

## Richard Hooker and the Holy Communion.

### II.

THERE is clear proof that the Puritans, led by Cartwright and Travers, were working for nothing less than the introduction of a thoroughly Presbyterian system. The Puritans had initiated a clever plan (and from their point of view we can hardly find fault with them for doing so) to leaven the Church from within with their ideas. They formed associations among the clergy, and held meetings, whereby their teaching might work below the surface of the existing Church, hoping gradually to introduce a Puritan system hidden under the forms which they could not as yet outwardly change. I will quote to you a Puritan view of these associations, from Brooke's "Life of Cartwright," so that we may see how the matter appeared to an opponent of the Church.

"Cartwright, we read, united with many of his ministerial brethren in the design of effecting a purer reformation, by endeavouring to introduce a system of ecclesiastical discipline widely differing from the Episcopal government, but not less conformable to the oracles of God. They formed associations in various parts of the country, and held private meetings for the purpose of friendly consultation and prayer to God. . . . In these religious associations, which were held at Warwick, Northampton, Cambridge, London, and other places, the worthy divines engaged in friendly discussion, not only concerning existing intolerance, and the abuses in the Book of Common Prayer, but also on the Episcopal government and Episcopacy itself, which they considered the mere device of man, and unconformable to the holy administration appointed by Jesus Christ. They investigated the claims of archbishops, lord-bishops, archdeacons, and other burdensome officers, with their exorbitant power and authority, as betraying the spirit and principles of antichrist. . . . The Puritans held that the Word of God contained an explicit account of the officers belonging to Christian Churches, with their spiritual duties, and the laws and maxims by which they were to be regulated : the whole of which was (in their opinion) a matter of pure revelation, and which they could not but consider as indispensable to the proper organization and government of the Churches of Jesus Christ. The principal ecclesiastical officers derived from this source were denominated pastors, elders and deacons ; and their respective duties

with the rules of discipline were, in their opinion, explicitly laid down in the New Testament."

It is obvious that these views were inconsistent with the Church system which had come down from ancient times and had prevailed ever since—a system sanctioned by the early Fathers and all the great authors and writers of Christendom up to the time when the Puritans sprang up, a system which had never hitherto been regarded as inconsistent with Holy Scripture itself. The rulers of the Church of England and the Queen could hardly be expected tamely to submit to such a revolution as the Puritans advocated and put forward as essentially requisite. Naturally enough they resisted the efforts of the Puritans—whether they used unnecessary violence and resorted to needlessly oppressive measures is, of course, another question. Cartwright, the Presbyterian leader, was even more intolerant, for he declares that he approves of the penalty of death, in the case of continued opposition to Puritan truth.

In the fifth book Hooker goes into these details as regards the ceremonies of the Church, and answers Puritan objections. As regards the performance of baptism, the Puritans narrowed down the ground taken by the ancient Church. They objected to private baptism, and especially to baptism being ever performed under pressure of apparent necessity by women. Hooker replies that "the practice of the Church in cases of extreme necessity hath made for private baptism always more than against it." He is, however, somewhat doubtful as to the lawfulness of baptism by women. What he says is chiefly this: "We cannot disprove the practice of those Churches which, necessity requiring, allow baptism in private to be ministered by women." He adds, however: "We deny not but that they which utterly forbid such baptism may have perhaps wherewith to justify their orders against it." While thus leaving baptism by women doubtful, Hooker sums up in favour of lay baptism being permissible.

The Puritans objected to the sign of the Cross in baptism. Hooker admits that the use of the Cross in baptism is only of human appointment. But it is sanctioned by primitive tradition. It may not be surprising, as the mediaeval Church had fallen into much wearisome ceremonialism in the undue use of that sacred sign, that the Puritans should have raised this objection, but we may certainly say that no evil has resulted from its use in the dedication of infants

to their Saviour, and that it has been a beautiful and expressive way of marking them as His, Who redeemed them by His own Cross. See Alford's lines—

“ In token that thou shalt not flinch  
Christ's quarrel to maintain.” etc.

