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

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

The Scottish Episcopal Church: An English Layman's Impression.

By CLEMENT ANTROBUS HARRIS.

A FEW years ago, when Provost Campbell, as he then was, became Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway, a friend addressed a congratulatory epistle to "The Hon. Mrs. Campbell, The Palace, Glasgow." To those acquainted with the conditions under which most Scottish Bishops live—Bishop Jolly occupied little more than "a butt and a ben," and his single servant did not "live in"—the address is amusing enough; but the best is yet to come. Postal officials often show remarkable acumen in supplementing insufficient addresses, but so far from "palace" and "Bishop" being associated terms in Scotland, the missive only reached its destination after being officially endorsed, "Not known at the Palace Theatre of Varieties: try the Empire!"

I repeat this story as an example of the misconception under which even educated English Churchmen labour as to the conditions of their own Communion north of the Tweed. Another example might be added from the same source, for when the present Bishop of Glasgow—I think it was he—was announced to speak at a congress in England, a local paper made the illuminating remark that "we shall now hear what these Scottish Presbyterians have to say for themselves!"

Yet the first of these misconceptions—that under which the English and Scottish Episcopal Churches are supposed to be similarly placed—is not wholly unnatural or unaccountable. An Englishman generally gets his impression of the Scottish Church during a transient holiday, and it is possible to attend service in a Scottish Episcopal church—indeed, in a series of Scottish Episcopal churches—and scarcely notice an iota of difference between such services and those of the Church in England. It is true we have the "Scottish Office" for Holy Communion, but it is only allowed in certain churches, and in

these is under restrictions, so it may easily fall out that a visitor never hears it. There are also minor differences in the Rite of Confirmation, making the Scottish rite, in appearance, more like an ordination than is the English rite, but a visitor is not likely to be present at a Confirmation.

To be separate at all, two Churches could hardly be in closer spiritual communion than are the Episcopal Churches of England and Scotland; they use the same Prayer-Book, and constantly interchange their clergy. Yet almost the day that an English Churchman makes his permanent home in Scotland he will find that the affinity in things spiritual is hardly greater than the contrast in things temporal.

Firstly, there is the fact of disestablishment, and all that flows from it.

The Episcopal Church in Scotland differs from the Church in England because she is now disestablished; from the Church in the Colonies, or in most of them, because she was once established; from the Church in Ireland because she has been disestablished twice; and from all of these Churches because of the "strange mutations" through which she has passed. Has any other Church been subjected to such periods of paradox? Bishops of a *disestablished* Church have sat and voted in Parliament; "Bishops" irregularly ordained have borne rule over Presbyters, many of whom must have been ordained episcopally; Bishops canonically consecrated have borne rule over clergy, many of whom had received only Presbyterian ordination—indeed, some among whom may have received no ordination at all, but only appointment by a "Superintendent" (between 1560-1572, when, under the "Concordat of Leith," there was a return to the Episcopal system and ordination, which might, however, where no Bishop was placed, be administered by a superintendent[1]); dioceses have been divided into Presbyteries, and their Chief Pastors made responsible to a General Assembly.

[1] I am indebted for this and much other information to "Lectures on the Reformation Period in Scotland," by the Rev. J. H. Shepherd, Rector-elect of St. Mary Magdalene's, Dundee.

Time was when "the man in the street" would have found it difficult to say whether the Church was Episcopal or Presbyterian, for there were no Canons, no Liturgy properly so called (the service being at the discretion of the minister and largely extempore), and no Confirmation, the rite being in abeyance. Twice the Episcopal Succession has had to be restored from England; once the proscribed Scottish Church has been the single channel through which the same Succession has been transmitted to a great sister Church. And the impress of her history is on the Church still. If English laymen attending Morning or Evening Prayer find it difficult to realize that they are in a church entirely distinct from that which owes allegiance to Canterbury, English clergymen taking incumbencies in Scotland make the discovery soon enough, and not infrequently find a difficulty in reconciling themselves to it!

