

Bishop Gore on the Holy Communion.

BY THE EDITOR.

THERE are not a few Churchmen who are attracted and impressed by the Bishop of Birmingham's pronouncements on social questions, and who admire his courage in telling Churchpeople what he believes to be the truth on these subjects. There are many more Churchmen who are profoundly grateful for his Bampton Lectures on the Incarnation, and for the practical teaching of his Commentaries on the Sermon on the Mount and the Epistles to the Romans and Ephesians. But it must be confessed that these very Churchmen are greatly puzzled by the Bishop's attitude on questions of the Church, the Ministry, and the Sacraments. They are, of course, perfectly aware of his general ecclesiastical position, and yet they find that side by side with this he makes such significant admissions, that, if these were carried to their logical conclusions with a like courage that their author shows on social questions, the result would inevitably be to modify, if not to destroy, his distinctive position on Church questions. It is thus inexplicable to many Churchmen that Bishop Gore cannot see the logic of the situation, for on almost any other subject, theological or social, he would be among the first to draw obvious conclusions. It would be easy to prove the truth of this contention from his book on "The Church and Ministry"; but it is our present purpose to consider it in relation to the Holy Communion in the light of the new Preface which the Bishop has included in the fourth edition of his work, "The Body of Christ."

The sub-title of that book is "An Enquiry into the Institution and Doctrine of Holy Communion," and yet it is only after 240 pages out of 330 that we are allowed to consider the one place in which the "Institution" of the Holy Communion is recorded. Surely "an Enquiry into the Institution and Doctrine" of the Lord's Supper should start from the New

Testament, for the purpose of obtaining a true idea of its meaning. It hardly seems the best method to approach a definitely Christian ordinance from the standpoint of the Greek mysteries. When we come at length to the Bishop's treatment of the New Testament, the treatment of such crucial words and phrases as "Do this," "This is," "Remembrance," is almost all that can be desired in the way of accurate exegesis, and yet, in spite of it, Dr. Gore teaches a doctrine of the Presence of Christ in the elements which is certainly not warranted by the true exegesis of these New Testament utterances. And if the doctrine is not found in the Divine words of institution, the question naturally arises whether it can be justified on any other grounds.

Again, when dealing with the question of what is called the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the Bishop says that "no doubt there is some justification at first sight for saying that the New Testament does not suggest that the Eucharist is a sacrifice." And though he proceeds to argue for a view of sacrifice in Holy Communion, all that he can say in conclusion is that the Eucharist is "a feast upon a sacrifice, but the feast upon the sacrifice is the culmination of the sacrifice." Is there not some confusion here? Sacrifice is that which man gives to God; a feast is that which man receives from God. The latter is not sacrificial, but sacramental. How, then, can a feast be termed an Eucharistic Sacrifice?

When he discusses the Prayer Book doctrine of the Presence of Christ, Bishop Gore speaks of his own view of the Objective Presence in the elements as "at least allowed" and "at least suggested" by our formularies, though he is compelled to admit that in the Declaration on Kneeling, and, "what is more important, in the form of Consecration," the doctrine of the objective Presence in the elements is "plainly evaded and not asserted." Now, in the light of Mr. Dimock's researches, and also of his contributions to the discussion at the Fulham Round Table Conference, would it not be truer to say that the doctrine of the Objective Presence in the elements is

plainly *avoided* in our formularies? Is it without significance that the phrase "Real Presence" is not found in any authoritative document of the Anglican Church? We notice these points as illustrative of Bishop Gore's position, in order to lead up to the new Preface, to which reference was made above, and which is in some respects the most remarkable pronouncement made on this subject by him.

First of all we note that Dr. Gore is not satisfied with the Anglican formularies by themselves :

"I have to admit that Anglican standards are in certain respects defective, and even misleading, when taken by themselves. . . . The main object of the book is to set the specifically Anglican teaching of our formularies on a larger background, by going back behind the Reformation and the Middle Ages upon the ancient Catholic teaching and upon the Bible."

