sense) before the issue of the first Book of Edward. Keeping this fact in full view, I venture to ask that those who would desire to form a true estimate of the points in controversy should study for themselves the two Acts of Uniformity which belong to this reign.

It will then, I think, appear that those who persisted in reading the *Corporal* sense into the first Book might (in the view of the English Reformation) fairly be regarded as "mistakers," especially those who may have desired to give ceremonial expression to such a sense, alleging "divers doubts for the fashion and manner of the ministration."

¹ See Gasquet's "Edward VI. and Book of Common Prayer," chap. xi., p. 157 *et seq.* See also Tomlinson's "Great Debate" (Shaw), especially pp. 15-19.

But it soon became evident (even if such a result had not been foreseen) that the ambiguities in the Book needed to be guarded against mistakes, such as Gardiner—not very unnaturally—fastened upon them. The statements and expressions, therefore, which were claimed as being “so catholicly spoken” (see Gardiner in Cranmer’s “Lord’s Supper,” P.S., pp. 55, 62) were removed or corrected in the second Book. And thus in 1552 the Book was made “fully perfect” by being “explained,” the changes being “as well for the more plain and manifest explanation hereof, as for the more perfection of the said order of Common Service.”

If this is so, then to return *now* to the use of the first Book would be to turn back from the perfecting work of the second Book to the imperfections of the first; and this (it can hardly be doubted) for the very purpose of admitting (or expressing) doctrine, the shelter (or apparent shelter) for which caused the imperfections of the first Book, and the very careful exclusion of which (in the way of “more plain and manifest explanation”) constituted the perfection of the second Book.

It is true, indeed, that the first Prayer-Book was a Protestant Book, and, notwithstanding the “Catholic” character which seems to be attributed to it alike by its friends and its foes, it has recently been pronounced by the *Tablet* to be “distinctly and undoubtedly heretical.” But it can hardly be supposed that it is for its Protestantism that its restoration is now recommended.

There may be those who, like myself, are disposed to take a more favourable view of the first Book than has been usually accepted. Disregarding the matter of ornaments and ceremonies, I believe we might not unfairly adapt to the second Book the language just quoted from Wheatley with reference to the new form of the Black Rubric, and say that it (the second Book) is the first Book “with some little amendment of the expression and transposal of” some of its parts; “but exactly the same throughout as to the sense, excepting that” certain forms of expression “were thought proper to be changed” to make its doctrine more distinct, and its language less open to the misunderstandings and misrepresentations of “mistakers,”—to make, in fact, its doctrinal position quite unmistakable, and to show, by this second revision, that the Church of England (which has certainly sanctioned the amendments) is not satisfied with refusing the doctrine of Transubstantiation and the Sacrifice of the Mass, but has determined to eliminate from her Service Book whatsoever of doubtful language might seem to teach, or to justify the teaching of, the “Real Presence” in the *Corporal* sense.

Those, therefore, who may be ardent admirers of the very

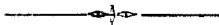
godly order of the first Book (understood in the sense in which its ambiguous language was defended by Cranmer), and for liturgical reasons might even desire to have some parts of it restored—if only there were no danger of doctrinal change—may very well be asked to pause and consider well the present position before they consent to give support to a proposal which, though it may commend itself as a conciliatory, charitable, and comprehensive compromise, would apparently tend to alter the doctrinal position of the Church of England on a most important point.

I cannot but think, and I venture humbly to express the opinion, that the serious effects which must be expected to follow on such a change of doctrine are very imperfectly apprehended by those esteemed and estimable men who are disposed to set down all opposition to such a proposal as due to the narrow-minded prejudices of an uninstructed, intolerant and bigoted ultra-Protestantism.

I believe it will be found that the first Book never gave real satisfaction to any party. For the short time it was in use (speaking generally) it was regarded by men of the "Old Learning" with disgust, of men of the "New Learning," by some with suspicion, by some few with distress.

And there are not wanting signs that now also it would fail to give satisfaction to those who regard themselves as the "Catholic" party in the Church, while in the opposite camp it is easy to see that its allowance would be followed by something more like a thunderstorm than an April shower, the atmosphere being already charged with what may be called an electricity of indignation, an indignation which those who have learned to thank God for the English Reformation (however they may deplore some of its manifestations, and however they may desire to follow after things which make for peace) can hardly pronounce to be unrighteous, or unnatural, or altogether uncalled for.

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

II.—*Hebrews iii.*

LAST month we sought to find a message, "godly and wholesome, and necessary for these times," in the opening paragraphs in the Epistle to the Hebrews. We come now to interrogate our oracle again, and we open the third chapter as we do so.