

## THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF THE POSITION OF THE CELEBRANT IN THE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION.

BY THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP E. A. KNOX, D.D.

Ante-Communion Rubric: "*The Priest standing at the North Side of the Table shall say the Lord's Prayer.*"

THIS paper is occasioned by the report of the Cromer Convention published in the *Record* of July 5th, 1935. The Cromer Convention is a gathering of a numerous and influential section of "Evangelicals." Through its "Own Reporter" it published the fact that, in the principal Communion Service on that occasion, the Celebrant faced Eastwards throughout, and that he and his assistants wore white stoles. It was hinted also by the Reporter that the time had come for Evangelicals to reconsider their adherence to the Rubric which orders the Minister to stand at the North side of the Holy Table, that is, facing Southwards and not Eastwards. The importance of the action at Cromer lies in the fact that, hitherto, it had been a current belief among Evangelicals that the Eastward position symbolised what they held to be false Eucharistic doctrine, that is, the doctrine of Sacrifice offered, whether by continuation or re-presentation, on the Altar for the living and the dead, and that coloured stoles were associated with the same "false" ritual. Now it is true that many clergy as well as laity profess to regard all ritual as almost a matter of indifference, and adopt whatever seems to be fashionable for the time being. Others, the more thoughtful, say that whatever makes for the maximum of uniformity in public worship should be preferred. There is, we agree, much to be said for uniformity. Nothing is more undesirable than that the devotions of worshippers should be distracted by diversity of ritual. The writer of this article holds this belief so strongly that when it became his duty, as a Bishop, to officiate in Churches of very diverse doctrinal tendencies, he made it his rule to adhere to the practice of the Church in which he found himself, so far as he could do so without committing illegalities. In Churches where the Eastward position was used, he conformed to it in the manner practised by Archbishop Benson when consecrating him (see below, p. 258). It is not, therefore, any indifference to the advantages of uniformity that dictates this article, nor is it intended to be an attack upon the clergy who have, on conscientious grounds, and not for mere fashion's sake, fallen in with the custom of the Eastward position.

The adoption of the Eastward position at Cromer was not a mere following of the use of Cromer Parish Church. It is even probable that this use is not, it certainly was not, the use of that Church. It was a distinct Call to the whole body of Evangelicals

to give up the North End position—not a *deliberate* call, but, practically, a call. The subject considered at Cromer was *the Church*; the deliberations all turned on the strengthening of individual spiritual life by sharing in the common life of the whole Church. The occasion was intended to be a demonstration of Church Unity. It can hardly be doubted that one of the reasons for adopting the Eastward position was the desire to remove a barrier which divides Churches at the Holy Communion. On one side is the common practice of the Eastern Church, the Roman Catholics and the Anglo-Catholics (i.e. the Eastward position); on the other the more Conservative Evangelicals of our own Church, and some of the Reformed Churches. The brethren at Cromer determined to “symbolise” with the non-Protestants by using the Eastward position, and wearing white stoles. “Here,” we can imagine them saying, “are matters of no doctrinal significance. Let us take this step, even if it be but a small one towards unity; let us remove customs that make for division and have no serious meaning.” Had they been challenged to prove the doctrinal insignificance of their action, we can hardly doubt that they would have said that this was the law of the Church of England as laid down in the Lincoln Judgment, when Edward King, Bishop of Lincoln, was prosecuted for adopting the Eastward position, and acquitted in an elaborately reasoned and apparently learned Judgment.

To such a friendly challenge as this either of two not less friendly answers might be given. Those who retain the North End position might content themselves by quoting the words of that Judgment: “The North End position is beyond question a true liturgical use in the Church of England.” “It was for at least two hundred years practically, or actually, the sole use. The Eastward position was one of the celebrated Six Points of the Ritualists, adopted by them about the middle of the nineteenth century to undo the ritual of the Reformation, and to restore pre-Reformation uses and doctrine.” Such an answer as this would be perfectly fair, but it would carry no conviction with those who have challenged us. We should seem to them to be merely obstructive Conservatives, refusing to march in the path of progress towards unity.

