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MEDIÆVALIST RESTORATIONS.

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A SCOTTISH friend of mine, a man of solid theological attainments and wide sympathies, whose works are in demand on this side of the Tweed, expressed himself thus to me in a recent letter. He said, "I find it difficult to get inside the mind of the Anglo-Catholic, and am therefore, I suppose, incompetent to do full justice to what they stand for." The difficulty is felt by very many of us who have been brought up within the Church of England. We are puzzled by the mental characteristics of our brethren who call themselves "Anglo-Catholics," and we cannot tell exactly what they stand for.

We know well what the older Anglo-Catholics stood for—the men whose works are collected in the Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology. Many of us occupy much the same theological position as Andrewes and Pearson and Bull and Wilson, the difference being such only as is caused by the corrections in their theology which have been brought about by the more advanced knowledge of the Bible and of God's works and ways in the visible universe, which has been gained in our days. We still use the word "Catholic" in the sense in which these men used it, the sense in which it is used in the Creeds. But the "Catholicism" of the new school baffles us. We are given no definition of it. All we know is that it is not exactly that of the Church of Rome, for the word "Anglo" is set over against "Roman." We can only infer what these of our brethren mean by "Catholic" from their general teaching and policy. The assumption on which they teach and act seems to be that whatever was accepted by the Church of England prior to the Reformation, or, at any rate, in later mediæval times, is true and right. Why this should be so—why there should be a quasi-infallibility attaching to the religious beliefs and practices of our English forefathers prior to the Reformation—most of us cannot understand, and no serious attempt is made to explain it to us. We are obliged to deduce a belief in such a quasi-infallibility from the policy that is being pursued in all parts of the Church of England and from the fashions in doctrine and ritual which have set in among us.

It is not merely the things that are done, but the methods by which they are done, that cause us perplexity, not only on intellectual but also on moral grounds.

Foremost among the restorations that are taking place is the Mass. The name is used, the doctrine is taught, and very largely the ritual is adopted. Naturally one asks one's self at once, how can this be done in view of the fact, as stated by Bishop Creighton,

that "one of the cardinal points insisted upon at the Reformation was the restoration of the primitive conception of the Holy Communion for the mediæval conception of the Mass"? Without all doubt, that change is embodied in the Prayer Book and Articles, and every clergyman of the Church of England is obliged to declare, before being instituted or licensed to any benefice or curacy, that he assents to the Prayer Book and Articles, and believes the doctrine of the Church of England therein set forth to be agreeable to the Word of God, giving the undertaking, further, that "in Public Prayer and administration of the Sacraments he will use the Form in the said Book prescribed and none other, except so far as shall be ordered by lawful authority."

The Report of the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline, 1906, is very emphatic on this latter obligation. It gives a list of practices which are "distinguished as being of special gravity and significance," the first of these being "the interpolation of the prayers and ceremonies belonging to the Canon of the Mass." Of such practices it is said, "They have an exceptional character as being marked by all the three following characteristics: (1) they are clearly inconsistent with and subversive of the teaching of the Church of England as declared by the Articles and set forth in the Prayer Book; (2) they are illegal; and (3) their illegality cannot with any reason be held to depend upon judgments of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, or to be affected by any view taken of the constitutional character of that tribunal." The first of the final recommendations of the Report is that the practices so referred to should "be promptly made to cease by the exercise of the authority belonging to the Bishops and, if necessary, by proceedings in the Ecclesiastical Courts," the opinion being given that it is "unnecessary and undesirable to postpone proceedings until the reforms which we have recommended in connection with the Final Court of Appeal in Ecclesiastical Causes and the Diocesan and Provincial Courts can be carried into effect."

Notwithstanding this warning and recommendation, the practices referred to have of late been much upon the increase, and "the interpolation of the prayers and ceremonies belonging to the Canon of the Mass" has become the established custom in very many churches. In some churches, where there is no departure from the language of the Communion Office, ceremonies are in use which "belong to the Canon of the Mass." The effect of this is to give to the service the general character of the Mass, especially when the chasuble and corresponding vestments are used, and it is gravely disturbing to those who hold *ex animo* the Eucharistic doctrine of the Prayer Book and Articles.