To begin with the province. The Episcopal Church is not, in popular estimation, "The Church of Scotland," much less "*The* Church." Though our Presbyterian friends derive their church government from Geneva, their Confession from Westminster, and their beloved Paraphrases are the work of an Englishman, the almost invariable name for our Communion in Scotland, colloquially, is "The *English* Church." The misnomer does us a grievous wrong as perverting the sense of patriotism so strong in the Scot, yet one must admit that circumstances have combined to render it not wholly unnatural to the superficial observer. It is doubtless sometimes used with a similar intent to the term "Italian Mission" in England, but with as much greater frequency as less accuracy, and is usually due, I think, to thoroughness: indeed it is not unfrequently used by Episcopalians themselves! Hereby hangs a little tale as true as it is new. The wife of one of our lay representatives, annoyed at the persistent use of the term "English Church" by a strange old gentleman in a country bus who had engaged in conversation with her, ventured to give him quite a lecture on the true history of Episcopacy in Scotland, and was somewhat surprised when her husband, on meeting her at the terminus, at once

recognized the old gentleman and introduced her to—the (late) Bishop of Glasgow! In print, the term always used is "Episcopal Church"; indeed, even the leading daily papers distinguish our Chief Pastors from those of the Roman Obedience by speaking of the "Episcopal Bishop" of So-and-so!

In the Universities the Faculty of Divinity is, of course, in the hands of the Established Church, but invitations to preach in the University chapels are frequently offered to ministers of other religious bodies, including, occasionally, our own. The invitation would almost seem to be more frequently offered to dignitaries of the English than of the local Episcopal Church.

Similarly, "D.D." degrees are by no means confined to ministers of the Established Church, and our own clergy receive their share. Eminent Nonconformist ministers in England are occasionally made the recipients of these degrees. A leading Presbyterian divine, who has interested himself in the matter, told the writer that the reason for this is that the Scottish University authorities do not think the English Universities very liberal-minded in the bestowal of divinity degrees, or their policy equitable.

Passing from the province to the diocese, the fact of disestablishment becomes, perhaps, even more apparent. The old cathedrals are not in our hands as they once were, and still are in England. Only those dioceses have cathedrals which have built modern ones. There are six of these—Edinburgh, St. Andrews (cathedral at Perth), Moray (at Inverness), the Isles (at Millport, Cumbrae), Brechin (at Dundee), and Glasgow, the last two being parish churches which have recently been accorded cathedral status. Aberdeen is without a cathedral. The beautiful cathedral of the Isles is surely the smallest in Great Britain, and probably the only one whose choir is entirely composed of women (they wear veils and look like confirmation candidates). Yet there is what many larger cathedrals do not possess—a Eucharist, and two other services, daily, at which the Provost usually represents Dean, Chapter, Minor Canons, choir, and too often, I fear, congregation, in his own person.

Passing from the diocese to the ecclesiastical unit, the parish, the different course which Church history has taken north and south of the Tweed is not less evident. The Episcopal church is not the parish church. I quote an otherwise ably conducted provincial weekly *verbatim* in calling one of our churches "that Tom, Dick and Harry sect in the Perth Road." The Episcopal clergyman is not the parish minister—he is more likely to be dubbed "the minister of the English chapel." If any public function of a religious character is to be performed, it is, of course, the parish minister, not the Episcopal clergyman, who will be asked to perform it, unless, as is perhaps more probable, an invitation to take a part is extended to all the ministers in the town, save, of course, where refusal is a foregone conclusion.

It is sometimes said that there is no religious difficulty in connection with education in Scotland. As regards ourselves, this is not the case. There is, it is true, no Cowper-Temple clause in Scotland, and School-boards can sanction the use of a catechism; but the Boards which allow Episcopalian children to be taught their own catechism are very few in number; in most places it can only be done by maintaining separate schools. But for the *majority* of the population there is no education difficulty, and the reason is not far to seek. For he would be dull indeed who did not observe that while the Dissenter in England differs altogether from the Established Church—ceases to be an Episcopalian at all; rejects Episcopalian forms of service, ritual, sacramental doctrine and catechism, if not the Creeds—the Scottish Dissenter differs much less from the Church he has left: he usually not only remains a Presbyterian, but retains the same type of service, sacramental teaching, standards of doctrine (though recently varying the terms of subscription), and—a factor of paramount importance in the education question—literally the same catechism. It says much for Presbyterianism that it has retained its hold on sons of so independent and, in religious matters, wayward, a disposition as have the Scots—a fact due, I believe, mainly to the large measure of self-government possessed by congregations through their Elders

and Deacons' Courts, and representatives in the General Assembly. I purposely avoid the term "laity," as elders are said not to be laymen.