The other reply is to re-examine the Lincoln Judgment, for, though it is the Judgment of a Court, it is not sacrosanct, and in the very passage where it denies the doctrinal significance of the Eastward position, it actually contemplates the possibility of revision. Here are the words:

“It will be observed that the argument under this head (i.e. the use of the Eastward position after 1662) is of a cumulative character, and that no point of the evidence is conclusive when isolated. It is the concurrence and coincidence of such indications as have been referred to that gives them force. It is possible that further research or argument may hereafter throw additional and perhaps novel light upon this somewhat obscure subject, devoid as it is of doctrinal interest.”

Now, in the sacred cause of truth, which is after all as sacred to

our friends as it is to us, we bespeak their attention to an inquiry which has convinced us : (a) That the Court in the Lincoln Judgment was misled in some of the historical evidence on which it relied. (b) That it overlooked historical evidence which pointed to the opposite conclusion. (c) That it never appreciated or even examined the grounds on which the doctrinal importance of the position of the Celebrant rests.

Even if we fail to convince those who differ from us, we shall at least establish such grounds for our belief that, unless our argument is wholly disproved, we shall make it impossible to allege that there is nothing beyond mere blind conservatism to be said against the Eastward, and in favour of the North End position of the Celebrant.

For the purpose of this examination it will be more convenient to reserve to a later point in our inquiry what we regard as the cardinal historical error of the whole Judgment, expressed plainly in the first of its conclusions that "the term the North side was introduced into the rubric of the Liturgy to meet doubts which had arisen owing to a general change in the position of the Holy Tables." Although it is true that the Holy Tables had begun to be substituted for Altars between our First Prayer Book (1549) and the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI (1552), we cannot agree that this Rubric was then introduced merely to solve a doubt or difficulty. Certainly, if that was its sole object it was a dismal failure, for the Court goes on to show that doubts and difficulties were increased rather than ended, and that, when the Holy Tables were restored to the East End, about the middle of the seventeenth century, the Bishops who had promoted this restoration solved the difficulty, so it is alleged, by *disobeying* the Rubric, by standing at the North *End* instead of the North *Side* as the Rubric ordered—nay, more, that when in 1662 they had the opportunity of removing this difficulty by substituting "End" for "Side," they did not do so. Surely this does not make sense.

We turn aside, however, for the present, from the complicated arguments of the Court as to the difficulties over the Rubric from 1552 to 1662, because they have no real bearing on the question before us. What we have to consider is this : When the Convocations in 1662 framed the Rubric by which we are governed, did they intend the North Side to be an exclusive use, and if so, in what sense, or to be an alternative use with the Eastward position ? The Court was "of opinion that a certain liberty in the application of the term existed." The argument of this article is that the Court was mistaken in the grounds on which it rested that opinion. What then were those grounds ? They may be summarised thus :

(1) That the Bishops at the Savoy Conference expressed a preference for the Eastward position.

(2) That the Bishops did not in their visitations make the Celebrant's position an article of inquiry.

(3) That engravings, contemporary and later, show books placed in the centre of the Holy Table, as though the minister would stand before them.

*First*, then, as to the Savoy Conference in 1661 on which the Court laid much stress, because the Bishops countered the Presbyterian desire that the minister should turn himself to the people throughout the whole ministration by replying that "when the minister speaks to God it is fitting that both he and the people should turn another way, as the ancient Church ever did." No doubt this answer may count as evidence that some of the Bishops preferred the Eastward position, but it is no proof that they even left room for it in the Prayer Book of 1662. What the Bishops said in the Savoy Conference is of little weight against the decisions of the Convocations when revising the Prayer Book at the end of the year 1661. The Court takes no notice of the conditions under which the Prayer Book was revised by the Convocations. Nearly four months after the Savoy Conference that Book was rushed through the Convocations in twenty days, rushed, because the House of Commons was impatient to pass the Act of Uniformity, and threatened to pass it with an unrevised Prayer Book annexed to it. Now the leaders of Prayer Book Revision in the Convocations were Cosin and Sancroft. They both desired revision in what we should call the High Church direction. But they had to remember that any vital alterations would certainly be challenged in the House of Commons, and then, as now, the idea of the revision of the Prayer Book by the House of Commons was anathema to the Convocations. On the other hand the House of Commons had no idea of being ruled by the Convocations. Professor G. M. Trevelyan, who is a recognised authority on this period, has a notable passage in his *England under Queen Anne*. He writes (p. 52):

"The Church of England was liked because she did not attempt to interfere with life, as Papist and Puritan in their different ways interfered. But when the High Churchman made clerical claims of his own over the laity, he at once aroused the same impatient temper that had destroyed successively the power of Rome, the power of Laud, and the power of the Puritans. The history of England can never be understood unless we realise the presence of another force at work besides the rival religions—the unorganised, but very real passion of anti-clericalism."