Supposing we could find a satisfactory answer to the question how men can make solemn declarations and promises with respect to the services of the Church and yet disregard them, there would remain the further question: Why is this ritual introduced from the Canon of the Mass? Does it mean that the doctrine corresponding to the ritual is held by those who introduce it? It seems to be

held by many, and it is certainly taught in the literature circulated by the new "Anglo-Catholics." But apparently it is not held by all. Canon Goudge, the Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, has stood forward as a champion of the "Anglo-Catholics"; but in the course of a correspondence in *The Times* last year he admitted that there was "nothing in which the Reformers were more entirely right than in wishing to turn the Mass into a Communion," and he added, "I agree also that the mediæval conception of propitiation in the Mass was 'in the main pagan rather than Christian.'" What justification can be found then for the revival of ceremonies which have the effect of turning back the Communion into the Mass and suggest a conception of propitiation which "is in the main pagan rather than Christian"?

It may yet be asked: Why trouble about mere ceremonies, which are, at any rate, ancient and picturesque? The answer is—and it takes us down to fundamental things—because worship with such ceremonies suggests a conception of the Divine nature which is not in accordance with the Christian Revelation. It is not adapted to the thought of the God Who "was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." I cannot dwell on this point here. I have dealt with it recently in a little book to which I may be allowed to refer.¹

With the re-conversion of the Communion into the Mass has come in the mediæval distinction between "Low Mass" and "High Mass"—low Mass for Communion and High Mass for worship apart from reception. Where the word "Mass" is not used the distinction is marked by the terms "Holy Communion" for an early service and "Sung Eucharist" for a choral celebration. Of course the terms are misapplied. Every Communion is a Eucharist and every Eucharist must be a Communion. It is another instance of the misuse of words which is incidental to this mediævalist movement. Anyhow, people are taught to receive the Holy Communion at 8, and, mostly omitting Matins, to attend a Sung Eucharist in addition, later. Of course a Sung Eucharist is quite correct in itself. The rubric in the Communion Office prescribes that certain parts of the service "shall be said or sung." Many of us have for years been accustomed to choral Communions, though without interpolations such as the Benedictus and the Agnus Dei, which tend to make the service Christo-centric—a theologically improper thing and certainly contrary to the teaching of Christ about the relations between Himself and the Father. The reactionary alteration is to call upon people to attend the Sung Eucharist for the purpose of "assisting at the Sacrifice" and for worship, with a discouragement from communion, indulgence being perhaps allowed to the aged and infirm.

In practice it is found that an increasing number of persons come to this service without having communicated earlier in the day, and thus the unprimitive and non-Catholic usage of non-communicating attendance, which was discountenanced even by

¹ *The Word and Sacraments* (Basil Blackwell, Ltd.), 13.

the Council of Trent, is coming again into fashion. We know well how widely prevailing was this usage in the Middle Ages.

This particular mediæval restoration is especially hard upon older people who cannot attend a plain service in the early morning, and may communicate only under conditions which are distasteful to them and a positive hindrance to their devotions. It is not infrequently said indeed by those who bring about these restorations that they personally are not mindful of the old: the old must make the best of things in this time of transition: it is the young whom they are out to influence. So the young are instructed to make a great point of attending the Sung Eucharist, watching intently all that is done at the altar. Choir boys, when they outgrow the choir, are trained to take an active part in the Mass or Sung Eucharist as servers. We were told at first that this was for their sakes, to keep them attached to the Church by giving them something to do. It turned out, however, that the primary object of enrolling them as servers was to provide a body of young men who, with the clergy, could go through the evolutions at the altar prescribed by the Canon of the Mass. Youths of this class are being encouraged to take Holy Orders, their views being thus formed for them while they are at an impressionable age and have no fair chance of learning what the doctrinal position of the Church of England really is.

The revived use of the chasuble, which necessarily goes with the restoration of the Mass, is commended to us on grounds which leave out of account the main reason. It is for the sake of continuity, we are told—continuity with the Church of the past; but the continuity thus set up is with the Church of England of the mediæval period, and it makes a breach with the customs of the post-Reformation period which brought us into line again with the usage of the Primitive Church.¹ We find, however, that the principal reason for the revival of the use of the chasuble is its association with the Mass. There are some religious orders in the Church of England with whom, apparently, the use of the chasuble is *de rigueur*. This seems to be for the sake of conformity with the mediæval or Roman rule of "no chasuble, no Mass." Professor Sir William Ridgeway traced this rule to the use of the wizard's cloak as a garment having a special virtue attaching to it, so that the wizard must put it on before performing his incantations.