It will be seen that if an Englishman's attachment to his Mother Church has been a "cupboard love," due to the loaves and fishes, pomp, circumstance, and prestige of Establishment, his loyalty will be sorely tried in Scotland. But if, on the other hand, he is of at all a romantic temperament, he will find himself in an atmosphere highly congenial. The Church of England has, I know, passed through its period of persecution. But that was short, and a long time ago. In Scotland, under the Penal Laws a clergyman could be imprisoned for administering baptism, and for a second offence transported. A print is not uncommon in Episcopalian houses depicting the good fisherfolk of Stonehaven holding up their infants in baskets under the window of the local prison, that they might be baptized by the incarcerated clergyman! A memorial to the Rev. Wm. Erskine, a comparatively recent minister of Muthill Episcopal Church, Perthshire, records that: "Owing to the troubles of the time in which he lived, he was during four years compelled to wander from place to place, and could only in secret visit his people."

It was illegal for more than five persons to meet together for Episcopalian worship. The house where the last five-person service is said to have been held is still shown on the south side of South Street, St. Andrews. It was in such an "upper room" —in reality a chapel—of Bishop Skinner's house in Longacre, Aberdeen, that Bishop Seabury was consecrated in 1784. The house has disappeared, but its approximate site is marked by a memorial stone in the wall of Marishal College. Visitors to Aberdeen will see the stone facing them as they walk up Longacre. And though the Penal Laws were not rigidly enforced after the accession of George III., they were not rescinded till 1792. Indeed, the last of the clerical disabilities, under which Scottish clergy could not officiate, or accept benefices, in England, did not disappear till 1864!

School-children are said even yet to be occasionally assailed with the old taunt—

> "'Pisky, 'Pisky, Amen,
> Down on your knees and up again."

Our chief pastors, too, are occasionally, but I think not often, called "Pseudo-Bishops" by Presbyterian Church papers on the ground of their titles having no legal basis in Scotland—a piece of Erastianism which is harder to forgive than that of the aggressively Presbyterian Major who at Church Parade in Edinburgh Castle one fine morning called out—

> "All Churchmen to the right;
> All Fancy Religions to the left."

This sense of the romantic, engendered by the past history of the Church and circumstances of the country, is confirmed by our very smallness in numbers. Five per cent. is a usual computation, though a Presbyterian minister in the West of Scotland, where Episcopacy was most ruthlessly stamped out, says we form 10 per cent. of his parish, and are increasing more rapidly than any other religious body.

But however prosaic and romantic lay Churchmen may differ in sensitiveness to the effects of disestablishment, both alike will feel the effects of disendowment. The Episcopal Church in Scotland is purely voluntary; its members have to pay for their religion; there is a decided, and many of us think not unhealthy, pull on the purse. "Taxation and representation go together," to some extent, even in the ecclesiastical sphere, and the Englishman newly come will probably be surprised at the large share taken by the laity in the financial and business matters of the Church. In the parish the *local* financial and other business matters, including usually the appointment of organist, verger, and other officials, are in the hands of the Vestry, which is elected annually by the communicants. The local contributions to central funds—that is, funds common to the whole Church—are in the hands of a committee specially appointed for the purpose. The spiritual affairs of the parish are as exclusively in the hands of the incumbent as they are in England, though

in these, as in other matters, I think the *influence* of the laity is perhaps greater. Similarly, the financial affairs of the diocese are managed by the Diocesan Council, which consists of both clerical and lay members; its spiritual affairs by the Diocesan Synod, which is exclusively clerical, though laymen may attend, and, by permission of the Bishop, may, and frequently do, speak.

The Supreme Court of the Church is the Episcopal Synod; its legislative body, the Provincial Synod, which consists of the Bishops and one in ten of the Presbyters. Doctrine and discipline apart, the paramount power in the Church as a whole is undoubtedly the Representative Church Council. It consists, broadly, of all the clergy, and a lay representative from each congregation; there are thus an approximately equal number of clerical and lay members. Of some 325 members of boards and principal committees (members *ex officiis* being omitted), 128 are laymen; and of the ten committees here alluded to, six have a layman as convener (*Anglice*, chairman). But at the meetings, which are held annually in different centres, and extend over two and sometimes three days, the clerical element largely predominates, especially among the speakers, for which, however, the laymen have only themselves to blame.