Now, bearing this point in mind, we understand readily why the Convocations did not alter the position of the Celebrant in Holy Communion. Though the High Churchmen had adopted the North End as a compromise (so the Court alleges), they had, at the Savoy Conference, put on record "their preference for the Eastward position." It was no secret that Cosin and his erstwhile chaplain, Sancroft, were the accepted guides of Prayer Book Revision in the Convocations, and that they were of the same outlook and temper as the clerical party which had so large a share in occasioning the Great Rebellion. It was not impossible to have framed a Rubric permitting the minister to stand either at the North End or facing Eastward. But such a Rubric endangered the safe passage of the Book. The Rubric of the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI (1552), repeated in the Elizabethan Prayer Book of 1559, was once more confirmed in 1662—"The Priest standing at the North Side of the Table, shall say the Lord's Prayer."

Nevertheless, the Court held that "a certain liberty in the application of the term existed."

The Court admitted that it could produce no *direct* proof of this liberty. It also entirely omitted to notice the new and exacting stringency which the Act of Uniformity in 1662 introduced into the conduct of Divine Service. It would be vain to search for any such stringency in the previous revisions. It is true that the Elizabethan Act of Uniformity required the Service to be conducted in the form in the Book prescribed and "none otherwise." But it made no inquiry into men's consciences. It required no one to express any approval of the form so long as he used it. It contained no such clause as the following: "In regard that nothing conduceth more to the settling of the Peace of the Nation . . . and to the intent that every person within this realm may certainly know the rule to which he is to conform in Public Worship." Still less did the previous Uniformity Act require "every Parson, Vicar, or other Minister whatsoever . . . openly and publicly before the Congregation assembled to declare his unfeigned assent and consent to the use of all things in the said Books contained and prescribed." For this declaration a special form of words was prescribed: "I do hereby declare my unfeigned Assent and Consent to *all and every-thing*<sup>1</sup> contained and prescribed in and by the said books."

In face of the fact that every clergyman was required by this public declaration to declare his unfeigned *assent and consent* to the Rubric: "The Minister standing at the North Side of the Lord's Table," it needs the strongest evidence to prove that every minister had liberty to add words, which not only were not in the Book, but which had also in the revision of it, been rejected—"or standing afore the Holy Table." It is singular that a Court containing among others the historian, Bishop Stubbs, should have omitted from their Judgment all mention of the Caroline Act of Uniformity and of its new and exceptional stringency. Recollection of it will lead us to examine very closely the proofs which the Court accepted as evidence of a liberty of which there is no trace in the Prayer Book.

*Second*: The Court had to acknowledge that the contemporary Commentators on the Prayer Book, Wheatley and Nicholls, not only recognised no such liberty, but even in the case of Wheatley condemned the Eastward position on the ground that the Rubric "was enjoined for no other end but to avoid the practices of the Romish Church." This reason Wheatley did not withdraw till his third edition. It practically reappeared in his seventh. Wheatley is at least evidence of the existence of this belief in learned ecclesiastical circles of his own time, the beginning of the eighteenth century. The Court, quite rightly, adduced this evidence of contemporary opinion, but failed to put into the same scale with it the accompanying weight of the stringency of the Act of Uniformity.

On the other hand, the Court relied partly on the evidence of the Bishops' and Archdeacons' Articles of Visitation: "We have extant no less than eighteen sets of articles exhibited by Bishops, and

<sup>1</sup> The italics are ours.

six by Archdeacons in visitations. Not one of these twenty-four, except Pory, refers to the minister's proper place as being at the North Side or End." The argument from silence is proverbially dangerous. If the Court had given full weight to the Act of Uniformity, it would hardly have adduced this evidence. For that Act on St. Bartholomew's Day 1662 purged the Church of all Puritans who might have been likely to neglect the Rubric. It had established uniformity in all, even the smallest minutiae. The silence of the visitation articles is, at least, open to the construction that no inquiry was made because no inquiry was any longer necessary. The one exception, Archdeacon Pory's Articles, seems to be due to his having reissued *verbatim* Bishop Juxon's Articles which were prior to the Act. The writer knows only one Bishop, and that himself, who examined his clergy on every one of the rubrics. The usual course is to inquire where there seems to be likelihood of disobedience or negligence. This support on which the Court rested does not seem to be well founded, but rather inimical to the Court's decision.

