

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

THE CHURCHMAN

October, 1924

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Prayer Book Revision—Latest Developments.

SINCE the last issue of THE CHURCHMAN several important decisions have been made by the House of Clergy in connection with the Revision of the Prayer Book. The chief of these is in regard to the Reservation of the Elements. The Committee which drew up the Report on Revision for the Church Assembly (N.A. 60) was very sharply divided on this question. A strong minority, consisting of Sir Edward Clarke, Mr. H. C. Hogan, Sir G. A. King, Mr. Albert Mitchell and Dr. Eugene Stock, made a strong stand against the introduction of rubrics permitting Reservation on the grounds that "Notwithstanding the care with which those rubrics had 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." In spite of this protest a rubric was inserted in the form for the Communion of the Sick, providing that "when the Holy Communion cannot reverently or without grave difficulty be celebrated in private, and also when there are several sick persons in the Parish desirous to receive the Communion on the same day, it shall be lawful for the Priest (with the consent of the sick person or persons) on any day when there is a celebration of the Holy Communion in the Church to set apart so much of the consecrated Bread and Wine as shall serve the sick person (or persons), and so many as shall communicate with him (if there be any). And the open Communion ended, he shall, on the same day, and with as little delay as may be, go and minister the same. If the consecrated Bread and Wine be not taken immediately to the sick person,

they shall be kept in such place, and after such manner as the Ordinary shall direct, so that they be not used for any other purpose whatsoever."

When the subject came before the House of Clergy one of the chief features of the discussion was the frank avowal, by Dr. Darwell Stone, on behalf of the Anglo-Catholics, that they desired Reservation not merely for the Communion of the Sick, but as a help to prayer and devotion. The Reserved Sacrament should, in their view, be the centre not only for private prayer, but for such forms of service as might seem right to those desiring to engage in them. In answer to direct inquiry, Dr. Stone said that although he had not used the word "Adoration" it exactly expressed their wish in regard to the Reserved Sacrament.

Notwithstanding this clear avowal of the ultimate aim of the Anglo-Catholic section, the House of Clergy passed the following rubrics which are to take the place of the sixth rubric after the Communion Service :

"According to long existing custom in the Catholic Church, the Priest may reserve so much of the Consecrated Gifts as may be required for the Communion of the Sick, and others who could not be present at the celebration in Church ; and for this purpose only."

"The Consecrated Bread and Wine so reserved shall be reserved, kept and administered in all respects in accordance with such rules as shall be framed from time to time by the Archbishops and Bishops of the Province or with Canons lawfully passed by the Convocation of the Province, and (subject to such Rules and Canons) with the directions of the Bishop ; nor shall any part of the Consecrated Bread and Wine be reserved, kept, or administered otherwise than as may be prescribed by such Rules, Canons and Directions."

Can Reservation be Safeguarded from Abuse ?

Some have expressed satisfaction with this decision on the ground that it confines Reservation to the purpose of communion, and excludes any other use, and that the reservation is to be controlled by the Bishops acting as a body and not individually. This, they think, will be in harmony with the practice of the Primitive Church as indicated in the often-quoted passage from Justin Martyr ; it will make adequate provision for the need that some assert exists for Reservation in large poor parishes, and it will preclude the introduction of the cultus of the Sacrament and the distinctive devotions

of the Roman Church. If the decision of the House of Clergy is accepted by the whole body of the National Assembly and adopted by the House of Bishops, the Church of England will for the first time since the Reformation allow a practice for which there is little evidence during the first thousand years of the Church's life, and was developed with the doctrine of Transubstantiation (cf. Mr. Albert Mitchell's pamphlet on Reservation).

But the practical question which the Church has to face at the present time is—Can the Reservation of the Elements be safeguarded from abuse? Can it be confined solely to the purpose of the Communion of the Sick? Experience already shows that where the practice has been illegally introduced, it has always been accompanied by this use for purposes of devotion. It was asserted during the discussion in the House of Clergy that "private devotions" before the Reserved Elements cannot be controlled. Those who desire to say their prayers before the Tabernacle cannot be forbidden. Since the discussion an attempt has been made to draw a distinction between "private and public veneration." It is said that it may not be possible to interfere with the private practice of individuals, but that public or corporate acts of devotion can be forbidden. Are we seriously asked to believe that if it is the practice of members of our Church to offer their prayers privately before the Elements, it will be possible for long to resist the demand even already being made for public services such as those of Exposition and Benediction in the Church of Rome? That is a slope upon which there is no resting-place. Concede Reservation for the Communion of the Sick, and the Reserved Elements will be used for private devotion, and soon no distinction will be drawn between private and public devotion. No case has been made for Reservation for the sick, and in our opinion the Church will be wise to maintain its present practice, and refuse to authorize Reservation for any purpose whatever. In view of the demands of the extremists this is the only practicable course.