The order in which he states the authorities is again significant of his method. He starts with the Anglican teaching, goes back behind the Reformation and the Middle Ages to the ancient Catholic teaching, and at last reaches the Bible. This is also the method of his book on the ministry. Is it not somewhat surprising that a Bishop of our Church should feel it necessary to say that the "Anglican standards are in certain respects defective, and even misleading, when taken by themselves"? Such a view surely unsettles everything in the Anglican position, for, as the *Spectator*, in reviewing this new edition of the Bishop's book, rightly said :

"The formularies of the Anglican Church were meant to be an authoritative exposition of the teaching of that Church, and no man who has subscribed to them—least of all, one who is bound to enforce the obligation of that subscription on others—can go behind them."

The Prayer Book and Articles were intended to be a complete exposition of the teaching of the Anglican Church based directly on Holy Scripture, and if our formularies are "defective" and "misleading" when taken alone, our duty is to test and correct these defects from Holy Scripture, which, as Bishop Gore rightly said at the Bristol Church Congress, is "the final testing-ground of doctrine."

The Bishop goes on to say that—

“The ‘anti-Roman’ utterances of the Articles are, as is well known, so vaguely or ambiguously worded that, as weapons of discipline, they would break in our hands.”

We cannot help wondering where are the “anti-Roman” utterances which are thus described as vague or ambiguous. Thus, Article XXVIII. declares that the doctrine of Transubstantiation “cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.” Also that “the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was not by Christ’s ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.” Is there anything particularly vague or ambiguous about these expressions? Again, in Article XXXI. we have these words: “Wherefore the sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits.” If it should be said, as it often is in certain quarters, that this phrase in the plural, “the sacrifices of Masses,” refers not to the Roman doctrine, but to some medieval abuses, it may, perhaps, be worth while recalling the words of Cardinal Newman, who in his “Via Media” (Longmans, 1891) wrote: “There is no denying, then, that these audacious words [“blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits”] apply to the doctrinal teaching as well as to the popular belief of Catholics. . . . What, then, the Thirty-First Article repudiates is undeniably the central and most sacred doctrine of the Catholic religion; and so its wording has ever been read since it was drawn up”¹

The Bishop naturally has something to say on the question of the practices which the Royal Commission said should be “promptly made to cease”:

“I believe that some practices connected with the Tabernacle and the Monstrance involve an extension of the use of the Sacrament which diverges so widely from Christ’s intention as to be illegitimate. I would prohibit

¹ Quoted Dimock, “Missarum Sacrificia,” p. 52.

them in the Church of England for this reason; and every Bishop can legitimately prohibit any rite or service or prayer which is not in the Prayer Book. I should be, therefore, quite prepared, apart from any suggestion of a Royal Commission, to cause to cease almost all the practices scheduled. But not—precisely not—on the ground that they involve a doctrine which the Church of England excludes.”

According to this, he is prepared to prohibit these practices on the ground that they involve an extension of the use of the Holy Communion “which diverges so widely from Christ’s intention as to be illegitimate,” and yet at the same time he will not prohibit them on the ground that “they involve a doctrine which the Church of England excludes.” So we have this peculiar result, that the practices diverge from Christ’s intention, but not from Church of England doctrine. The logical conclusion from this is, as the *Spectator* pointed out, that the Church of England includes a doctrine which in its consequences “diverges widely from Christ’s intention.” There is something surprising and impossible in this position, unless the Bishop has not made his meaning clear.

It was to be expected that Dr. Gore would refer to the Bennett Judgment, about which he says that the Church of England “does not exclude Mr. Bennett’s doctrine. So the Commissioners recognize.” Now, we venture to ask whether this is quite accurate, and in order to make perfectly sure we will quote the words of the Royal Commission with reference to Mr. Bennett :

“He was acquitted because the Court, having regard to the penal character of the proceedings, and to the defendant’s right to the benefit of ‘any reasonable doubt,’ thought his words capable of a construction which did not call for judicial condemnation. The real relation of the judgment to Mr. Bennett’s teaching has been frequently misunderstood. His language has been taken in the sense which the Court held that it narrowly avoided; and his acquittal has been treated as establishing the legality of doctrine which his language was held not to express.”

