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# A Milestone in Canadian Theology: Bishop Kingdon's *God Incarnate*

EUGENE R. FAIRWEATHER

## I

JUST over fifty years ago, in October, 1907, one of Canada's most distinguished theologians died in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Hollingworth Tully Kingdon had served the Canadian Church as pastor and scholar for more than twenty-six years—first as coadjutor to the redoubtable John Medley, and then as second Bishop of Fredericton. The *Canadian Churchman* obituary spoke of his scholarly attainments in the highest terms: "He was a man of wide and extensive learning, and it is questionable if in his own line he had his equal on this side of the Atlantic. . . . It is not at all likely that we in Canada at all events will see his equal again in the matter of scholarship."<sup>1</sup> In the same vein, his Cathedral Chapter's memorial resolution, after paying tribute to his energetic concern for the Church's work in "the poor and needy portions of the diocese," emphasized his academic distinction: "His ripe and great scholarly attainments were widely recognized by the whole Anglican communion, and were of great service to the Church in Canada, and we believe will be of still greater service in the years to come. His literary works . . . are considered by many noteworthy scholars of the Anglican communion as standard productions, which will ever be recognized by students of Canon Law and Church Doctrine as marks of ripe scholarship, sound learning and great ability."<sup>2</sup>

Among Bishop Kingdon's published writings, the *Canadian Churchman* emphasized his "very valuable work on the Incarnation of our Lord, by which he will be mainly remembered." At the time of their publication in 1890, Kingdon's Bishop Paddock Lectures, given at the General Theological Seminary, New York, in the same year,<sup>3</sup> had been well received. The *Canadian Churchman*, noting that some of the Paddock Lectures "have been very good, and some others have not been quite so good," concluded that "the present volume is most decidedly above the average."<sup>4</sup> The *Church Quarterly Review* declared that "this remarkable volume, on the highest of all possible themes, will be gratefully welcomed by the Church at large."<sup>5</sup> The *Church Review*, of New York, was still more enthusiastic: "We cannot call to mind any recent work where such an abundance of

1. *Canadian Churchman*, Oct. 24, 1907, p. 685.

2. *Ibid.*, Nov. 7, 1907, p. 721.

3. *God Incarnate*, New York, 1890.

4. *Canadian Churchman*, Oct. 16, 1890, p. 630.

5. *Church Quarterly Review*, Vol. 32 (April-July, 1891), p. 131.

treasures, old and new, have been brought out from the storehouse of the Faith. . . . It is beyond question the theological work of the year."<sup>6</sup>

As one might expect, after such a welcome, Kingdon's book had considerable influence in its day—above all, in the discussion of Christian initiation, which was becoming a live issue among Anglicans. So, for instance, it was used by the anonymous author of an article in the *Church Quarterly Review* on "Primitive Teaching on Confirmation and its Relation to Holy Baptism," together with Father Puller's and Canon Mason's essays, in support of his high doctrine of Confirmation over against Baptism.<sup>7</sup> On the other side of the debate, the immensely learned Darwell Stone pointed to Puller, Mason and Kingdon as the three able advocates of an opinion which he understood to be meeting "with wide and increasing acceptance in the Church of England."<sup>8</sup>

After all this, it is surprising that Kingdon's treatment of an important problem in sacramental theology should have been so completely forgotten, particularly since it is presented in the context of a full Christological synthesis which gives coherent expression to the typical incarnational-sacramental outlook of Anglican theology. Nonetheless, despite the recent renewal of the discussion by Dix, Lampe and others, Father Leeming's listing of Kingdon's book in the bibliography of his *Principles of Sacramental Theology*, apparently on the strength of Stone's comment, seems to be its sole appearance in contemporary theological literature.<sup>9</sup> Under these somewhat peculiar circumstances, a fresh look at one of the most erudite and important volumes to come from a Canadian study during the nineteenth century may not be without interest.

## II

By way of introduction, something should be said about Kingdon's life and theological standpoint. A surgeon's son, he was born in London on April 16, 1835, and was educated at St. Paul's School and at Trinity College, Cambridge.<sup>10</sup> He was ordained priest in 1860 by Walter Kerr Hamilton, the saintly Tractarian Bishop of Salisbury. After serving as Vice-Principal of Salisbury Theological College from 1864 to 1869, he joined the staff of the pioneer "ritualistic" parish of St. Andrew's, Wells Street, London.<sup>11</sup> From 1878 to 1881, when he became a bishop, Kingdon was vicar of Good Easter, Essex.