*Third*: More reliance seems to have been placed by the Court on Engravings. Of these some sixty belong to the period which concerns us, that is the period dating from the 1662 Act of Uniformity onwards. Of these, sixteen are said to show definitely Eastward position, eighteen the North Side or North End, the rest either give no indication, or more often such indications as "Eastward North of Front." To examine all of these engravings was a task beyond the writer's reach. He selected, however, for examination the one engraving which has the appearance of being specially decisive, a plate by Hollar, which is described as follows, in page 194 of E. S. Roscoe's Edition of *The Bishop of Lincoln's Case* (London, 1891):

"1662 Eastward—Two large cushions for use are in front. The Archbishop of Canterbury comes out of the North door of St. Edward's Chapel, vested in a . . . cope. The third prayer being ended, the said Archbishop standing afore the Altar began the versicle, 'Lift up your hearts.' The Archbishop having left (being aged) the Bishop of London went up to the High Altar and began the Communion" (i.e. administered).—*Coronation of Charles II* (Engraving by Hollar), pp. 176, 184 (Soc. Antiq.).

Although the Coronation of Charles II preceded the Act of Uniformity by a few months, yet the Rubric then in force was the same as that by which we are governed. The service was a service full of antique ceremonial, in which, if in any service, the tradition of the Eastward position could hardly fail to have survived. It was conducted by Bishops soon after concerned in the Savoy Conference. All these considerations tend to give it a decisive character. Also, Hollar is the artist whose plates appear in Sparrow's *Rationale of the Common Prayer* (1657); and the plates in Dr. Sparke's *Scintilla Altaris* are said to be of the Hollar type (Roscoe as above, p. 133). The question is whether these plates are historical evidence of a practice, or artistic conventions? Unfortunately the Secretary

of the London Library reports that he can find no such engraving as that above quoted in any volume of the Society of Antiquaries.

While this article was in the Press reference to the British Museum produced the same negative result. The engraving could not be traced in the volumes of the Society of Antiquaries. (The opportunity given by this consultation of the British Museum produced by the courtesy of authorities the interesting information embodied in the Postscript at the end of this Article, which is here continued with the scantier material at the writer's disposal.)

There is, however, a closely detailed record of the Coronation of Charles II in which it is recorded of the Bishop of London, who was acting for the Archbishop, that he placed himself on the North side of the Altar, (1) after the proclamation of the King, (2) after the Sermon, (3) for saying three prayers after the Litany. Not once through the whole account are we told that he stood "afore the Altar." The position taken by the Archbishop, who was not celebrating, was probably "Afore the Altar" facing Westward. This record is preserved by White Kennet (Bishop of Peterborough) in his *Register* of documents, and in Ogilvy's profusely illustrated account of the Coronation of Charles II. A folio double-page plate in the latter work shows, out of all there assembled, only the King kneeling "afore the Altar" (i.e. Eastward), apparently on a cushion, while a Bishop, saying prayers at a Faldstool on the Altar steps, faces Northward.

Hollar's evidence, when tested by historical records, cannot be said to have *historical* value, yet the Court laid it down that historical facts supply the only material known to the Court from which a just account can be formed of the meaning of the term which is the "present subject of charge." There is good reason to put a low estimate on the historical value of engravings as evidence, the more so, since hardly one of the engravings represents an *actual opening* of, or conducting, a Communion service in the Eastward position, while some of those showing the North End show a *minister standing there*.

It is especially curious that a learned Court conducting a historical inquiry missed the consecration of the four Scottish Bishops on December 15, 1661, that is, when the revision of the Prayer Book had just been practically completed by the Convocations. If, in fact, the Eastward position was intended to be an alternative, it seems hardly possible that it should not have been used at a Consecration Service conducted by four Bishops, of whom three had taken part in the Savoy Conference. These Bishops were parties to the policy of restoring Episcopacy in Scotland; they had insisted on the ordination of Leighton and Sharp as deacons and priests, taking no account of their Presbyterian ordination; they were not concealing their own preferences out of respect for Scottish predilections; they bowed to the Altar and taught the Scotsmen to do the same, to Alexander Brodie's grief and horror: while an eye-witness, the Rev. James Brown,<sup>1</sup> tells us of the Bishop of London who "had

<sup>1</sup> *Analecta Scotica*, Edinburgh, 1834. For full quotation see *Robert Leighton*, by Bishop Knox (J. Clarke, 1930), p. 176.

the action" (i.e. celebrated) that he "placed himself on the right side of the Altar, Worcester on the left." (To the Scotsman the right and left are governed by the thought of a minister behind the Table.) We should note also that this Scotsman, following current phraseology, calls the "ends" "sides."