It should also be remembered that the judges held Mr. Bennett’s words to be “rash and ill-judged,” and “perilously near a violation of the law.” In view of this statement it is impossible not to endorse Mr. Dimock’s words :

“ I know not how any expression of Mr. Bennett’s in his revised edition can be said to be *rash*, if his doctrine is allowed to be lawful. I do not think that anyone can say that his words are *ill-judged* on the hypothesis that the doctrine they were intended to teach is to be accepted, or acknowledged to be true, or legally allowable to be taught.”¹

Bishop Gore seems to rest his case almost entirely on the Bennett Judgment, but as his words do not fairly correspond with the statement of the Royal Commission on this subject, it must be obvious that his position needs a far stronger justification.

On the question of “ a line of deep cleavage,” which the Royal Commission held to exist between the Church of England and Rome in regard to certain practices, the Bishop has the following remarkable pronouncement :

“ It is quite true that if we take a typical Anglican teacher and a typical Roman we may find ‘ a line of deep cleavage ’ between them. But if we take the least Protestant types of Anglican teaching and the most moderate Roman types the line is hardly apparent ; and if we take the doctrinal requirement of Rome at its minimum, and at the same time recognize how vague are the limits of Anglican Eucharistic theology, we shall come to the conclusion that no such line of deep cleavage exists at all.”

We cannot help asking whether he is really satisfied with such a position. Let us attempt to apply it. Let us take the least Protestant type of Anglican teaching, say that of the Bishop himself or of Mr. Darwell Stone. Then let us try to discover “ the most moderate Roman type,” say that of Father Tyrrell ; and it would be doubtless true that “ the line is hardly apparent.” But how far does such a view really carry us ? Let us, instead, take a truly representative Roman Catholic like Cardinal Manning or Cardinal Vaughan ; and on the other hand a representative High Churchman of the older school, like Cosin, or Beveridge, or Goulburn, or Burgon, and see whether there is not, after all, “ a line of deep cleavage.” Still more—and this surely is the only true way of arriving at a settlement—let us take our present Prayer Book and Articles as representing the Church of England, and ask whether any well-informed Roman Catholic would say that between the teaching found

¹ “ Bennett Judgment,” p. 44.

therein and that of his own Missal, Catechism, and Creed, "no line of deep cleavage exists at all." To ask such a question is to answer it.

Bishop Gore, writing of Mr. Darwell Stone's sacramental teaching, says that "nothing could be more disastrous than that it should come to be believed that the ecclesiastical authorities of the Church of England were ready to brand it disloyal and unallowable." Now, Mr. Darwell Stone, in his book on the Holy Communion, when referring to the Presence of Christ in the elements, says that there is "agreement among Eastern Christians, Roman Catholics, and the successors of the Tractarians in the Church of England, as to that central part of the doctrine of the Eucharist, the expression of which by the English Church Union in 1900 may be cited as a convenient illustration."¹ It is necessary, therefore, to inquire as to the doctrine set forth by the E.C.U. For this purpose we may bring forward a competent witness. This is how the Bishop of Edinburgh, Dr. Dowden, speaks of it :

"The language of this Declaration finds no countenance in the writings of the Fathers of the Primitive Church. And it is more obvious, though not more certain, that it finds no countenance either in the authorized standards of the Church's doctrine or in the writings of the great theologians of the English Church, most of whom were deeply read, not only in the Holy Scriptures (the ultimate authority on all questions of doctrine), but also in the literature of Christian antiquity and the Early Fathers."²

Or we may hear the present Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford :

"The truth is that the Declaration of the English Church Union is at variance with the doctrine maintained by the consensus of all the most eminent theologians of the Church of England since the Reformation, nor can it be reconciled with the natural interpretation of the English Liturgy, or the 28th and 29th Articles. It is a deliberate attempt to undo the work of the Reformation, which delivered our Church and Realm from the tyranny of the many accretions of false doctrine which the Church of Rome had imposed upon Christians as necessary articles of faith, but which the Church of England declared to be unsanctioned by Scripture or by the teaching of the primitive ages of the Church."³

¹ "Holy Communion," p. 186.

