

## Discussions.

### “THE PERMISSIVE USE OF THE VESTMENTS.”

(*The Churchman, March, 1911, p. 169.*)

I SHOULD not venture to intervene in this discussion but for the fact that, as it seems to me, one particular point is not brought to the front as it deserves to be. To my mind there is an even larger question involved than the prevention of moderate High Churchmen joining forces with the extremists. I freely admit the strength of Canon Beeching's argument on this head; I recognize the danger that he points out, and should be quite prepared to see a section of High Churchmen move in the direction of Ritualism, in the event of permissive use of Eucharistic Vestments being denied. Such a reinforcement of Ritualism were much to be regretted. But an object dearer to my heart than the restraint of Ritualism is the Reunion of Christendom. And this is the larger question to which I have already alluded.

A vast proportion of High Churchmen have been hitherto content to celebrate the Holy Communion without any distinctive Vestment. I have the greatest personal respect for the high character and self-devotion of the minority, as a body, by whom the agitation for change has been raised and carried on. But what will happen if the Ornaments Rubric is altered with the view of distinctly legalizing a Eucharistic dress? I cannot confine my thoughts to the Church of England. I am bound to ask myself what, outside my own Communion, would result from the general adoption of a distinctive Eucharistic dress? I believe it would mean a fresh and very serious barrier to reunion with those with whom reunion is most to be hoped for. It is, perhaps, rash, in view of the intellectual cleavage that has appeared in the Roman Church, to say what may or may not happen within the next two or three decades; but, judging from the past, it is not in that direction that Reunion is to be looked for. The Church of Rome knows nothing of Reunion from the true Anglican standpoint. The *Church Times* does not represent the *Anglican Church* when it says that “the Church of England is not at variance with Rome on the Sacrament of the Altar, but on the papal claims and all that they involve.” The Anglican Church, if represented by her formularies, is at issue with the Church of Rome on a great many fundamental questions; and on not one of those questions will the Church of Rome yield an inch. She will accept submission, and nothing short of submission; she will brook no interference, much less will she federate; we see no signs of return to primitive and Scriptural purity. Our real hope for any substantial measure of

Reunion lies in other directions—viz., with the Presbyterians and with those Nonconformist bodies which accept the Apostles' Creed as the basis of their teaching. The forces of infidelity are every year gathering strength, and it often seems to me that the one hope for the faith of our children is in the drawing together of all who love and believe in Jesus Christ as the Divine Saviour of the world. The Church's disunion, its lack of solidarity and concentration, is a terrible source of weakness. We want to sweep away barriers to union instead of erecting fresh ones. And, believing, as I do, that a Eucharistic Vestment, legalized to satisfy the Sacerdotal and Sacramentarian section of the Church of England, would be such a barrier, I sincerely trust that no such step will be taken. If I thought that one's sole object should be to make the Church of England as comprehensive as possible, I might hesitate, whatever my personal feeling and preference, to offer any resolute objection to the proposed alteration of the Rubric. But since my thoughts of comprehension are not confined to my own Church, I hope and trust that no fresh stumbling-block will be placed in the way of Reunion with those whose principles are not antagonistic to mutual concession and reasonable toleration.

I deprecate as warmly as Canon Beeching the unhappy divisions of the Church of which I am a member. But this concession in regard to a Eucharistic Vestment is surely an attempt to "heal lightly" the hurt which we deplore. I am prepared to wait, and to wait fifty years if need be, for Reunion with other bodies of Evangelical Christians; and for that very reason I am not prepared to play into the hands of those whose attitude to orthodox Nonconformists is as unyielding as that of Rome herself. Whatever Canon Beeching may say (and no one can say it more effectively), the legalization of Vestments will be regarded by the public as a triumph of Sacerdotalism, and as such will be celebrated by the *Church Times*.

G. S. STREATFEILD.

The "Vestment controversy" has demonstrated at least one point beyond reasonable dispute—viz., that the vast majority of those clergy who wear Eucharistic Vestments do so because, on their own confession, they regard them (as they are regarded in the Church of Rome) as "ecclesiastical Vestments indispensable to and characteristic of the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar." Canon Beeching, on the other hand, contends that their use should be permitted as the historic "vesture appointed for the ministration" of Holy Communion, and he urges that this was the view entertained by Cranmer. This, however, can hardly have been the case, as Canon Beeching has omitted to notice that the Rubric of 1549 allowed the use of the chasuble (Vestment) or *cope* for the Celebrant, and Cranmer could not have been unaware of the fact that historically the cope was a processional dress, and had never been regarded as a distinctively Eucharistic Vestment,

whereas the chasuble, since its recognition as a sacrificial Vestment, had been indispensable.