This detailed account of the actual conduct of a service is, in fact, of crucial importance. These English Bishops preferred the East End (so the Court alleges). The Prayer Book which they had just completed was on its way to the King and to the Houses of Parliament. When, if not on that occasion, should they have demonstrated the "liberty" with which the Courts credit them? If the Eastward was a lawful position, the consecrators of the Scotsmen were traitors to their own consciences and to the liberties of the Church of England by adopting, as they unquestionably did, the North End or Side position.

A word must be said here of the Rubric before the Prayer of Consecration in which we read: "When the Priest, standing before the Table, hath so ordered the Bread and Wine, that he may with the more readiness and decency break the bread before the people, and take the Cup into his hands, he shall say the Prayer of Consecration." This was a new Rubric, not altogether new, if we take into account Laud's Scottish Liturgy, but new to our Prayer Book, in which from 1552 onward the direction had been: "Then the Priest standing up shall say, as followeth." The object of the new Rubric, as it declares, is to secure the ready and decent consecration of the Elements *before the people*. (The Puritans at the Savoy Conference had desired the "manual acts" in consecration of the Elements.) The Court attached so much importance to the manifestation of the consecrating acts, that it condemned the Bishop of Lincoln for not having had the *intention* to display them. It is not enough that there should be in the mind of the minister no intention to hide the acts. It must be his object to make them visible. In my long experience of the ministry, I came across only two ways in which the Rubric, so interpreted, could be satisfactorily obeyed. One was that the Minister facing East, having brought the vessels from the centre of the Table to the North End, himself returned to his position at the North Side, and so displayed the acts. The other was that used by Archbishop Benson at my Consecration, who used throughout the Eastward position; in the performance of the manual acts he turned from the East to the West. Here was a deliberate intention to display the acts. Having myself followed this use in Churches where the Eastward position was the rule throughout the service, I am bound to add that it was not a position which made for "more readiness." The turning round to replace the Paten, and the recital of the words, without book, facing the people, tended to great nervousness and "unreadiness." All the attempts which I have seen to display the acts by ministers facing Eastward have resulted either in concealment of the acts, or in adoption of a slantwise position, which is not rubrical, and does not make either for decency or openness. I doubt not that the



intention of the Rubric is to justify the Minister's standing before the Table, while he arranges the vessels, while it leaves him to return to the North End without specific instruction to do so, in the same way that, without instruction, he returns to it, after placing the Alms and the Bread and Wine on the Table.

It remains for us to discuss the alleged doctrinal insignificance of the Celebrant's position, the very core of the decision of the Court, a subject which I approach with sincerest reluctance, since, by implication, to maintain the doctrinal importance of the North Side position is to accuse my brethren of neglect of sound doctrine. I have no such intention. There are those who use the Eastward position because they believe it to suggest the offering of a sacrifice on the Altar. These will not expect me to endorse their doctrine, but will agree with me that the Eastward position has doctrinal significance. But a very considerable number of my brethren have used, and continue to use the Eastward position—as I did, in Churches where I found it customary, because I accepted the dictum of the Lincoln Judgment, accepting the Judgment, that is, without studying it. Had I read it carefully, I must have found it unconvincing. Nor do I doubt that where my arguments carry persuasion, those who accept them will have more confidence in refusing to abandon what the Court itself admitted to be a true liturgical use in the Church of England, "and," they will be able to add with no small confidence, "the *only true* liturgical use in the Church of England."

It is evident from the line of argument pursued by the Court that the promoters of the suit against Bishop King tried to argue that the Eastward position was a sacrificial position<sup>1</sup>—"the natural attitude for one offering a sacrifice," and that it conveyed "some sacrificial doctrine of the Eucharist against the doctrine of the English Church"—to which the Court replied that "no significance can be attached to a form, act or usage unless that significance is in accordance with the regular and established meaning of language or symbol whether liturgical or other" . . . "the imported sacrificial aspect of the Eastward position is new and forced, and can take no effect in rendering that position either desirable or otherwise."