6. *Church Review*, Oct., 1890, p. 299.

7. Cf. *Church Quarterly Review*, Vol. 34 (April-July, 1892), pp. 1-20; F. W. Puller, *What is the Distinctive Grace of Confirmation?* (London, 1880); A. J. Mason, *The Relation of Confirmation to Baptism* (London, 1891).

8. *Church Quarterly Review*, Vol. 45 (Oct., 1897-Jan., 1898), p. 362.

9. Cf. B. Leeming, S.J., *Principles of Sacramental Theology* (London, 1956), pp. 650, 185.

10. Biographical data are taken (unless otherwise indicated) from O. R. Rowley, *The Anglican Episcopate of Canada and Newfoundland* (Milwaukee and London, 1928); J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, Pt. II:1752-1900, Vol. IV, p. 47.

11. Cf. M. Donovan, *After the Tractarians* (London, 1933), pp. 52, 119; S. L. Ollard, *Short History of the Oxford Movement* (2nd ed., London, 1932), p. 216f., 233.

In 1879 John Medley, Bishop of Fredericton since the creation of the see in 1845, indicated to his synod his readiness to provide the stipend of a much-needed coadjutor, asking however that the nomination be left in his own hands.<sup>12</sup> After considerable discussion the synod passed the requisite canon. Medley proposed Kingdon's name to a specially convened synod on January 12, 1881, and the nomination was approved by overwhelming majorities, clerical and lay, though only after a debate in which the election of a candidate known personally neither to the bishop nor to the synod was criticized as a "leap in the dark."<sup>13</sup> While party tensions remained latent on this occasion, it seems clear that suspicion of Medley as an active supporter of the Tractarian Movement was far from extinct. From this standpoint the *Evangelical Churchman*, Toronto's vigorous hammer of "ritualists" and "sacerdotalists", criticized the "unseemly haste" of the election, and added: "Mr. Kingdon . . . is a member of the disloyal English Church Union and of the Sanctae Trinitatis Confraternitas . . . of Cambridge, a local Ritualistic Society, not so well-known and perhaps not quite so pronounced in its character as the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, but of similar aims and tendencies."<sup>14</sup>

Despite misgivings, when Dr. Kingdon<sup>15</sup> arrived in New Brunswick he made a most favourable impression on his future flock, and the synod of July 5, 1881, unanimously confirmed his election, after hearing testimonials from five eminent English ecclesiastics.<sup>16</sup> On Sunday, July 10, he was consecrated in Fredericton Cathedral by Bishop Medley, the Metropolitan of Canada, assisted by two Canadian and two American bishops. By this time, the *Evangelical Churchman* had so far recovered its equanimity as not only to reproduce without comment a newspaper report which referred no less than three times to the Metropolitan's mitre—in other circumstances one of its *bêtes noires*—but even, while maintaining its opposition to the mode of his election, to express unguarded approval of the new bishop. "Those who urged the canon on," it wrote, "in hope, evidently, of securing an extreme sacerdotalist, are the only disappointed ones. . . . The theological standpoint of . . . Dr. Kingdon, appears to be that of a very moderate high-churchman. . . . He does not belong to any of the advanced societies. He has written in strong condemnation of Fasting Communion. . . ."<sup>17</sup> This optimism was, indeed, somewhat premature, since Kingdon was to become, like Medley, a vice-president of the "disloyal" E.C.U.,<sup>18</sup> but experience was to sustain the *Evangelical Churchman's* appraisal of Dr. Kingdon as "a

12. Cf. W. Q. Ketchum, *The Life and Work of the Most Reverend John Medley, D.D.* (Saint John, 1893), p. 224f.

13. Cf. *Dominion Churchman*, Jan. 27, 1881, p. 41; *Evangelical Churchman*, Jan. 20, 1881, p. 588.

14. *Ibid.*

15. D.D., *jure dignitatis* (Cantab.), 1881; Hon. D.D. (Trinity), 1885; (King's) 1890; Hon. D.C.L. (Trinity), 1893.

16. Cf. *Evangelical Churchman*, July 28, 1881, p. 186.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 190, 194.

18. Cf. *Church Times*, Sept. 16, 1892, p. 899.

candid, fair-minded man, able to respect the views of those from whom he differs."