The Chasuble and the Doctrine of Sacrifice.

Another important decision of the House of Clergy at the July Session was the permission to use the Chasuble in the celebration of Holy Communion. If this change is confirmed by the Church Assembly it will mean a definite alteration in the attitude of the

Church of England in regard to the nature of the sacrifice in the Holy Communion. Professor Burkitt, in his valuable pamphlet on Eucharist and Sacrifice, showed clearly that the only sacrifice recognized in our Communion Service is "that the congregation, having confessed, been shriven, having 'assisted' at a due consecration of the bread and wine, and finally having received their own portion, do then and there offer unto God themselves, their souls and bodies, to be a reasonable sacrifice."

The use of the Chasuble is sought by those who freely proclaim that they are not satisfied with this view of sacrifice. They teach that in the Communion Service there is an offering of Christ present in or under the forms of Bread and Wine as a propitiatory sacrifice to God the Father. This is the teaching of the Roman Church, which holds that the sacrifice thus offered is available for the dead as well as the living, and that the Priest has thus the power of releasing souls in Purgatory on whose behalf Masses are offered, from the pains that they are suffering. This doctrine of sacrifice leads on inevitably to Masses for the dead.

The Chasuble as the Symbol of Charity.

Sir William Joynson-Hicks in a letter to *The Times* pointed out this distinctively Roman significance of the use of the Chasuble. He was taken to task by the Bishop of Ripon, who maintained that the Chasuble was not "definitely and specifically characteristic of the Church of Rome." The *Guardian* also endeavoured to represent Sir William as ignorant regarding the significance of the Vestment. It said: "There is nothing sacrificial about the Chasuble. The symbolical significance attached to it in the Latin form of ordination is that it represents charity." This is a plea frequently put forward. Recently Dr. Strawley has brought it forward on several occasions, but the misrepresentation contained in it has often been exposed. Several Roman Catholic authorities can be quoted to show conclusively that the Chasuble is given to the priests of that Church at their ordination solely to signify that they have had conferred on them the power of offering the sacrifice of the Mass, and that they are to wear it only when engaged in offering that sacrifice. There is also abundant testimony that those who have introduced the use of the Chasuble into our Communion Service have intended to symbolize by it the Eucharistic sacrifice. If "charity" were alone

symbolized we might well ask with one speaker in the House of Clergy: Why disturb the peace of the Church and cause divisions to introduce a garment intended to symbolize "Charity"?

Great Issues involved in Small Decisions.

There are, of course, some in the Church who regard it as "small minded" to raise objections to such things as the wearing of a particular vestment or the Reservation of the Elements. We would, however, remind them that some of the greatest issues in the history of the Church have depended upon decisions relating to apparently trivial matters. We need only recall the sneer with which some have spoken of a controversy over a diphthong, yet on the difference between "oi" and "ou" depended the whole Catholic faith as to the divinity of our Lord. In the present instance it is the whole conception of God and His worship that is at stake. If we believed that these changes meant a loftier conception of God, or a higher ideal of worship, we should give them our hearty assent. But on the contrary we believe that they represent a falling away from the true conception of God that our Church has maintained for several centuries. The Reformation meant a completely new and nobler idea of God and of man's relation to Him: the present changes reveal a tendency to sink back to lower, and we may add medieval, views. The study of personality—human and divine—which has been so greatly emphasized in recent years, ought to have saved us from such retrogression. But religion, like everything in which the human element plays a part, is subject to grievous reactions.

The sub-Christian Level.

Some of these facts were well brought out by the Dean of Bristol in a letter to *The Times* on the Reservation discussion. He emphasized the "Scripturalness" of the Church of England, and the fact that the presence of Christ is in the Communion, and that it is as Communicants we offer the only "eucharistic sacrifice" which is "ourselves, our souls and bodies." His chief point is that "with fidelity to the original conception of the Holy Communion is bound up the Christian conception of religion, because any other undermines the Christian conception of God." He refers to the danger of a relapse to a sub-Christian level in the devotional standards of the Church of England. That is the great central fact of the whole

problem to many to-day. The Church of England appears in the face of the light of centuries, of the experience of generations of Christians of the highest type, to be willing to relapse to a sub-Christian level, and to depart from the purity of the faith won at so great a cost in the ages past. We are not surprised that the Dean of Bristol speaks of such a relapse as "treason to far more than even national interests." The highest interests of morality and truth are at stake. We are eager that the Church of England should take its place in the van in the forward march, but this cannot be if it is willing at the dictation of a small minority to relapse into Medievalism.