It may be noticed here that changes have been made in the appointments of some of our cathedrals and larger ancient churches to suit this restoration of High Mass. An altar is placed in the nave just opposite the rood-screen. We have been told that these altars are intended to solemnize the thoughts of visitors to these churches and to promote their reverent behaviour; but we have discovered since that they are intended for use at early services when there are many communicants, the Holy Table in the choir or chancel, now called the High Altar, being reserved for use at High Mass or the Sung Eucharist only. Of course, in the early

¹ See *The Word and Sacraments*, p. 56.

Church there was but one altar or Holy Table in any church, which has been the rule ever since in the East. It is a legal pronouncement that the same usage for the Church of England is clearly contemplated in the rubrics and the 82nd canon. The altars, which had been multiplied in the Middle Ages, in special association with the growing cult of the saints, were removed by authority in 1550.¹

Another mediæval restoration is the wafer. It was introduced pretty generally during the War and commended to people on the ground that it was made of pure flour—not the unpleasant and unwholesome flour in common use then. It was pointed out at the time that the Government had specially sanctioned the use of pure flour for bread to be used at the Sacrament. That, however, was ignored, and the innovation was persisted in. Now the argument is used that when there are large numbers of communicants common bread is inconveniently bulky. Many of us for long years have been in the habit of administering to hundreds of persons at the service of Holy Communion, and we never were conscious of such an inconvenience. Again we are obliged to conclude that the real reason for the use of the wafer is different from what is alleged.

Just let it be remarked here how the beautiful and suggestive symbolism in the Holy Communion is impaired when the wafer is substituted for ordinary bread taken direct from the loaf. "We, who are many, are one bread, one body: for we all partake of the one loaf."² It is emphatically not a catholic practice, this substitution of the wafer for ordinary bread. Dr. Fortescue, a Roman Catholic, says: "All the earlier writers, in East and West, speak of the bread as the ordinary kind, which then, as now, was leavened." The wafer has never been in use in the Eastern Church.

It must be remarked here that the use of the wafer is, as yet, illegal in the Church of England. The House of Clergy has recommended that it should be sanctioned as an alternative to common bread, but at present it is "settled as law that pure wheat bread, such as is usually eaten, is the only substance which can legally be used as bread in the holy Sacrament."³ The decision of the Privy Council on the subject was largely influenced by the fact that "when Cosin and others in 1662 desired to insert words making the wafer also legal they were rejected."

There are many churches now where the Holy Communion cannot be partaken of in the form prescribed by the law. In some cathedrals members of Church Societies of different schools of thought attending corporate Communion at occasional gatherings must partake of wafers or not at all, or if their request that they may follow the legal use is granted the concession is made grudgingly and reluctantly.

A word may be said here about the crucifix, which is being introduced into many churches and church buildings. People are being told that if they do not like the crucifix they need not look at

¹ See Scudamore, *Notitia Eucharistica*, pp. 168-72.

² 1 Cor. x. 17 (R.V. margin).

³ G. J. Talbot, *Modern Decisions on Ritual*, p. 140.

it. It is not exactly that the crucifix is disliked. It is rather that in the minds of many there is a doubt as to its propriety as a religious symbol. The Christians of the earliest centuries shrank from the representation of Christ as undraped—they shrank indeed at first from any representation of Christ at all. Generally, up to the eleventh century the figure was tunic-clad, and there are good grounds, which could not well be mentioned here, for not deviating from that rule now. But, apart from this, the crucifix as an object of devotional contemplation must tend to stereotype in the minds of those who so use it, one act—though a supreme one—of Christ and one phase of His work and life, with the result that His continued activity and ever-present influence may comparatively be lost to mind. When Christ was first depicted—as in the catacombs—it was in the character of the Good Shepherd, that is, as One Who gave up His life for His sheep and ever lives to succour them. The crucifix, moreover, emphasizes the victory on Calvary of the powers of darkness over Christ, while it suggests no thought of His subsequent triumph over those powers. Mr. H. G. Wells has spoken for others besides non-professing Christians in saying, “We cannot accept the Christian’s crucifix. Our crucifix, if you must have a crucifix, would show God with a hand or foot already torn away from its nail, and with eyes not downcast, but resolute against the sky. A Christianity which showed for its daily symbol Christ risen and trampling gloriously upon a broken cross, would be far more in the spirit of our worship.” It may be remarked that the objections mentioned do not apply to the cross without the figure.