After eleven years of strenuous service as assistant to the aged Medley, Kingdon succeeded to the see on September 9, 1892, and was enthroned on November 23. Until heart disease incapacitated him in June, 1906, he presided over the diocese with energy and conspicuous executive ability. For the little time that remained to him he was pretty much an invalid, retaining his episcopal jurisdiction but committing most of his functions to his coadjutor, John Andrew Richardson, after the latter's consecration on November 30, 1906. Kingdon died on October 11, 1907, and was buried four days later in the churchyard of St. John's, Douglas (Nashwaaksis).

"It may be said of Bishop Kingdon", a contemporary wrote, "that, though small of stature, he is quick and resolute of will."<sup>19</sup> This resoluteness, displayed alike in his vigorous pastoral labours, in his literary productivity amidst continual distractions and in the firmness of his rule, was one of his most conspicuous qualities. At the same time, his "transparent and almost rugged sincerity of character,"<sup>20</sup> together with his sympathy and skill as a *pastor pastorum*, seems to have won him widespread affection as well as respect. So, for example, a priest ordained near the end of his episcopate recalled, forty years later, that "he loved an argument, and respected you more when you stood your ground and gave back a quick and like answer." But the same priest could also write: "The Bishop's strong character, and deep spiritual life, his patience and understanding did much to shape my life."<sup>21</sup>

Apart from his *God Incarnate* and from some tracts on Confirmation,<sup>22</sup> Kingdon's theological standpoint and scholarly abilities were chiefly displayed in *Fasting Communion* and in *Divorce and Re-marriage*.<sup>23</sup> *Fasting Communion* is not, in fact, a "strong condemnation" of the custom. Kingdon's aim is simply to show that the practice of abstaining from food and drink from midnight before receiving Holy Communion is a matter of discipline or devotion, a "mandate or counsel", rather than a rigorously binding precept.<sup>24</sup> His concern with this point stems from his experience of a number of younger Tractarian rigorists who are assigning such importance to the "rule" of fasting communion as (in Kingdon's opinion) to discourage reasonable frequency of communion.<sup>25</sup> Far from despising the discipline itself, let alone condemning it, Kingdon speaks clearly of his own lifelong

19. C. H. Mockridge, *The Bishops of the Church of England in Canada and Newfoundland* (London and Toronto, 1896), p. 327.

20. *Canadian Churchman*, October 24, 1907, p. 685.

21. From a privately printed diocesan centennial booklet, *One Hundred Years of Church Life*, pp. 34, 32. (I am indebted to the Ven. A. F. Bate, Archdeacon of Saint John, for a copy of this work.) A partly fictional but lifelike account of Kingdon appears in Basil Partridge, *Chaplet of Grace* (Philadelphia, 1956), pp. 195-98.

22. *Church Quarterly Review*, Vol. 34 (April-July, 1892), p. 7, n.l.

23. *Fasting Communion, Historically Investigated from the Canons and Fathers, and Shown to be not Binding in England*, 2nd ed., London, 1875; *Divorce and Re-marriage*, Montreal and Fredericton, n.d.

24. Cf. *Fasting Communion*, pp. 358, 125.

25. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 2, 367f.

practice,<sup>26</sup> while the entire volume is marked by genuine concern for the spirit of sacramental piety expressed in the tradition of fasting communion. Moreover, there is no doubt in his mind of the right of the Church to require such a discipline by canonical precept; on basic principles he is at one with the rigorists in upholding a "Catholic" view of authority. What he does question—essentially on the basis of the "desuetude" or disuse of the relevant canons in the post-Reformation English Church, rather than on the shaky ground of theories of the independence of the medieval Church of England from the *Corpus Iuris Canonici*—is the present existence in the Anglican Communion of a binding rule, such as the rigorists assume.<sup>27</sup> For thus maintaining, in the interests at once of pastoral discretion and of accuracy in the interpretation of canon law, a position already held by the Tractarian "apostle," John Keble, and later to be taken up by the eminent Anglo-Catholic moral theologian, Kenneth Kirk, Kingdon found himself hailed by some and denounced by others as a prophet of laxism.<sup>28</sup> Whatever view we may take, however, of his possibly tendentious solution of a complex canonical problem, we shall go far astray if we think of him as a moral or canonical laxist. As even a cursory examination of *Divorce and Re-marriage* will show, he accepts authority wholeheartedly once it is clear to him that authority has in fact spoken. Again following Keble, Kingdon fills the pages of this work with evidence from the Fathers and Councils in support of the strict view of the indissolubility of marriage, thus making divorce from the marriage bond inherently impossible. This time, he not only receives the general approval (subject only to the criticism of certain oversimplifications) of so conservative a theologian and careful a scholar as Stone,<sup>29</sup> but also experiences the sincerest form of flattery at the hands of a committee of the Convocation of York. His triumph may seem a trifle ambiguous, since Convocation recommitted the report to enable the committee to check the quotations borrowed by its convener from Kingdon and left unverified by its members,<sup>30</sup> but the whole episode remains something of a tribute to the influence Kingdon could exert even from the dense forests of New Brunswick!