Looking to the Bishops.

We look to the Bishops to save the Church from this fate. On them will shortly rest the responsibility of deciding the final form of our revised Prayer Book. If they accept these alterations a cry of disappointment will go up from the lips of hundreds of thousands of loyal Churchmen. Have the Bishops the courage to maintain the old truths of our Church? Some seem to think that they are terrorized by the Anglo-Catholic section; that the policy of "squeezing the Bishops" taught by a distinguished member of that order has been carried out so effectively that each individual Bishop dare not face the pressure of organized opposition in his own diocese. We do not believe this of the Bishops. No doubt they are willing to make compromises for the sake of peace, but where fundamental truth is concerned they will surely stand firm at all costs. It is not for us to suggest the proper line of action for them to adopt, but it has been suggested in high quarters that it is time that they gave up individual efforts in dealing with these matters, and arrived at some decision as to their corporate action. The decisions thus arrived at should be impartially but firmly enforced so that some measure of order may be restored in the Church. Those who are unwilling to submit should then have no alternative but to join another communion where they would be more at home.

Truth and Unity.

Sooner or later our Church will be faced by the problem of deciding for Truth or for Unity. The idea entertained by some that the unity of Christendom can be achieved by the inclusion of contradictory doctrines and conflicting ideals is impracticable. We are

anxious to go as far as any in widening the comprehensiveness not only of the Church of England, but of the great world-wide communion embraced in the vision of a reunited Christendom. But the claims of Truth are insistent and must be respected. At present there seems to be a tendency to regard compromise as the chief means of unity. This can only arise from a loose hold on principles, and a failure to realize the importance of fundamental truths. Free play may be readily accorded on all points that are matters of speculative interest, but below all these there is a basis of belief necessary for the very existence of the Church. We cannot on the one hand allow Rationalism to explain away the Resurrection, nor on the other permit a false Catholicism to fetter reason by the claims of an infallible Pope, and a Church organization based largely on forged decretals. The Church requires a simple faith in the fundamental truths of Christianity, and an adequate organization untrammelled by obsolete theories, and capable of expansion and development in order that the truth may be passed on pure and unsullied.

The Alternative Communion Offices.

Very few people are able to carry in their mind the various proposals put forward in C.A. 84 and by the House of Clergy for the Revision of the Communion Office as compared with our existing Office. They need a conspectus that will enable them to see for themselves by comparison the real character of the changes and how far doctrine is involved in the alterations. Changes are not proposed in such a solemn rite for the mere sake of change. Something much deeper is at stake and every word tells. Dr. A. C. Downer has conferred a boon on Churchmen by setting forth in *The Alternative Communion Offices* (Church Book Room, 2s.) the proposals made in C.A. 84 and those put forward by the House of Clergy. He has added to their indebtedness by appending a number of Notes that make plain the issues involved in the changes. He calls attention to much that has been overlooked and shows that conceptions absent from our Book of Common Prayer but present in the Medieval Service Books are found in the new proposals. Bishop Knox in a suggestive Preface states that while the proposals for a new consecration prayer in C.A. 84 might have been welcomed by some High Churchmen in the seventeenth and

eighteenth centuries, they are now accompanied by other changes which give the prayer a meaning that would have been repudiated by these divines. It is not by piecemeal consideration that the proposals must be judged. When taken as a whole their seriousness is so great, that they constitute a revolution in our conception of the doctrine of the Holy Communion. We hope that this book will have a very wide circulation.

The New Bishop of Birmingham.

