

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

Anglican point of view is summed up by Archbishop Laud in these words: " At and in the Eucharist we offer up to God three sacrifices : one by the priest only—that's the commemorative sacrifice of Christ's death represented in bread broken and wine poured out ; another by the priest and people jointly, and that is the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for all the benefits and graces we received by the precious death of Christ ; the third, by every particular man for himself only, and that is the sacrifice of every man's body and soul, to serve Him in both, all the rest of his life, for this blessing then bestowed on him " (Conference with Fisher, quoted by Meyrick, *Doctrine of the Holy Communion*, p. 40).

THE DOCTRINAL BASIS OF N.A. 84.

BY W. GUY JOHNSON (Member of the National Assembly).

IN view of the statements by members of the Prayer Book Revision Committee, e.g. by Lord Hugh Cecil at the last session of the House of Laity, that no change in the doctrine of the Prayer Book is made in their Report, it may seem unnecessary and even ungracious to seek for any special doctrinal characteristics in that document. But if you first read your own doctrine into the Prayer Book and then make proposals which would bring out that doctrine more clearly, people who are unable to find it in the Prayer Book may be excused for thinking the proposals do involve a change. Moreover, it is clear that a large number of Churchpeople, belonging to more than one school of thought, are of opinion that the alterations made in the Prayer Book in 1552 greatly changed its doctrinal complexion as compared with the Book of 1549. Proposals, therefore, which have for their effect a reversion in many important features to the 1549 Book must be supposed to carry with them the doctrinal implications of such reversion.

It is important to bear in mind that N.A. 84 is only an instalment of revision, and it is a reasonable inference that the further revision contemplated by it will be in the same direction as that we are now asked to follow. It is further important to remember that many of the proposed changes are of the nature of concessions to those among us who are already teaching a system of doctrine quite alien to that which is contained in the Prayer Book, and we cannot overlook this when interpreting the meaning of these concessions. In the time allotted to me it is only possible to indicate a few of the chief points in the Measure which appear to distinguish it doctrinally from our present book.

To begin with the Calendar, it is very remarkable that while as many as twenty-nine additions are made to it, no name later than 1380 has been deemed worthy of commemoration. If Anskar

of Sweden, Thomas of Aquinas, and Ninian, Bishop of Galloway, are to be given places, we might at least have expected that the men to whom we owe our English Bible and English Prayer Book—Wyclif and Tyndale, Cranmer and Ridley and Latimer—would also have been included. As it stands in the Measure, the Calendar has a truncated, lopsided appearance, and even so, why were Grosseteste and Wyclif excluded, for they both come within the period which it covers. These and later omissions are rendered significant by the fact that in 1914 a Committee of the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury presented a Report on the Calendar recommending the addition of the following, among other names: Grosseteste, Wyclif, Cranmer, Bishop Morgan, George Herbert, Jeremy Taylor, Latimer, Hooker, Andrewes, Thomas Ken, Bishop Butler, John Wesley. If these, with perhaps one or two others, such as Tyndale, Cosin, Henry Martyn, Bishop Hannington, had been included, the Calendar would then have had an historically balanced character, and the collect provided for days for which there is no special collect could then have been used with a purely general reference. As it is, we are asked to thank God for the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas and others whose doctrine the Church of England has expressly repudiated.

This matter is itself important, but there is another which goes much deeper—the insertion, on November 2, of the commemoration of All Souls, which takes us behind even the First Prayer Book of Edward VI. This commemoration is to be found in the Sarum Missal, as it is also in the Roman; but it has not had a place in our formularies since the Reformation. The commemoration of All Souls is open to two objections: it introduces an unreal and unscriptural distinction between Christian people—those described on November 1 as “All Saints” and those referred to on November 2 as “All Souls,” and it is inseparably associated with the doctrine of purgatory. If I may quote from the Protestant Dictionary: “The earliest mention of this special day, November 2, cannot be traced higher than the tenth century, when Odilo, Abbot of Clugny, having heard of an awful dream seen by a pilgrim from Jerusalem, in which he beheld the suffering of souls in purgatory, set apart this day of intercession for them. If All Saints’ Day be observed, All Souls is superfluous, unless superstitious doctrine be held respecting the state of the dead.” In view of the origin of this commemoration, and of the fact that the doctrine of purgatory is already being taught by the Anglo-Roman party in our Church, objections to its revival are strengthened. Moreover, the language of the special Collect proposed for use on this day is as follows:

“*Collect.* Almighty Eternal God, who wouldest have all men to be saved; Be merciful, we beseech Thee, to the souls of thy servants who have departed from this world in the confession of Thy Name, that they may be joined to the company of thy Saints; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*”

However appropriate these petitions might be to the state of those who had died in impenitence or unbelief, or to those whose

state was doubtful, they are wholly out of place when referring to the *faithful* departed. Such a prayer would be strangely out of harmony with that for a sick child in the Visitation service, ". . . or else receive him into those heavenly habitations where the souls of them that sleep in the Lord Jesus enjoy perpetual rest and felicity"; and with that in the Burial Service: "Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity."

In the same category must be included the prayers "for the faithful departed" which are contained in the Revision Committee's Report. If these do indeed enjoy "perpetual rest and felicity," it would seem reasonable to believe that they have passed beyond the need of our prayers.

We find, moreover, that in the Burial of the Dead there is provision for a "special celebration of the Holy Communion," a provision which was removed from the First Prayer Book in 1552. It is difficult to avoid seeing in this a concession to those who now celebrate Masses for the Dead, a superstition bound up with the doctrine of purgatory.