The production of two such substantial treatises is in itself a notable accomplishment for a busy London curate and an even busier Canadian bishop. Kingdon's supreme scholarly achievement, however, as his contemporaries supposed, is unquestionably his study of the Incarnation and its implications. Here, in the first place, we have a weighty essay in theological synthesis, in which the person and the creative and redemptive work of the eternal Word are interpreted in the light of a considerable knowledge of the history of Christian thought, and with an eye open to the problems raised for theology by the philosophy and science of the day. In

26. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 348, 368.

27. Cf. *ibid.*, Pt. I, Chap. III.

28. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 169, 347; K. E. Kirk, *Conscience and its Problems* (London, 1948), p. 277ff.

29. Cf. *Church Quarterly Review*, Vol. 40 (April-July, 1895), p. 37.

30. Cf. *ibid.*; *Guardian*, Feb. 27, 1895, p. 346.

the second place, when he comes to deal with the sacramental "extension" of the Incarnation, Kingdon not only completes his theological synthesis with a clear and solid exposition of Catholic sacramental doctrine, but also makes his third important contribution to historical theology in a discussion of Baptism and Confirmation as sacraments of Christian initiation, to which reference has already been made. Whatever we may think of his thesis in the end, his documentation is an important addition to the evidence needed for the discussion of this problem—an addition all the more impressive because of its appearance a year before Mason's classical presentation of the same case. Both as a systematic theological treatise, then, and as an early and serious contribution to an important theological debate, *God Incarnate* can claim our interest, without any appeal to theological chauvinism.

### III

In undertaking the Christological synthesis which is his main concern in the book, Kingdon starts from the prologue to the Fourth Gospel, which provides the "texts" for four of his seven lectures. Now, as in the past, he says, the Johannine corpus is the supreme corrective of doctrinal error, simply because of its forcible and plain witness to the central truth of the Incarnation. In expounding the Johannine teaching, Kingdon begins with the affirmation of the deity of the Logos, and goes on to argue that this truth, manifested in the Resurrection of Christ, fulfils the deepest demand of nature and reason. Developing his argument skilfully, he moves from the order of the universe to divine mind and will as the ground of order, from mind and will to divine "personality," and finally (along the line suggested long ago by Richard of St. Victor) from personality to the interpersonal love declared in the Johannine statement, "God is love." Having thus (he believes) shown the coherence of God's self-revelation in Christ with the ultimate outreach of natural reason, he goes on, on the basis of the full Trinitarian dogma, to expound the mysterious Christian truth of creation through the Word, who is both "Mediator in creation" and "Revealer in illumination."<sup>31</sup>

In thus stating the divine origin of creatures and creaturely life, Kingdon makes what he considers the essential theological point of the Christian doctrine of creation. Having made it, he is concerned to show that it cannot come into real conflict with the facts of nature as rightly interpreted by science. After a digression on the angelic creation, in which he trips unselfconsciously through metaphysical mazes where angels themselves might almost hesitate to tread, he contrasts with the stability of the angelic world the evolutionary development of the visible world, whose history we can read backwards by scientific reason. Having cited Augustine and Aquinas as instances of the readiness of great theologians to admit more in the Genesis narrative than meets the fundamentalist eye, he argues that biblical faith