It would be interesting to know what influences were brought to bear upon the Prime Minister to induce him to nominate Canon Barnes for the Bishopric of Birmingham, for it can hardly be supposed that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald made the appointment on his sole initiative. But then it is very rarely that Prime Ministers do so act in the matter of Crown appointments, although some have proved themselves much less pliable than others. It will be recalled that when the method of appointment of bishops was under discussion in the Church Assembly, the Archbishop of Canterbury playfully remarked that if a burglar broke into Lambeth Palace and opened a certain drawer, he, at least, would soon see that the Prime Minister was by no means the only person concerned in the appointments to the Episcopal Bench, and it can hardly be doubted that the Primate is the one man in all England whom Premiers would most desire to consult. How far his Grace's hand can be discerned in the appointment of Canon Barnes to the Bishopric of Birmingham must, of course, be purely a matter of conjecture. It would be idle to pretend, however, that the elevation of Canon Barnes to the Episcopate has won anything like general approval among Churchmen. The *Church Times*, on first hearing the rumour, was singularly outspoken in its opposition, and, although in a subsequent leader it somewhat modified the strength of its language, there can be little doubt that the appointment is not at all to the mind of Anglo-Catholics. It would be surprising if it were, for the new bishop has more than once publicly expressed views which are not at all favourable to their distinctive teachings. Nor is the appointment one which satisfies the general body of Evangelicals, a large and important section of whom view with the utmost dismay his Modernist tendencies. It has been affirmed that he is not an "advanced" Modernist, and that is probably

true, but his sermon at this year's gathering of the Modern Churchmen's Conference, preached after his appointment to Birmingham, and some other later utterances, make it plain that his views on the story of Creation and his general attitude towards the Holy Scriptures are not those which find favour with the great majority of Evangelicals. It must readily be admitted, however, that he is a man of great learning and capacity and that, personally, he has great charm of manner, but how far these qualities will make up for the absence of any wide parochial experience such as ought to be, at least, one of the qualifications of a Bishop, remains to be seen. Those who know him best are assured that he will make a good bishop, and there seems every indication that Churchmen in Birmingham will offer him a cordial welcome. Whilst on the subject of appointments to Bishoprics, we take leave to remind the powers that be that the Evangelical section of the Church has claims to recognition which are not sufficiently realized. Evangelical Churchmen have a distinct and very important contribution to make to the thought, life and work of the Church, and they ought to be represented among the Bishops in both the Southern and Northern Provinces in sufficient numbers to make that contribution effective.

"English Modernism."

The views of the new Bishop of Birmingham are sufficiently set out in the essay he contributed to the volume *Liberal Evangelicalism*, and more recently he has contributed articles on "English Modernism" to the *St. Martin's Review*. It is, perhaps, only fair to him that we should quote the closing words of his concluding article in the September issue. After affirming that "as Christianity becomes once again intellectually respectable, the main hindrance to its revival will be removed"—a highly controversial proposition, but let that pass—he goes on to defend the position of "English Modernists" as follows:—

It is sometimes suggested that Modernists are engaged in the placid enjoyment of religious puzzles with aloof indifference to the needs and trials of common men. It is true that in Holland, America and elsewhere there are some modernist theologians who seem to delight in destructive theories that are often fantastic. But English Modernism has a different character. Of all our leaders it may be fairly said that they seek so to present the gospel

of Christ that it may be re-established as the basis of our civilization. They preach God, as Christ revealed Him; the Creator Whose plan and rule of the world perplexes us and—yet—our Father. They bid men be loyal to the Spirit of Christ, for only by such loyalty can man be completely true to the purpose for which he was created. And they give substance to the hope of everlasting life; for, unless this hope be sure and certain, earth's evolutionary history is unintelligible and man's spiritual consciousness is the gift of a merely freakish Giver. Such teaching is both coherent and rational. Far from being a mere tissue of negations, it is a positive and inspiring faith. Those who formulate it differ in many details of belief. Some, more than others, are agnostic with regard to questions of subsidiary importance. But, as Lightfoot used to say, it is enough to be sure of a few great truths. Men of little minds crave for unattainable certainties because their grasp of essentials is weak. The great man, like Newton, is always humble in the presence of Nature and of God. Our men of science can teach us many things and, not least among them, to recognize with humility the extent of our ignorance and to have faith in truth.

“Inconceivably Irreverent and Foolish.”

These words “inconceivably irreverent and foolish” are applied by the Rev. F. W. Puller, S.S.J.E., in a letter which appears in the August number of *Theology* addressed to “Dear Mr. X,” who asked his opinion on the practice of Communion under one kind only. The letter is one of great interest and is absolutely fatal to the contention of those—and unfortunately they are many—who are pleading for administration of the Bread only, and not the Bread and the Wine, in the Holy Communion. The practice prevails in the Church of Rome, and members of the school of English Churchmen so-called, whose one ambition seems to be to follow Rome as closely as possible, are seeking to introduce the practice amongst us. The present writer once saw administration in one kind at a week-day service of Holy Communion, and if we may judge from Mr. Puller's letter, the practice is much more common than it is generally supposed to be. But, whatever may be the case in public services, there seems reason to fear that it is becoming increasingly the case to “reserve” one only of the two Sacramental Elements, with the result that in communicating the sick with the “Reserved Sacrament” only one kind is administered to the patient, even though he may be physically fit to receive in both kinds. Mr. Puller admits that he would be ready himself “to communicate people

under one kind, if they were physically incapable of receiving under both kinds, but *could* receive under one kind " ; for the rest, however, he is strongly opposed to the practice. His words are so striking that it will be convenient to quote them, even though the passage is rather long :—