Mr. Guy Johnson has also well pointed out that at the utmost the historic continuity of the Eucharistic Vestments is confined to their use during 600 years of the most corrupt period of the Middle Ages, and it may be further added that for only about 300 years prior to the Reformation was the chasuble regarded as a distinctively and exclusively sacrificial garment—a period which significantly synchronizes with the official acceptance of the dogma of Transubstantiation.

Surely, then, if the Vestments are to be permitted on purely historical grounds, their use must not be confined to the single service of Holy Communion, but extended to *all other times of ministration*, as historically the chasuble was used as a general ministerial dress, and only for about 300 years as a specially sacrificial garment suitable only for the Eucharist?

But I hardly think that the Ritualist who values the chasuble only for its sacrificial signification would welcome its enforcement for preaching, burying, or marrying! Thus, to allow the chasuble for the Eucharist in contradistinction to “other times of ministration” would only serve to emphasize our historic continuity, more especially with the three centuries prior to the Reformation, when it was regarded as an expressly sacrificial Vestment, and would therefore vindicate the contention of the “Counter-Reformation” party within the Church.

It would, however, at the same time endorse a view which is absolutely contradictory to the whole Reformation position and to the teaching of the Prayer-Book, and one also which is consistent only with the Roman theory of the Sacrament, which requires the priest at his ordination to be given the chasuble as the “*vestem sacerdotalem*” symbolical of the power then bestowed on him “of offering sacrifices and masses for the living and the dead.”

With the revision of the Prayer-Book in prospect, the Vestment question certainly does become a matter of present-day expediency rather than an historical question as to the precise interpretation of the Ornaments Rubric; but if it is decided to legalize a distinctive and exclusive Eucharistic Vestment, which, as confined to the Eucharist, historically symbolizes sacrificial teaching, the only logical sequel is that the teaching of the Prayer-Book must also be altered to harmonize with this sacrificial view of the Eucharist and this sacerdotal view of the ministry. The Communion must once again be turned into the Mass, and the presbyter into the sacrificing priest.

If loyal High Churchmen are genuinely anxious for the permissive use of Vestments in order to emphasize the historic continuity of the Church, let them in all consistency, at least, advocate their general use for *all* times of ministration, and not simply as a distinctive Eucharistic dress which would inevitably be construed as symbolizing

our continuity with the medieval theories of Transubstantiation and the Sacrifice of the Mass.

Past experience also leads us to the conviction that "permissive" use, would, in the course of a generation or so, practically amount to a binding custom, as those who refused to adopt the practice would gradually come to be regarded just as antiquated, narrow, and puritanical, as those who cling to the use of the black preaching-gown to-day.

C. SYDNEY CARTER.

### "HIGHER CRITICISM AND ORTHODOX BELIEF."

(*The Churchman*, March, 1911, p. 193.)

The article in the March number of the CHURCHMAN, which is written as an appeal to those who hesitate to accept the new criticism, contains certain assumptions which should be first eliminated.

At the outset we read "the main results of historical criticism are generally accepted as practically ascertained facts"; but none acquainted with both sides of the controversy, or who have read, say, such a book as "The Problem of the Old Testament," can admit this for a moment. Take, for example, one of these "most assured results," of which Wellhausen says: "About the origin of Deuteronomy, in all circles where appreciation of scientific results can be looked for at all it is recognized that it was composed in the same age as that in which it was discovered."

Yet this preposterous theory, which is inconsistent with all the records, Kings, Chronicles, or Jeremiah, and is encumbered with improbabilities that no critic has fairly considered, remains as incredible as when it was first propounded by De Wette.

In regard to these results generally, the *facts* that have been brought to light have only served to confirm the traditional view. One fact must be admitted, that multitudes of men, many of them of learning and sincerity, have accepted the new theories; but this should not carry conviction to any who are acquainted with the history of human thought; again and again a like deluge of mere opinion has submerged the world of orthodoxy.