31. Cf. *God Incarnate*, pp. 1-19.

does not commit believers to notions of "special creation" or fixity of species, and concludes that evolution is not only the most adequate scientific account of the origin of species but also the key to a more splendid picture of God's creative power. With sounder judgment than many Christians of his day, he refuses to try to fit the divine action into gaps in evolutionary doctrine, noting for instance that an evolutionary account of the origins of life would present no real problem for faith. Only in the supraphysical reality of the soul, inbreathed by God, does Kingdon see a "special creation," and even this he understands as the crowning of physical evolution, which makes of man the microcosm, destined to be the centre of God's purpose for the total universe. It is against the background of this sweeping picture of the purpose of man's creation that Kingdon presents the tragic frustration of human destiny by sin and the Fall—again with a sense of the distinction between the truth of faith and the pictorial form of the biblical story.<sup>32</sup>

In the light of this interpretation of the world and man in the world, Kingdon discusses the meaning of the Incarnation itself. As we might expect from his view of man as the microcosm in which the whole universe is fulfilled—a view, incidentally, which he is quite prepared to reconcile, if need be, with the existence of "intelligent agents" on Mars—he adopts the "Scotist" view of the Incarnation as inherent in God's creative purpose rather than simply remedial. What really happened, he urges, is that God's full purpose was carried forward *despite* sin. With this conception of God's purpose constantly in mind, Kingdon speaks of the Old Testament witness through prophecies, types and theophanies, and of the quest for the Christ in the Gentile world. Finally, recalling the old Latin word-play, he tells how, in the fullness of time, the angel's *Ave* began the reversal of the fall of *Eva*, and points to Christ's birth in weakness as God's great act of power for the benefit of all creation.<sup>33</sup>

Kingdon now reaffirms the centrality of the Incarnation as the real heart of Christian faith and life, emphasizing the significance of the Incarnation of the *Word* as proof of the unity of divine purpose in creation and redemption. In this context, and with his eye on the painfully familiar story of Christological error and heresy, he is particularly concerned to show how the *Word* united to himself human nature in all its creatureliness, yet without spot of sin. In working out this theme, he deals briefly but effectively with a number of problems, notably with Christ's growth in human knowledge, which he explains frankly and realistically, along the lines of Irenaeus' idea of the "quiescence" of the Logos in his human temptation, dishonour, crucifixion and death, while rejecting "kenotic" speculation.<sup>34</sup> Our Lord's growth in wisdom, he writes, "could not have affected the infinite knowledge of God the Son any more than growth of Body could have affected the infinity of His Incomprehensible Majesty. The Fathers discussed the question continually, and came to the conclusion that He was ignorant only as man,

32. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 20–42.

34. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 66–92.

33. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 43–65.

and so far forth as knowledge came to Him through His manhood."<sup>35</sup> What he is trying to avoid is "the error which would suggest in some way that our Blessed Lord somehow laid aside His attributes or essential character as God, which He resumed at the Resurrection and Ascension."<sup>36</sup> This notion, which he regards as incompatible with the true deity of the Son, Kingdon avoids through a consistent and accurate use of the Chalcedonian two-natures principle, which enables him both to affirm Christ's deity without compromise and to offer interesting reflections on such a thoroughly human question as Christ's experience of mirth and laughter.

From this study of the Incarnation and its conditions Kingdon moves on to a discussion of the Atonement. Noting how large a part of the Gospels themselves is given over to the events of Christ's passion and death, he points to a similar emphasis in the apostolic *kerygma*, and adds a comment on the way in which the world of the early Christians was "full of the Cross." Recognizing, however, both the absence of a full exposition of the saving fact of Christ's death and the necessity of guarding against pernicious misinterpretations, he feels bound to offer at least a brief theological statement in the light of his own principles. Sin, as he sees it, is a disorder, contrary to the purpose of man's creation. Man, cut off from God by this unnatural disorder, which he recognizes as a denial of the objective order of creation, hides himself in shame and guilt. Out of this awareness of guilt spring at least certain features of the practice of sacrifice—notably, Kingdon thinks, the widespread rite of human sacrifice. All such ritual acts, however, are inadequate, and only the divine action which they typify—the self-sacrifice of the Word incarnate—can effectually restore human nature to the purpose for which God gave it being. This self-sacrifice Kingdon interprets by means of three categories which he finds in Scripture: propitiation or sin-offering (carefully explained to avoid ideas of a transaction between an angry Father and loving Son), redemption or ransom (understood as a Godward act, on the basis of Exodus 13:13), and atonement or reconciliation. This objective presentation of the Godward act of Christ is complemented by some brief reflections on the Christian life of faith and love, of death and resurrection in Christ.<sup>37</sup>