² "Address to Synod," p. 21.

³ "Letter on the Doctrine of the Real Presence," p. 28.

These are not the utterances of extreme and rabid Protestant Churchmen, and yet language could not be plainer in opposition to Mr. Darwell Stone's doctrine, which the Bishop is prepared to champion. The Bishop is endeavouring to distinguish between a medieval and ancient doctrine which is Catholic and a doctrine which is purely Roman, but the position will need much more support than it has received at present. Newman and Pusey both failed to establish such a contention. It is a simple fact that Cranmer and Ridley died for denying the essential Roman doctrine, while they claimed to hold the true Catholic doctrine which is found in Holy Scripture. It is equally true that the essential Roman doctrine is still denied by our Articles, and that no educated Roman Catholic would dream of accepting those Articles as in any sense an adequate expression of his views. Where, then, is the place for the Bishop's contention? Lord Halifax and Mr. Athelstan Riley see the logic of the situation, and know perfectly well that the ceremonial condemned by the Royal Commission involved the condemnation of the doctrine expressed by that ceremonial.

The real question at issue in connexion with present controversies in the English Church on the Holy Communion is not as to a presence of Christ, as Lord Halifax says, "in the whole rite," but, to quote his words, "the doctrine that the Bread and Wine . . . by virtue of consecration and the operation of the Holy Ghost become, are made, are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ." In other words, Is there any presence of Christ in or under the elements by virtue of the words of consecration? The Dean of Canterbury, in his preface to the recently reissued Treatise of Archbishop Cranmer, says that—

"Persons may deny, as many do in the present day, that they hold the Roman doctrine of Transubstantiation, and may yet hold an essential part of the Roman doctrine by maintaining a presence in the elements themselves; and what Cranmer said of the abuses of that time may be said in our own, that the root of all the superstitious practices against which Evangelical Churchmen are contending is to be found in this doctrine—not of a real and objective presence of Christ in the Holy Communion, but of the real and objective presence of His body and blood in the elements."

This is the point on which attention should be concentrated : Is there a Real and Objective Presence in the elements?

In this connexion we may again quote the Bishop of Edinburgh :

“One thing is absolutely certain : it is no part of the doctrine of our Church that there is an adorable presence of our Lord’s body and blood *in* or *under* the forms of bread and wine. Such language is undiscoverable in the doctrinal standards of our Church, and wholly unknown to the Church of the early Fathers.”¹

In an admirable pamphlet by the Principal of the Leeds Clergy School, the Rev. J. G. Simpson, we have the following words with reference to the true Anglican position :

“The formularies are conspicuously silent on the subject of a real presence in the elements themselves, and I should argue that, at least prior to the Tractarian movement, this silence has, in spite of varieties of expression, been maintained by representative theologians. To reopen the question is, in my judgment, to swerve from the Anglican method, to depart from the Anglican spirit ; and this, unless we are convinced of their essential unsoundness, it does not seem to me that we are warranted in doing.”²

Now, it is perfectly obvious that the position of Bishop Gore on the one hand, and that of Bishop Dowden and Mr. Simpson on the other, cannot both be right. This is no question of Evangelical *versus* High Church doctrine, as the names referred to in this article clearly show. It is a question of Anglican doctrine *versus* Roman.