Now it is, perhaps, the tendency of English judicature to reduce a controversy to some one definite point, and, separating that point as far as possible from immaterial issues, to concentrate inquiry on it, and on it alone. So the Court chose to treat the Rubric ordering the North Side position as an order necessitated by the alteration of "altars attached to the East wall" into "tables moved into the chancel or body of the Church." It appeared to the Court that further complications arose by the setting of altars table-wise, that the standing at the North side became impossible when the "tables"

<sup>1</sup> One of the very few engravings showing a *minister* in the Eastward position is thus described: "Comber's short discourses. . . . Minister in surplice, scarf and hood kneels Eastward before the Altar of burnt offering." Emblematic, Roscoe, p. 190.

were once more removed about 1640 to the East End, and that the North *End*, which the Court declared to be beyond question true liturgical use in the Church of England, was, in strictness of fact, a compromise adopted by Caroline High Churchmen as the best solution of a Rubric impossible of fulfilment. Yet those very High Churchmen, with the stringency of the Uniformity Act of 1662 before their view, repeated this same impossible Rubric—impossible because (as it is alleged) the *end* of an oblong cannot be a *side*. As we said before, this repetition of an impossible Rubric does not make sense.

Those who are interested in this argument of the Court may find, if they choose, a scathing examination of it in Mr. J. T. Tomlinson's *Historical Grounds of the Lambeth Judgment in the Lincoln Case* (London). My reason for not following Mr. Tomlinson in his argument is that it seems to me that the case was wrongly stated. I quite agree with the Court that "neither those who approve nor those who disapprove of an action which is recognised by authority can really invest it with any sense contrary to the sense of the authority which recognises." I have stated above my reasons for believing that the Church of England from 1662 onwards did not recognise the Eastward position, but definitely rejected it. The grounds for this rejection will be, necessarily, not the opinions of this or that Churchman or Liturgiologist, however eminent, but the legislative acts of the Church. Yet behind the acts there must, of necessity, be doctrinal reasons, to which the Church refers in the second Preface to the Prayer Book of 1549. "The most weighty cause of the abolishment of certain Ceremonies was that they were so far abused, partly by the superstitious blindness of the rude and unlearned, and partly by the insatiable avarice of such as sought more their own lucre, than the glory of God, that the abuses could not well be taken away, the thing remaining still."

Now the question which the Court ought to have examined, and never did examine, was this: "Was the North Side Rubric (a change in long-established ritual confessedly), a direction necessitated by temporary disorder *and no more*, or was it an essential part of the Communion of 1552, the transition from the Lord's Supper and Communion commonly called the Mass to the Lord's Supper *or* Holy Communion? No one can read the argument of the Court without being impressed by the ineffectiveness of the new Rubric for purposes of order. It did, in fact, make confusion worse confounded, and it sinned against the principle that the ceremonies should only be changed, if they are dark and misleading. If the Eastward position was retained as an alternative, there was no excuse for not retaining it as the only use, no excuse for a change which made for diversity and disunion. The Court, in fact, never faced this difficulty at all, never betrayed the least consciousness of it. They never put themselves in the position of worshippers who were confronted at the very opening of a new service with a most startling alteration of ritual. Yet they claimed to be judging as historians, a claim which

no one can make who cannot envisage the past, and see events with the eyes with which contemporaries saw them.<sup>1</sup>

It is especially singular that the Court which expresses so correct a view as to the authority from which we ought to seek information as to the significance of a liturgical usage, does not, in any part of its examination of the Celebrant's position, refer to the Preface on Ceremonies, the authorised and official explanation of the Church, in the First Prayer Book of Edward VI (1549), of the reason why some ceremonies were retained and some disused. Had they referred to this Preface, they would have seen how reluctant Cranmer (for the Preface is his work) was to change any ceremony unless it was superfluous and burdensome, or had lent itself to superstitious or avaricious abuse. The Court would also have noted that Cranmer, though he refused to be guided by foreign Churches, felt that some explanation was due from the Church of England to the other Churches of the Reformation.