With the revived use of the crucifix may be associated the practice of re-introducing images of the early saints into our churches and the representation of mediæval saints in stained glass windows. Till recently the subjects of our stained glass were taken from the Bible, this custom corresponding with our Anglican use of commemorating in our Church services the New Testament saints only. The revived mediæval practice tends to divert attention from the New Testament type of piety to the mediæval type with its exaggerations and defects. Incidentally it has the effect of familiarizing Church worshippers with the mediæval vestments. Of course it is a proper thing to keep in remembrance the saints of an older day, from whose lives there are valuable lessons still to be learnt; but the form which this recent revival has taken, besides concentrating attention on mediæval examples of piety, tends to draw the attention away from the examples of the later saints, with their greater enlightenment and broader humanity. Of these, too, we know a great deal more than we do of the earlier saints, whose real life stories are often lost in the mist of legend.

Of course in what has been said about these mediæval restorations no implication is intended that there is little to admire or to cherish in the religion of pre-Reformation days. Our Anglican Reformers, as all well know, were most anxious to preserve whatever was good and true in the religious beliefs and practices of their and

our forefathers, and their aim was to discard only what was tainted with superstition and had led to notorious abuses.

Surveying thus the new "Anglo-Catholic" movement in its general character and effects, it is indeed difficult to understand what attractiveness it can have for men of thoughtful mind who have thoroughly assimilated the central teaching of Jesus Christ. The most energetic advocates of the movement are to be found amongst the junior clergy—amongst those especially who have been trained in Theological Colleges in which mediævalism is dominant; though it is noticeable that the more thoughtful of these younger men, as their minds become widened, tend to find their way back towards what has come to be called Central Churchmanship. So great, however, is the power of fashion and of a persistent propaganda, that there have been drawn into the movement, partly or wholly, some men of considerable scholarship and some of the higher officials of the Church. One of our Church papers which formerly stood for sound Anglicanism has lately bent to the fashion, and now, in imitation of the ethical style of another Church paper, allows itself to sneer at those who defend the doctrine of the Prayer Book and Articles. All this would be the more surprising if we did not remember that the Judaistic reaction which St. Paul had to combat affected for a time even such Apostolic leaders as St. Peter and St. Barnabas.

Notwithstanding the countenance that this movement has received, it is undeniable that it has not taken its start from any newly-discovered truth and that, in some notable respects, it does not make for righteousness. Without questioning at all the Christian zeal and devotion of many who have associated themselves with the movement, it is impossible not to be struck by the way in which it tends to warp the characters of those, at any rate, who are engaged in propagating it. One greatly fears the effect on the rank and file of Churchpeople of the crookedness and equivocation with which many of these mediævalist changes are introduced. Then, again, there have been passionate pleas for tolerance of this new form of religion; but the ruthless intolerance practised by its votaries has become a by-word throughout the country. In parish after parish earnest, devout Churchpeople have been driven away from the Lord's Table by the irregularities and illegalities practised there. The spread, too, of the spirit of lawlessness in regard to matters which have been described on authority as "subversive of the teaching of the Church of England" is a very serious portent. A leading King's Counsel in Ireland, speaking before the Catholic Truth Society recently, gave an appalling account of the condition of that country in regard to perjury, robbery, and murder, the refusal or fear to give truthful evidence being such that "the most serious and horrid crimes remain unpunished." When the spirit of lawlessness has had free course for some time in a nation or a Church it becomes a task of surpassing difficulty to exorcise it. Even after an alternative Prayer Book has come into use and the Ecclesiastical Courts have been adapted to modern demands, we may have to

wait long before there is a general return within the Church of England to the ways of law and order. The pity of it is that this disturbance and division should be brought about in the main by the revival of a doctrine of Eucharistic sacrifice which is not found in the New Testament, which is not taught in the Prayer Book or Articles, which, admittedly, is in part of pagan suggestion, and which impugns the character of God. In consequence of this revival with its accompaniments in ritual, we are at present hopelessly divided in our central act of worship. Even when occasional and exceptional provision is made in some of our churches and cathedrals which are under "Anglo-Catholic" influence, for those who prefer to take part in the Holy Communion in the form prescribed by the Church of England, there is no attempt or apparent desire to bring all together at least once in a way for corporate Communion. And in some dioceses, though the clergy at diocesan gatherings may assemble in full numbers at such a service as Evensong, they do not and cannot meet as one body in the "blest Sacrament of Unity."