The Holy Eucharist is the central Mystery of the Christian life during the present dispensation. Everything connected with it is enveloped in Mystery. Some of its effects are indeed more or less clearly revealed, but there must be a great deal which will not be known until after our Lord's return. In the meantime, the only safe course for the Church is to adhere strictly to what our Lord has taught us about it by His words and by His actions. Any attempt to apply human logic to something so far beyond our ken, is to court disaster. For example, to say that there can be no need for priests who are not celebrating, and for other clerks and all lay people, to receive the Chalice when they communicate, because the precious Blood is present by concomitance with the Lord's Body in the sacred Host seems to me *to be inconceivably irreverent and foolish*. (*Italics are ours.*) I am referring, of course, to the opinion which has become common among Latin theologians since the latter part of the eleventh century.

During the first thousand years and for some time later, the Church faithfully adhered in the Celebration and Administration of the Eucharist to our Lord's teaching and practice. Early in the twelfth century some few Bishops began to introduce a new custom of communicating the laity with a Host which had been dipped in the Chalice, instead of allowing them to drink from the Chalice. Paschal II, who was the Roman Pope from 1099 to 1118, hearing of this novelty wrote to Pontius, the Abbot of Cluny and Superior-General of the whole Cluniac Order. He begins by quoting a passage from St. Cyprian's letter to Cæcilius, another North African Bishop, in which St. Cyprian teaches that in the Celebration of the Eucharist nothing should be done which should be different from what the Lord first did for us. Having quoted the words of the illustrious Bishop of Carthage, Pope Paschal goes on to say : " Therefore, in agreement with the teaching of Cyprian, let the tradition established by the Lord be adhered to, when His Body and Blood are being received, and let no man-made novelty bring about a departure from that which Christ our Master both commanded to be done, and Himself did. For we know that our Lord delivered first the Bread and afterwards the Wine ; and we teach and command that that custom should always be observed in Holy Church, excepting only in the case of infants and persons in extreme illness, who may be totally unable to swallow the Bread " (*Migne's Patrologia Latina*, vol. clxiii., col. 442). I quote this passage, not because its main argument bears directly on communicating people under one kind, but because Pope Paschal bases his argument on the wrongness of departing in any degree

from what our Lord Himself did and commanded to be done, when He was instituting the Eucharist.

These are wise and weighty words, and we trust they will have influence with pro-Roman Churchmen, who, whilst they are impervious to all outside influences, may yet take heed to the words of a friend. It will be an intolerable scandal if "communion under one kind" ever find a place within the Church of England.

"The Church of To-morrow."

The Church Congress at Oxford—a re-visit after an interval of sixty-two years—opened on September 30 and is being continued during the first three days of this month. The title of the subject of the discussions, "The Church of To-morrow," has mystified some people, but a little reflection will show how eminently useful the careful consideration of such a problem might be. Whether the papers at Oxford will fulfil all that is expected of them cannot yet be determined, but judging from the names of the appointed readers and speakers, the Congress should be a useful one. The programme is on the whole a bold one, and it should be extraordinarily interesting to hear what is said on such subjects as "What Youth asks of the Church" and "What the Church asks of Youth." Another subject of great importance which will be discussed at length is "Children and the Church," for the children of to-day will be or should become the Churchpeople of to-morrow. The weightier matters to be discussed include "Problems of Faith; Worship and Conduct"; and "The Appeal of the Faith—Re-affirmation and Re-Statement." "The Hope of To-morrow" will be centred on "Christ the Saviour," and "Christ the King"; and "The Church of To-morrow" will give opportunity for dealing with its world-wide extension and its ultimate unity.

* * * * *

The Rev. G. T. Spriggs, Box 66, Kensington, P.E.I., Canada, writes to the National Church League that some unknown friend is sending some copies of the *Church Gazette* and the *Churchman* to his old address, Alberton, P.E.I., and he would be grateful if the League would draw the donor's attention to the fact that he has left his old address. He adds that he appreciates very much receiving the literature and wants to thank the friend. Will the kind donor please note the change of address?