Two important considerations suggest themselves. First, it is exceedingly improbable that so important and significant a change as that from the Eastward position to the North End should be made without strong reason, and, secondly, that Cranmer was not without knowledge of foreign liturgies, or indifferent to them. Now it is well known that Gardiner and other Roman Catholics found in the First Prayer Book of Edward VI (1549) all that was needful for the Mass, the office which above all others had lent itself to "superstitious and avaricious abuses." Here was a definite reason for Cranmer's using the pruning knife more freely in the Second than in the First Prayer Book on the ceremonial of the Mass. The same reason that prompted in the Second Prayer Book (1552) the abolition of vestments, and the removal of prayers of sacrificial import, as well as the excision of the word "Altar" from the beginning to the end of the service could not fail to suggest also the removal of the Eastward position. Further, as concerns Continental Churches, Calvin was very busy in 1550 over the attempt to bring the Reformed Churches into line over the doctrine of the Eucharist. He practically persuaded the Swiss and Zwinglians to abandon the merely Commemorative Meal or Supper, and to establish a profound sense of the Real Presence of Christ, not in the Elements, but in the souls of faithful communicants. This is the characteristic feature of the Prayer Book of 1552, and it is characteristic of our Prayer Book to-day. We do not, with the Presbyterians, sit round the Lord's Table with a Minister facing West, at a commemorative sacred meal, nor, with the Roman Catholics, worship the Lord on His Altar-throne, the Priest facing East, to lead us in this worship, but we *kneel* at the Holy Table, where the Minister, standing at the North End, conducts our devotions, and from the Holy Table feeds us with Bread and Wine consecrated to be a token

<sup>1</sup> The Court seems to have accepted Cosin's view, but with modification. Cosin represents the North End as a compromise after rebellion occasioned by the Eastward rubric of the First Prayer Book. But the rebellion was significant of doctrine, and so was the compromise.

and means of our receiving the spiritual food of Body and Blood of Christ.

All this important history the Court overlooked. They overlooked also the not less important statement in the Preface to the Prayer Book of 1662: "Our aim was . . . to do that, which to our best understanding we conceived might most tend to the preservation of peace and unity in the Church, the procuring of reverence, and exciting of piety and devotion in the public worship of God." Yet, while they might, by the insertion of a few words, have established beyond dispute the Eastward position, the liturgical use which they are supposed to have thought most suitable and "tending most to the procuring of reverence and exciting of piety and devotion," they did not do so. They did not, while carefully examining the Rubric, of which examination there is proof positive, insert the simple words, "standing afore the midst of the Holy Table or at the North Side thereof." The Court did not even attempt to explain this inaction. It is submitted that the *authoritative explanations of the Church* contained in the Prefaces to the Prayer Book (1) invest the North End position with doctrinal significance, (2) establish it as the true and only liturgical use in the Church of England.

But if we are asked to suggest the kind of false doctrine that moved the Reformers in England and on the Continent to reject the Mass, we would use some words written by Professor Raven in his *Jesus and the Gospel of Love* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1931), p. 347:

"The Jesus of Rome is the Lord of the *Civitas Dei*. As King of Kings He is the Head of the Heavenly Host, angels and archangels, saints and virgins, and of the hierarchy on earth, the successor of St. Peter, the bishops and clergy. Through His ministers, celestial and terrestrial, the Most High has covenanted to dispense His grace to mankind; through appropriate intercessors He receives their petitions; through appointed sacraments He bestows His favour. Supreme among gifts is His own flesh and blood, when, as Victim in the holy sacrifice His priests bring Him down and offer Him upon the altar that the faithful may receive the food of immortality. He is still Man in name. . . ."

The same truth is more concisely but not less forcibly expressed in Keble's lines on *Gunpowder Treason*, where he appeals thus to those who were being, or had been, lured by the Church of Rome:

"If with thine heart the strains accord,  
That on His Altar-Throne  
Highest exalt the glorious Lord,  
Yet leave Him most thine own;  
O, come to our Communion Feast,  
There present, in the heart  
Not in the hands, th' Eternal Priest  
Will His true self impart."

Now Keble, when he wrote these words, used the North End position.