Hooker points out that “ it does not follow that we should encourage a reaction from superstitious use to its direct opposite, otherwise we may fall into the vice which is nearest to this other extreme, namely irreverence.” And he lays down the principle, that the right course to remedy the superstitious abuse of things profitable in the Church is not to abolish utterly the use thereof—because not using at all is the opposite to ill-using—but rather, if, it may be, to bring them back to a right, perfect and religious usage.

The principal objection raised by the Puritans to our mode of receiving the Lord's Supper was the kneeling. They urged that “ kneeling carrieth a show of worship; sitting agreeth better with the action of the Supper: Christ and His Apostles kneeled not.” Hooker answers: “ Kneeling is the gesture of piety. We come as receivers of inestimable grace. What can be better than that our bodies should be suitable witnesses of minds unfeignedly humbled? ”

Further, the Puritans desired a severe examination of intending communicants, after the inquisitorial fashion of the Genevan discipline. Hooker denies not that examination may be desirable in some cases, but he adds: “ God does not bind us to dive into men's consciences, to Him they seem such as they are; but to us they must be taken for such as they seem.” The Puritans in this and other ways thought they could drill people into being religious; but grown-up people cannot be drilled, they can be influenced, but not drilled. Influence is the secret of religious power, and it is by influence, not by force, that the Holy Spirit Himself touches and leads souls on.

Papists ought not, in the Puritan view, to be admitted to Communion in the Church of England, “ until such time as by their religious and Gospel-like behaviour they have purged themselves of that suspicion of popery which their former life and conversation hath caused to be conceived.” Until then, said the Puritans, they are to be regarded as “ dogs, swine, beasts, foreigners and strangers,

and not of the Church." This narrow and uncharitable attitude is rejected by Hooker, who had just before expressed the opinion that a belief in transubstantiation was not fatal to a real reception of Christ in the Sacrament, and thus here and elsewhere he shows a wide charity, and a more tolerant and modern conception as to essentials and non-essentials than the Puritans. Moreover, in reply to their maintaining that Papists had no right to be held members of the Church of Christ, Hooker diverges into a somewhat lengthy consideration of what the Church is, and lays down very liberal and comprehensive lines as to what is meant by the Church. He remarks: "Because the only object which separateth ours from other religions is Jesus Christ, in whom none but the Church doth believe, and whom none but the Church doth worship, we find that accordingly the Apostles do everywhere distinguish hereby the Church from infidels and from Jews, accounting 'them which call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to be His Church.'"

We find in Hooker's treatment of the subject of the Holy Eucharist an instance of his characteristic method. His treatment of the great question at issue does not deal only with the immediate difficulty, he raises the matter into a wider and higher atmosphere. Thus he deals with the solemn subject of the Holy Communion. His object is by this wider view to include the tenets of the Romanist, the Lutheran, and the Protestant as to that Sacrament in one embrace of charity and goodwill. The Puritans argued that Romanists who held transubstantiation could not be saved until they repented of the error. Hooker reasons against transubstantialtion being true, but at the same time points out that this doctrine need not be fatal to the soul. The Lutheran held consubstantiation, and was condemned by the Puritan for doing so. The Romanist condemned both the Lutheran and the Calvinist. It is the object of Hooker to make peace between them, and he exhibits a spirit of toleration almost unknown in those days, by asserting that all three agree in the main point, and hold that the faithful receive Christ in the Sacrament, and therefore that it is needless to dispute as to whether He is localized in the consecrated bread and wine.