There is one other point of real importance in the Bishop’s new Preface. He writes as follows about Evangelical teaching :

“I express a fear, which subsequent experience has confirmed, that there are teachers of the Evangelical school among us to-day who do not accept this teaching—that is, ‘the doctrine which Hooker declared to be agreed upon by all schools of thought in his time’—and this constitutes undoubtedly a serious divergence from our standards.”³

We should very much like to have the proof of this statement concerning Evangelical Churchmen of to-day. It is a new thing for men of the extreme Anglican school to claim Hooker as belonging to them, as has been recently done by Provost Vernon Staley. Hitherto our great Elizabethan theologian

¹ “Define your Terms,” p. 21.

² “The Thing Signified,” p. 4.

³ “The Body of Christ,” p. vi.

has been classed with Waterland as among the "Virtualists," and therefore quite inadequate and inaccurate from the so-called Catholic standpoint. Now, we make bold to say that there is practically nothing in Hooker that the great body of Evangelical Churchmen do not accept, while there is a large amount of his plainest and most unequivocal teaching on the Holy Communion which would be utterly foreign to men of Mr. Darwell Stone's school. In support of this we may refer to a convenient summary of Hooker's view in the long quotations given by Mr. Dimock in his "Papers on the Eucharistic Presence," where it will be found that Hooker is entirely opposed to any union or identification of the Presence of Christ with the elements. So far from Evangelical Churchmen diverging seriously from the standards of the Church of England, we dare to assert that there are no High Churchmen who adhere more closely to them. Evangelicals take the formularies of our Church as they are, in their plain meaning, and do not regard them either as "defective" or "misleading." They find themselves ready to endorse views of representative Churchmen from Cranmer and Ridley down to the commencement of the Tractarian Movement, and in support of this they refer to the authorities quoted in Vogan and Goode, and in the *Guardian* by the Bishop of Edinburgh a few years ago. They have no need and no wish to go "behind" the Anglican Church to anything medieval, ancient, or Catholic, and they are content with the Prayer Book and Articles because their teaching "may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture." Now, can the Bishop of Birmingham say as much as this for his position? His own words in the new Preface clearly show that he cannot.

We have now endeavoured to examine and state the position on both sides, and we wish to ask in conclusion whether the matter cannot be brought to a definite issue? Are we to go on interminably in this unsatisfactory way? Can those Churchmen who are represented by Bishop Gore remain satisfied with basing their position on the very equivocal result of

the Bennett Judgment? Is it adequate to speak of the Prayer Book as "at least patient" of their interpretations? Are we to obtain the typical Anglican doctrine only by calling as our witness the "least Protestant" Churchman we can find? We wonder what the Bishop of Birmingham would think if he applied these principles to other questions? Would he arrive at a true idea of Socialism by taking the least Socialistic writer on the one side and the most moderate Individualistic writer on the other? Still more, would he arrive at the true doctrine of our Lord's person and work if he took the best possible example of a spiritual, earnest Unitarian on the one hand, and the most large-hearted, sympathetic, Broad Churchman on the other? What would the Bishop say if we attempted to settle our Christological and Socialistic problems in the way he now urges that we should resolve our sacramental differences? We end as we began, by confessing once again our profound admiration for Bishop Gore's fearless courage and relentless logic in regard to social questions, and our utter inability to understand his position in regard to sacramental doctrine as laid down in his most recent utterance.



Literary Notes.

THE history of the Jew the wide world over is probably more complete than any other history of either country or people. It would be interesting to make a bibliography of literature relating to the Jew. The latest is a history of the Jews in India. There is a large colony of this race in Cochin. Mrs. Nalini Banerji, the wife of Mr. A. R. Banerji, the Dewan of Cochin, has the work in hand.



Professor Thomas D. Seymour, who holds the Chair of Greek Language and Literature in Yale University, defines in the preface of his "Life in the Homeric Age" the scope of the book. He says it "is based upon a careful study of the Homeric poems. The earlier works on the same subject have not relieved the author from the obligation of collecting his own material for an independent examination of the questions involved. To Buchholz's 'Homerische Realien,' however, he is greatly indebted for collections of material which have enabled him at times to check the completeness of his own. In the main he has followed Reichel in the chapter on Homeric Arms."