Maintainers of the unquestionably "true liturgical use in the Church of England," the North side position of the Celebrant in Holy Communion!—it is for you to remember that in this act of

obedience to your Church you are upholding her Scriptural teaching as to the Being of her Lord and Master, namely that He, being Very God and Very Man, by the sacrifice of Himself upon the Cross, whereto He was sent by the love of God for the world, has wrought so perfect a reconciliation, that nothing can be added to it, nor any further presentation of it be made to the Father, on Whose right hand He is seated in glory, and has so entirely removed every barrier, or even supplementary intervention, that we have access with boldness into the holiest. No priest stands between us and the glorified Son of Man in heaven.

Nay, even when it is urged that the grossest superstitions connected with the Mass are now no longer believed, and that no return to them need be feared, and when you are called to conform, as it is said, "to usages in themselves innocent but attractive, since they make for the unity of Christendom," your obvious reply is that you cannot forsake a plain command of your Church for one which is at best of doubtful validity: also that, when you forsake that plain command in order to join yourselves to a multitude which is predominantly committed to a humanly mediated access to your Lord, you obscure truth, and become partakers with those who place the Priesthood between you and your Lord.

If you take the Eastward position you may try to persuade yourselves that you have no sympathy with such false teaching, but who is to know where you draw the line, or at what point you part company with false teachers? Men cannot read your consciences, but they can judge your actions. Acts speak louder than opinions. You increase a multitude of which the overwhelming majority is pledged to utterly unscriptural doctrine. It is your duty to your own Church as Churchmen, your privilege as Evangelists of the true gospel, to maintain the living truth of God, and your still greater privilege to suffer for so doing, if that be the will of Him Who has loved you with a love passing knowledge.

P.S. Results of inquiry in the British Museum :

*First* : White Kennet and Ogilvy are confirmed in their statement that the Bishop of London, being Celebrant at King Charles II's Coronation, did not celebrate in the Eastward position, but from the North End.

*Second* : The Court rested its conclusions mainly on Hollar's engravings. In those engravings the Artist's design was to show that the instructions of Joel ii. 17 were fulfilled, and that the Litany was said "between the Porch and the Altar." A corner of the Holy Table was shown with a book resting on it. The Court gave weight to the fact that it was no part of the Artist's purpose to illustrate any significant use, and that therefore more credence could be given to the representation as a historical record. But did the Artist intend to show any presentation of the Holy Table? He certainly showed only a corner of the Table, with a book on it, and without any Communion vessels. The Litany and Communion Services were, as Sparrow tells us, "distinct" services. No doubt

the Artist intended to show a symbol of a Holy Table—but there is a long, long distance between that purpose and the inference from it that he intended to show a record of the mode of conducting a Communion service or even of preparation for conducting it. The inference of the Court will convince only those who wish to be convinced.

P.P.S. To facilitate reference to Ogilvy's work the title runs as follows :

"The entertainment of His Most Excellent Majestie Charles II, in his passage through the City of London to his Coronation . . . To these is added a brief Narrative of his Majestie's Solemn Coronation by John Ogilby.

Printed for Richard Mariot and Thomas Dring and are sold in their shops in Fleet Street, MDCLXII."

It is in the London Library.

PURITAN SALT. The Story of Richard Madox, Elizabethan Venturer. By George Walker. *Lutterworth Press*. 4s. 6d.

The name of Richard Madox, Fellow of All Souls', Oxford, the author tells us, does not appear in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and yet in the attractive narrative of his life and adventures given in this volume there is much which would, we think, entitle him to a place there. He was a Puritan when the name was newly coined, when it was the creed of the adventurous, and advanced youth accepted it as the newest fashion. He had the patronage and protection of Leicester who had much to do with his various appointments. He was privileged to move in the company of Drake, Hawkins and Frobisher and of such prominent scientists and merchants as Dr. Dee and Michael Lock.

The author has gleaned much of his material from his hero's diaries and sea journals, from some letters preserved in the Calendar of State papers, and from "A Sermon to Mariners" preached at Melcombe Regis and preserved in the British Museum. The book gives an interesting account of the early stages of the Puritan Movement and the sea life of the time. It is mainly written round Fenton's unsuccessful attempt to reach the East via the Cape.

In the Religion and Life Books series of reprints the Student Christian Movement Press issue *A Philosophy from Prison* (1s. net). This is a Study of the Epistle to the Ephesians by Canon F. R. Barry. In a Preface to this reprint the author emphasises in face of the developments of recent years the urgent need "to discover the spiritual basis for a true community of persons."