Passing over with a few words the opinions of Zwinglius, who taught that the Eucharist is a bare commemoration of the death of Christ, these three views come before Hooker's consideration. Is there any point in which all these three meet together? Hooker,

ever anxious to promote Christian unity and peace, shows that there is ; and this being found, he deprecates quarrelling over the rest of the question. What are these three views, and where does Hooker find a meeting point ? There is transubstantiation, the Roman doctrine, which teaches that the bread and wine are converted into the actual Body and Blood of Christ Which was born of the Virgin Mary, and crucified on the Cross. Secondly, there is the Lutheran doctrine, that the Body and Blood of Christ are incorporated with the bread and wine. Thirdly, there is the doctrine to which Cranmer and Ridley had finally adhered and which was maintained by Calvin, and adopted by Hooker himself. In this view there is a real communication of the Body and Blood of Christ spiritually understood to every faithful receiver, but not a localized presence in the elements themselves. Treating these three, Hooker proceeds to show the one important point of agreement. He says it is unreasonable to contend how Christ is to be received in the Eucharist. For all agree in that which alone is material, namely, that there is a real participation of Christ and of life in His Body and Blood in the Sacrament, and all agree that it is the soul of man that is the receptacle of Christ's Presence. Hence the question, if it need be argued at all, is reduced to this—whether, when the Sacrament is administered, Christ be wholly within man only, or else His Body and Blood be also externally seated in the very consecrated elements themselves ? This question Hooker proceeds to consider, and personally he accepts Calvin's view. He says : " The bread and cup are Christ's Body and Blood because they are causes instrumental upon the receipt of which the participation of His Body and Blood ensueth," and he adds, " 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." <sup>1</sup> Further he says : " I see not which way it should be gathered by the words of Christ, when and where the bread is His Body and the cup His Blood, but only in the very

<sup>1</sup> In his very valuable " History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist," Dr. Darwell Stone quotes a passage from a charge of Archbishop Temple, who says : " Hooker, undeniably a very high authority on the doctrine of the Church of England, maintains that the real presence should not be looked for in the consecrated elements, but in the receivers . . . but to this it must be added that the Church nowhere forbids the further doctrine that there is a real presence in some way attached to the elements at the time of consecration and before reception " (vol. ii. p. 582).

heart and soul of him which receiveth t[hem].” And again: “If on all sides it be confessed that the grace of baptism is poured into the soul of man, that by water we receive e it although it be neither seated in the water, nor the water changed into it, what should induce men to think that the grace of t[he] Eucharist must needs be in the Eucharist before it can be in usis that receive it?” It is worth noticing that Hooker when he uses s the expression that the consecrated elements are instrumental to o our receiving the Body and Blood of the Lord, and in some other s[im]ilar expressions, touches upon a point which may commend itself to o modern thought. Analogies between science and religion must t not be pressed too far, but we may find illustrations of religious truth in the discoveries of science. Force in the sense of communicated power is a familiar idea to us now, though we are not scientific experts. It is known to us as a living, moving power. It has b been suggested to me by a thoughtful friend that this is Hooker’s idea of the Eucharist. Christ is present with us as we draw near to o the altars of His Church, and we may conceive Him as imparting g to us, with a dynamic power, the life and force of His Presence. Far beyond any material transformation of the elements is the t thought of the spiritual infusion of His own vitality: “As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.” And with reference to transubstantiation and consubstantiation, Hooker remarks: “It appeareth not that of all the ancient Fathers of the Church any one didd ever conceive or imagine other than only a mystical participatidn of Christ’s Body and Blood in the Sacrament.”

Hooker concludes by representing hoow a plain person might, amid these differences, arrive at a praactical conclusion, namely, that the elements are instrumentally a c cause of a mystical participation, whereby Christ makes Himself oours and we have possession of all such saving grace as His sacrificed l Body can yield. “What these elements are in themselves it skillleth not, it is enough that to one which takes them they are the EBody and Blood of Christ. His promise in witness hereof sufficethh, His word He knoweth which way to accomplish; why should z any cogitation possess the mind of a faithful communicant but this—‘O my God, Thou art true; O my soul, thou art happy.’”