For all this, which is so utterly contrary to the mind of Christ, there can be no remedy till one and all look anew to Him as the Supreme Guide of His Church in thought and conduct. There are those indeed of this new school of "Anglo-Catholics" who say that they have been following the mind of Christ as declared by His Spirit in a later day. But the Spirit of Christ cannot speak differently in the fourteenth or the twentieth century from the Christ of the Gospels. There may be developments from the early teaching, but they must be natural and proper developments, and the only test whereby it may be known that men have rightly apprehended the teaching of Christ's Spirit in later centuries is that of conformity with His recorded words. Hence the importance of the appeal to Holy Scripture as "the rule and ultimate standard of faith"; and hence, too, the importance of our Communion prayer that all "they that do confess God's Holy Name may agree in the truth of His Holy Word, and so live in unity and godly love."

"O pray for the peace of Jerusalem." In seeking that peace we must be prepared to make full provision and allowance for the varying tastes in public devotion of all sorts and conditions of men; but such provision must be within the limits of entire loyalty to the doctrine of Christ Himself, else we are departing from essential Christianity and stereotyping our divisions. I conclude with some wise and earnest words of one who is not a member of the Church of England, but wishes it well, and is anxious for its peace for the sake of its effective Christian influence on the nation. "Peace in either individual or Church life is not found when it is made an end; nor is it found when sought by secondary means. Anglicanism will not gain worthy and permanent peace merely through a desire for 'comprehensiveness' or even so excellent a thing as the spirit of 'mutual concessions.' Christian peace, for a Church as for an individual, is based on Christian truth. What seems to be lacking in many discussions in the Church of England to-day, and what is at the root of its deep divisions (which are far deeper than any in Presbyterianism or in the Evangelical Free Churches, and, indeed,

are seriously impairing the title of Anglicanism to be counted an *ecclesia docens*) is simply that that Church has not yet made up its mind about great issues of *truth* which have been faced by every other Church in Christendom, unreformed or reformed, and which—certainly in no party or one-sided way, but none the less really and plainly—must be faced before peace can be rightly prayed for and worthily won. If Anglican policy be no more than an ecclesiastical arrangement which makes room for varying and, indeed, conflicting types and traditions, it will not deserve the reward of peace. But signs are not lacking that, with thoughtful leaders in the Church of England, there is a real desire to face issues of truth and to reach a synthesis of truth; and on that the blessing of Him 'Who called Himself not tradition but Truth' may be trusted to rest." ¹

¹ Professor Carnegie Simpson, D.D., "Two Church Movements," p. 76, in *The Review of the Churches*, January, 1926.

The Message of the Lessons, by J. Anthony Wood, M.A., Rector of Witherley, formerly Fellow of the Punjab University and Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Lahore, is a series of "Short Introductions to the Lessons for Sundays and Holy Days in the Revised Lectionary" (Cambridge, W. Heffer & Sons, Ltd., 4s. 6d. net). In 1917, when the New Lectionary was drawn up, the Convocation of Canterbury recommended that the reader of the lessons should introduce them with a brief word of explanation. Mr. Wood has drawn up this series for the purpose. Canon E. S. Wood in a Foreword says that he uses them regularly in his Church, and finds them most useful. To supply a brief introduction on the spur of the moment would be beyond the powers of most clergy, and those provided in this volume are admirably suited to the need. They are concise, yet sufficiently clear and full to give the hearers a sufficient conception of the meaning and surroundings of the portion of Scripture to be read. They have been carefully thought out, and we have no doubt that they will be widely used. They are well printed, and in handy form for use at the lectern.

Bunyan's *Holy War* is not at all so well known as his *Pilgrim's Progress*. Interest in it ought to be greatly increased by the edition just issued by S.P.C.K. The Master of the Temple has abridged the original work, and in an interesting introduction gives a brief history of the book and his reasons for making the abridgment. The prolixity of the original, which extends to the title—it runs, "A Relation of The Holy War concerning the City or Town of Mansoul besieged by Diabolus, and its Final Recovery by Emmanuel"—"hardly needed any excuse in Bunyan's time, but it may be fatal in ours when readers are confronted with so many rivals for their attention that they instinctively tend to prefer the brief to the lengthy." He has therefore shortened the text without otherwise changing it so as to bring the real end of the Holy War of Mansoul more quickly into sight. The allegory is too well known to need any commendation, and in this abbreviated form it will no doubt find a much wider circle of readers.