All of us agree that "whatever the ultimate results may prove to be, so long as they have been arrived at by fair and scientific means, they will have to be accepted as just deduction of historical and literary investigation," but it is just because the means used are often unfair and unscientific we cannot consent to them.

The Article accepts the objection made to the traditional view that it represents the Divine revelation as given "wholesale and ready made," as though all the great expositors before Wellhausen had failed to show that the Scriptures as they stand record a progressive revelation.

The reference, of course, is to the Law of Moses, which the critics will not allow could have been given at one time.

And yet, what is this Law more than the circumstances of the time needed? It brought with it no sudden advance in the revelation of the Divine will.

The Decalogue contained no new laws for men. The civil "judgments" were such as were necessary to serve as the basis of jurisprudence in the new nation.

The code of ritual was but an elaboration of the sacrificial worship of the patriarchs, particularizing and emphasizing the ideas involved in primeval sacrifices, atonement, redemption, satisfaction, cleansing, fellowship, thanksgiving, and setting these ideas before the mind in all the personal, domestic, social, and national experiences of the Israelite.

The spiritual meaning of the law marked no great advance, if any, beyond the religion of Abraham. The Law was a revelation to the people of "the God of their fathers," whom they had forgotten in Egypt.

It is also singularly inconsistent to deny that the Law could have been given by Moses at the beginning of Israel's life with Divine attestations, and to insist that it was surreptitiously manufactured, ready-made, too, by some unknown scribes after the Exile.

Another assumption adopted in the Article is that man was led "from crude beginnings up to the loftiest conceptions."

That the spiritual condition of man at the first was *crude* is not only opposed to the records we have of early piety, but is opposed also to all that scientific historical investigation has proved concerning the earliest races.

Well it would be for all of us to be true children to the man who heard and obeyed the Divine voice—"Get thee out of thy country . . . go into the land that I will show thee. . . . I will bless thee and thou shalt be a blessing. Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward. Walk before Me and be thou perfect"—the man who longed to see the day of Christ, and who saw it and rejoiced, when he saw, as it were, the promised seed dying as a sacrifice and rising from the dead.

When all unproved assumptions are removed from the discussion, we shall be able to come to a sound conclusion as to the value of this new spirit of criticism, and shall learn to profit by it in all that is fair and scientific and historical.

W. F. KIMM.

### "SUGGESTIONS TOWARDS REUNION."

(*The Churchman*, February, 1911, p. 119.)

I have to thank Mr. Malaher for his interesting comment. He draws what is no doubt a true distinction between the two functions of Episcopacy. When, however, he proceeds to demand "proof" that

Presbyterian elders are priests to whom has been delegated the power of transmitting Orders, then I must protest that he asks for what it is impossible to give. "Proof" in such a matter there can be none. It would be interesting to know Mr. Malaher's idea of the proof which the Catholic Church can offer that her Bishops were given the power to transmit orders. At any rate, if with Lightfoot and Gwatkin we believe that Episcopacy is a very early development from Presbytery, then the question of the power to transmit Orders stands upon the same footing for the one as for the other. In such a matter we cannot well go behind the intention of the founders of Modern Presbyterianism. If the intention was, as we believe, to maintain the unbroken succession of Orders, though reverting to Presbyterian government, then those who desire Reunion will be satisfied.

But I cannot refrain from adding that the real intention of my original paper was to show, by reference to some of the representative Anglican divines, how very far from the true spirit of English Catholicism is the modern rigorist demand for proof in matters not susceptible of logical demonstration. I must therefore regard Mr. Malaher's comment as expressing a view which our great Anglican predecessors would have disowned, and which is necessarily fatal to hopes of Reunion.

W. ALDWORTH FERGUSON.



## Reason and Belief.<sup>1</sup>

BY SIR OLIVER LODGE, F.R.S.

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It is, of course, in the realm of science that he has won his laurels, and may claim to be an authority. In the realm of theology, however, he is more or less a mere layman, and while he may be listened to with respectful attention, it must yet be tempered with caution. This is quite fair. If a theologian ventured to write on scientific subjects, and if, moreover, he presumed to differ from recognized experts, he would be quickly pounced

<sup>1</sup> Methuen. Price 3s. 6d. net.