As regards the ministerial office, (Cartwright had expressed

himself very strongly against the use of the word "priest." He says: "For so much as the common and usual speech of England is to note by the word 'Priest' not a minister of the Gospel, but a sacrificer, which the minister of the Gospel is not, therefore we ought not to call the ministers of the Gospel priests. And that this is the English speech, it appeareth by all the English translations, which translate always *ιερείς* which were sacrificers, Priests; and do not on the other side for any that ever I read translate *πρεσβύτερος* a Priest." Then he uses severe words condemnatory of the Mass. In reply to this argument of Cartwright, Hooker admits that the word "priest" has generally been used to imply sacrifice, and then adds that sacrifice is now no part of the Church's ministry. But he thinks that the word priest may allowably be applied to our clergy in an indirect sense: for though the Church has now properly no sacrifice, yet it has the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, and it has this proportionably to ancient sacrifice, by which I suppose he means that the Holy Eucharist has some correspondence with the ancient sacrifices, though in the strict sense it is not a sacrifice.

He says therefore: "Whether we call it a 'priesthood,' a presbytership, or a ministry, it skilleth not, although in truth the word 'presbyter' doth seem more fit, and in propriety of speech more agreeable than 'priest' with the drift of the whole Gospel of Christ. What are Churches but families; what better title could there be given than the reverend name of 'presbyters' or 'fatherly guides'?"

We notice here the fairness of mind of Hooker, that when he thinks that there is a degree of truth in a Puritan argument he is willing to admit the force of it as far as he is able to agree.

Passing onward from this point, we have to notice that the Puritans argued that the offices mentioned in Scripture were still obligatory, such as "pastors and teachers." He replies that these are now included among the presbyters, and that they were not necessarily orders. For the most ancient of the Fathers mention three degrees of ecclesiastical orders and no more. So Tertullian says: "When your captains, that is to say the Deacons, Presbyters and Bishops, fly, who shall teach the laity to be constant?"

The question of Episcopacy is more fully treated in the seventh

book. As only five books were published in Hooker's lifetime, and the rest a good while after, a doubt hangs over the question how far the seventh book represents his opinions. But what is said about Episcopacy in the seventh book being quite in harmony with the short reference thereto in the fifth book, we may assume that it represents in substance what Hooker had noted down. It has his characteristic of eminent fairness. What makes for the Puritan side is not slurred over. It is admitted frankly that at first the names "bishops" and "presbyters" indicated the same office, and were used interchangeably. For instance, reference is made to the chapter in the Acts where St. Paul sends for the elders of Ephesus and "speaks to them of the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops." A similar reading is given in our Revised Version. Here Presbyterians would say: "You see, the same persons are spoken of as elders, and then as bishops, and they all came from Ephesus." To this argument Hooker, or his editor, goes on to reply: "In the first beginning the laity were subject to a college of ecclesiastical persons, who are called sometimes presbyters, sometimes bishops, but soon after one presbyter became elevated to govern the rest, and this one president or governor held this authority for some time before the designation of 'bishop' was exclusively reserved to him." (So we find James presiding at Jerusalem, and Timothy and Titus set over other presbyters, with power of ordaining.) And as the Apostles passed away, these head presbyters would hold authority in their place, and so the three orders of bishops, priests and deacons would take the complete form which they have since maintained. So the editor of the seventh book quotes St. Jerome to show that "where colleges of presbyters were, there was at first equality among them; but when the rest were thus equal, so that no one of them could command any other as inferior to him, they were all controllable by the Apostles, who had that episcopal authority abiding at first in themselves, which they afterwards gave over unto others." Moreover the editor of the seventh book quotes Calvin, observing: "Mr. Calvin himself, though an enemy unto regiment by bishops, doth notwithstanding confess, that in old time the ministers which had charge to teach, chose of their company one in every city, to whom they appropriated the title of 'bishop,' lest equality should breed dissension." This reference to Calvin himself will quite suffice us, I think.



We must now draw to a close. Let me leave three main thoughts before the reader.

1. Hooker's great desire to be fair both to Romanists and Puritans, and to recognize whatever degree of truth lay in their arguments.