¶ We come next to two proposals which have aroused strong opposition—the permission to use the chasuble (for that is what is meant by the word "vestment"), and the alteration of the Prayer of Consecration.

The chasuble is the vestment which in the Roman Church is distinctive of the Mass. It is always worn by the celebrant at Mass, and is not worn except on that occasion. The use which prevails in the Scandinavian Churches where chasubles are worn on a great variety of occasions, and its exceptional use by deacons at penitential seasons in some Continental Churches, do not affect the general truth of this statement. It signifies the doctrine that the Holy Communion is a sacrifice offered to God, and is claimed by most of those in our Church who now use it as emphasizing that doctrine. But the New Testament represents the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper as a gift from God to us, and not an offering from us to Him. Moreover, our Lord's last utterance upon the Cross was "It is finished," and there is now no more sacrifice for sin. There is therefore no place in the Christian Church for such a sacrifice as that which is supposed to be offered in the Mass, and our Prayer Book not only contains no provision for it, but in plain and express language rejects it. It will be remembered that in 1906 Lord Halifax, speaking as President of the English Church Union, said, "We value the vestments, other reasons apart, because they are a witness to the fact that the Lord's Supper is neither more nor less than the Mass in English."

The same teaching is to be found in the changes in the Prayer of Consecration. This now ends with the recital of the institution by our Lord, concluding at the words "do this as oft as ye shall drink it in remembrance of Me." The proposal is to add the following words:

“Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, we Thy humble servants, having in remembrance the precious death of Thy dear Son, His mighty resurrection, and glorious ascension, looking also for His coming again, do render unto Thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits which He hath procured unto us; and . . .”

Then is added the first of the two prayers provided in our present book after the communicants have all partaken. Then come the words: “And now as our Saviour Christ hath commanded and taught us, we are bold to say,” and the whole is concluded with the Lord’s Prayer.

There are two principal objections to this change, slight as it may appear to be. One is that the additions afford opportunity for acts of adoration to the consecrated bread and wine which would then be upon the Holy Table, such as genuflection and elevation. The other is that by incorporating the first post-Communion Prayer in the Prayer of Consecration, support is given to the claim that the priest is performing a sacrificial action on behalf of the people. In its present place the language of the prayer is appropriate and beautiful. The communicants have all partaken of the sacred emblems of the Saviour’s love. With thankful and uplifted hearts they return to their seats, and then anew dedicate to God the lives which He has redeemed. “Here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls, and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee . . . and although we be unworthy to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service.” At this point of the service there is no possibility of misconceiving these words, but the introduction of such sacrificial expressions into the Consecration Prayer, while the consecrated elements are yet upon the Holy Table, would greatly lend itself to erroneous and unscriptural teaching.

In the proposal to permit Reservation of the Sacrament for the Sick, it might be possible, if the new rubrics were strictly construed and loyally obeyed, to acquit the change of any doctrinal intention. At the same time it ignores the rubric as to spiritual communion; and it is hardly a want of charity, in view of the very explicit statements which have actually been made, to doubt whether the restrictions will be observed.

Five members of the Revision Committee signed the following Memorandum which appears in the Report :

We regret that we are unable to concur with the majority of the Committee in approving of the proposed new rubrics to the Order for the Communion of the Sick (numbered 145 in the Schedule to the Report), which contemplate Reservation of a part of the consecrated bread and wine and (in the event indicated) “further provision to meet the needs of the sick and dying.” Notwithstanding the care with which those rubrics have been settled, we do not think that it is possible adequately to safeguard the practice from abuse. We do not admit that

the practice of Reservation is either primitive or Catholic ; and we believe that the teaching associated with it is not conformable to Holy Scripture.

EDWARD CLARKE.

H. C. HOGAN.

G. A. KING.

ALBERT MITCHELL.

EUGENE STOCK.

It cannot be denied that Reservation is in practice largely associated with superstitious teaching as to the nature of Christ's presence in the Sacrament, and many very grave abuses are prevalent in connexion with it. It is clear that doctrinal motives influence the demand for its restoration, though purely practical considerations are those which are generally used in support of the claim for it.

It is this doctrinal bias of the Measure which makes concession or compromise impossible. Truth is ours to profit by, to defend, and to maintain, and not to barter or to sacrifice in the supposed interests of peace and unity. We must stand fast, that the Truth of the Gospel may continue with us, and that as "with freedom did Christ make us free," we be not "entangled again in a yoke of bondage."

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE USE OF N.A. 84.

BY THE REV. CANON GEORGE BUCHANAN, M.A., Vicar of
Holy Trinity, Hull.

IT is not easy to fulfil the terms of the subject allotted to me, because it is largely hypothetical. If N.A. 84 be adopted, what will be the effect? but if it be largely amended, what further effect? Again, if it be not used by large sections of Evangelical Churchmen, what effect can there be, except to accentuate their divergence from their brethren? And further if, where it is used, it is regarded as being of a temporary and transitory nature, then what effect will its use in the meantime have on the permanent book to be adopted say twenty years hence?

In spite, however, of so much that is hypothetical, there are three points that are to be reckoned on as certainties:

I. *Very many Evangelical Churchmen will use it.* It is idle to suppose that the *odium theologicum* will prevent the large body of younger Evangelicals from making use of its provisions, and any thought of counting on that may, in my judgment, be dismissed. Even if it be amended by the E.C.U. Report, it will still largely be used, at least you cannot count on any innate antagonism that would automatically prevent this. The fact is that, for better or for worse, innate antagonisms have largely died among the better type of Churchmen; a wider view of the universe and a deeper study of