Perhaps the most important function which laymen perform in the Church is their voting in the election of Bishops. In every congregation of a given status there is a triennial election of a Lay Elector who, should a vacancy occur in the See, votes in the election of a Bishop. The laity, however, cannot nominate. A characteristic of this lay vote would seem to be its comparative unanimity compared with the clerical vote, which is generally more divisive.

It augurs well for the good of the Church, and should allay misgivings as to the effect of admitting laymen to ecclesiastical councils, that on all other questions laymen and clerics are found in fairly even numbers on both sides. There is no pitting of lay against clerical opinion. We have no "Laymen's League," and no need for one. The powers of the

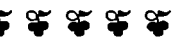
laity have also been recently much increased by the formation of a new body, the Consultative Council, the first meetings of which have just taken place. This council consists of clerical and lay members in approximately equal numbers, and with equal rights of speaking and voting. It cannot enact Canons. But within its own doors it can discuss and vote upon any question, doctrinal or disciplinary, which may affect the Church. It can *propose* Canons, and no enactments of the actually legislative body, the Provincial Synod, become law till the Consultative Council has had the opportunity of considering and giving an opinion upon them.

So far the characteristics of Scottish Episcopacy are such as are less likely to strike the summer visitor than to be discovered by the resident. There remains one which will strike the traveller more than the resident, unless he also be a traveller. This is the greater uniformity, compared with England, in both doctrine and ritual between one church and another. There are extreme churches—a few, for instance, where incense is used, auricular confession is taught and practised, and the Sacrament is reserved; and till the death of Dr. Teap, a year or two ago, there was at least one where the "black gown" was worn in the pulpit. But if the score or so of widely separated churches in which the writer has attended service may be taken as a criterion, there is certainly much greater uniformity than in England. One cause of this is the greater influence of the laity. True, the same extremes exist among the laity as among the clergy, though not, I think, in the same proportions. But two incumbents are *never in a parish together;* laymen are, and neutralize each other. Consequently, while between two incumbents of opposite extremes the parochial policy is *reversed*, under the influence of laymen of opposite extremes it is *tempered*.

But an English traveller would not only notice a greater uniformity than is usual in his own country. He would notice that this uniformity has been achieved on the "High" side of the mean temperature of Anglicanism, if one may hazard a guess as to what ecclesiastical normality is! For the laity, not

less than the clergy, are influenced by their environment; and just as the Episcopal Church in Ireland, surrounded by Romanism, is uniformly "Low," so in Scotland, surrounded by Presbyterianism, it is uniformly "High."

It has been the writer's aim to state facts rather than offer opinions, but the reader will perhaps bear with him if he states a single conclusion that has often forced itself upon him during his many years north of the Tweed. It is, that if the Church of England organized and trusted her laity as much as does her sister Church in Scotland, and made as much of her pounds as her poorer sister does of her shillings, the task of the Nonconformist would be much harder than it is.



The Climax of Revelation.

By the Rev. W. B. RUSSELL CALEY, M.A.

THERE are only three special theophanies in Scripture, or times at which God in a special manner revealed His character and attributes to men—occasions perfectly different to those revelations in dreams and visions and voices which He constantly made to His prophets and servants, but absolutely unique in their solemnity and circumstances; occasions on which Deity, in a mysterious and awe-inspiring manner, made itself manifest to humanity with stupendous grandeur, yet with necessary and well-defined limits of power and splendour.

These three remarkable occasions on which God "made His glory to appear," and man saw God (in a sense) and yet lived, are—the giving of the law (Exod. xix.), the revelation to Moses (Exod. xxxiii., xxxiv.), and the revelation to Elijah (2 Kings xix.). All these theophanies are marked by an extraordinary similarity, and are attended by the same results. Each manifestation is marked by a wondrous exhibition of power and of purity, and is then succeeded by an articulate and distinct indication and expression of the Divine will. They are unrelated in many