2. His habit of correcting the narrowness of the Puritans by widening the subjects of controversy, and regarding them with all the various light which God has given to men.

3. His showing to the Churchpeople of his day, and of succeeding generations, that the Church of England as Reformed under Elizabeth, was in harmony with the primitive Church of the Early Ages.

The closing scene of Hooker's life was in harmony with that love for God's order, and God's laws, which he has dwelt upon in his writings.

"And now," says Izaak Walton, "his guardian angel seemed to foretell him that the day of his dissolution drew near: for which his vigorous soul appeared to thirst."

"In this time of his sickness, and not many days before his death, his house was robbed; of which he having notice, his question was, 'Are my books and written papers safe?' And being answered that they were, his reply was, 'Then it matters not: for no other loss can trouble me.'

"About one day before his death, Dr. Saravia, who knew the very secrets of his soul—for they were supposed to be confessors to each other—came to him, and, after a conference of the benefit, the necessity, and safety of the Church's absolution, it was resolved the Doctor should give him both that and the Sacrament the following day. To which end the Doctor came, and, after a short retirement and privacy, they two returned to the company; and then the Doctor gave him, and some of those friends which were with him, the blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Jesus. Which being performed, the Doctor thought he saw a reverend gaiety and joy in his face; but it lasted not long: for his bodily infirmities did return suddenly, and became more visible, insomuch that the Doctor apprehended death ready to seize him; yet, after some amendment, left him at night, with a promise to return early the day following; which he did, and then found him better in appearance, deep in contemplation, and not inclinable to discourse; which gave the Doctor occasion to require his present thoughts.

We here notice that the love of the Divine order and law which Hooker showed in his writings filled his mind as death drew near. To which he replied, 'That he was meditating the number and nature of Angels, and their blessed obedience and order, without which peace could not be in Heaven : and oh, that it might be so on Earth !' After which words, he said, 'I have lived to see this world is made up of perturbations ; and I have been long preparing to leave it, and gathering comfort for the dreadful hour of making my account with God, which I now apprehend to be near ; and though I have by His grace loved Him in my youth, and feared Him in mine age, and laboured to have a conscience void of offence to Him, and to all men ; yet if Thou, O Lord, be extreme to mark what I have done amiss, who can abide it ? And therefore, where I have failed, Lord, show mercy to me ; for I plead not my righteousness, but the forgiveness of my unrighteousness, for His merits, Who died to purchase pardon for penitent sinners. And since I owe Thee a death, Lord, let it not be terrible, and then take Thine own time ; I submit to it : let not mine, O Lord, but let Thy will be done.' With which expression he fell into a dangerous slumber : dangerous as to his recovery, yet recover he did, but it was to speak only these few words : ' Good Doctor, God hath heard my daily petitions, for I am at peace with all men, and He is at peace with me ; and from that blessed assurance I feel that inward joy, which this world can neither give nor take from me ; my conscience beareth me this witness, and this witness makes the thoughts of death joyful. I could wish to live to do the Church more service ; but cannot hope it, for my days are past as a shadow that returns not.' More he would have spoken, but his spirits failed him ; and, after a short conflict betwixt Nature and Death, a quiet sigh put a period to his last breath, and so he fell asleep. And now he seems to rest like Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. Let me here draw his curtain, till with the most glorious company of the Patriarchs and Apostles, the most Noble Army of Martyrs and Confessors, this most learned, most humble, holy man shall also awake to receive an eternal tranquillity, and with it a greater degree of glory, than common Christians shall be made partakers of."

"In the meantime," adds Izaak Walton, "bless, O Lord ! Lord, bless his brethren, the Clergy of this nation, with effectual

endeavours to attain, if not to his great learning, yet to his remarkable meekness, his godly simplicity, and his Christian moderation : for these will bring peace at the last. And, Lord, let his most excellent writings be blest with what he designed, when he undertook them : which was, glory to Thee, O God on high, peace in Thy Church, and goodwill to mankind. Amen, Amen."

S. HARVEY GEM.