The exposition of the mystery of creation and redemption, which occupies a little less than two-thirds of the book, is followed by two chapters in which Kingdon discusses the communication of Christ's salvation to believers. Most of the first of these is devoted to the sacraments, treated as an "extension of the Incarnation." In this survey, Kingdon discusses the seven sacraments of Catholic tradition: Baptism, the initial sacrament of union with God; Confirmation, presented as the completion of Baptism through the gift of the Holy Ghost; Absolution (general as well as private) as the

35. *Ibid.*, p. 87f.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 79. With this should be contrasted the rather confused theology of Charles Gore's statement in his Bampton Lectures on *The Incarnation of the Son of God* (New York, 1896), p. 170f.

37. Cf. *God Incarnate*, pp. 93–125.

extension of baptismal forgiveness to postbaptismal sin; the Eucharist, considered both as sacrifice and as sacrificial banquet; Holy Orders, as the transmission of spiritual authority through sacramental succession; Marriage, as the type of the union between Christ and his Church; and Unction, which he supposes to have been replaced in the Anglican Church by the "solemn visitation of the sick."<sup>38</sup> The remaining chapter covers much of the same ground in the light of the further idea of the function of the Spirit as perfecting the work of the Word, both in the creation of nature and in the "new creation." On this basis, Kingdon first expounds his view of the Catholic Church as the temple of the Holy Spirit, and then reformulates his theory of the relation of Baptism and Confirmation and deals briefly with one or two other questions in sacramental theology.<sup>39</sup>

Kingdon's interpretation of Christian initiation, while it is presented in his text as one element in his theological synthesis and has been duly noted in our survey, deserves at least a brief paragraph of its own, both because of the care with which he documents it in about twenty-five pages of appended notes and on account of its considerable influence in the debates of his own day, not to mention its possible importance for contemporary theology. As is generally known, the Oxford Movement laid great emphasis on "baptismal regeneration" as taught in the Prayer Book. Fifty years later, some "high church" theologians, including Kingdon, added to this doctrine a new emphasis on Confirmation as the essential completion of Baptism, apart from which (in the normal sacramental economy) the indwelling presence of the Spirit is not bestowed. Though criticized by many able theologians, this idea has reappeared in our own day, and must now be reckoned with both as influencing pastoral practice and as affecting the attitude of at least some Anglicans towards non-episcopal churches. In any assessment of the idea and its implications, Kingdon's scholarly presentation will have its own peculiar value, because of his skill in making patristic learning and systematic formulation complement each other.<sup>40</sup>

As we look over Kingdon's book once again, it may well be that we shall be less unreservedly enthusiastic than its readers in 1890. For one thing, so short yet so comprehensive a book inevitably takes for granted many points of detail which we, after more than six decades of historical research, can no longer assume. Moreover, in an age of lively philosophical conflict, full of Marxists, Thomists, existentialists, positivists and such-like, the typical Tractarian lack of philosophical sophistication may seem an almost crippling defect. And yet, we must not overlook the remarkable positive values of Kingdon's work, akin as it was in many ways to the developing "liberal

38. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 126-171.

39. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 172-206.

40. Kingdon's view is succinctly expressed in a Confirmation sermon, preached on Sept. 18, 1881 (*Evangelical Churchman*, Oct. 6, 1881, p. 351): "You have come here to-day to complete baptism, to fill up what was begun in baptism. As in baptism your body was consecrated to God, so in confirmation should the Holy Spirit dwell in your hearts, filling your whole being as the temple of Solomon was filled after it was consecrated."

Catholicism” of Gore and others. Like the “liberal Catholics,” Kingdon showed a healthy respect for scientific and historical facts and a healthy horror of committing faith to obscurantism. Like the “liberal Catholics” again, he displayed a new openness to philosophical considerations, even if he also shared the limitations of their knowledge of the history of Christian philosophy. When he parts company with the “liberal Catholics”—for example, in his rejection of the Christological monstrosity of “kenoticism”, with which Gore himself so disastrously flirted—it is perhaps to the credit of his theological and metaphysical judgment. All things considered, he is a theologian to be remembered with respect—and even to be read, with attention and appreciation.