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THE CHURCHMAN

April, 1924

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

February Sessions of the Church Assembly.

THE House of Clergy and the House of Laity continued their discussion of the Prayer Book Revision proposals at their Sessions in February. The House of Clergy was mainly occupied with the further consideration of the Communion Service, and especially with proposed alternative forms of the Prayer of Consecration. Yet another attempt was made to secure the omission of the chief part of the service from the revision scheme. A proposal was made that there should be no alteration from the Exhortation to the end with the exception of the Proper Prefaces. Canon Brook Gwynn and Canon J. B. Lancelot, who brought forward this proposal, maintained that the vast majority of Churchpeople did not desire any change in this portion of the Communion office. They also pointed out that the alternative forms of the Consecration Prayer represented a grave departure from the doctrine of the Church of England as they contain doctrine not to be found in the New Testament, nor in the writings of our great divines.

"New Tracts for Our Times."

At this stage in the discussion Canon Grose Hodge reminded the House that it was understood that there was no alteration in doctrine in the proposed alternative forms, and that they were not to be used as stepping-stones to further concessions. He went on to draw attention to three pamphlets which had been sent to every member of the Church Assembly, and to ask for an assurance that they did not represent the views of the Anglo-Catholics. These pamphlets are entitled "New Tracts for our Times," and are issued by "A Committee of Anglican Priests." Three of them have so far been issued, and their contents may be judged from a few

extracts. The first is on Revision and Catholic Principles, and is based on the novel theory that the Church of England had no right to adopt a Prayer Book of its own because Cranmer broke his "solemn oath of canonical obedience to his ecclesiastical superior the Bishop of Rome." It urges that "the custom of sixty years standing, and daily increasing, of using the Roman Canon in celebrating Mass" should be followed, and, as a practical course, to secure validity for the revised Prayer Book, that it should be submitted to a commission of the Orthodox Churches in order that any statements of dogma objectionable to them may be removed. The doctrine of the Church of England is thus to be subject to the approval of the Church of Rome and the Eastern Church.

Some Bold Demands.

The second of these tracts on The True History of the Prayer Book is useful as showing a just appreciation of the teaching of our present Communion Service. It says that the bugbear of the Reformers was the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and that it was their boast that they had changed the Mass into a Communion, but it goes on to say, "We see now the reverse process at work. Step by step as Catholic faith and practice have been regained . . . the missing portions of the old Liturgy are restored, until in many cases the last vestiges of the Communion Service vanish, and we are presented with the Roman Mass pure and simple." That this restoration of the Mass is their aim may be seen from their Statement :

"We demand nothing short of the old Catholic Liturgy, performed in the old Catholic way, in the old Latin language, as being the only canonical Liturgy of the Church of England, the only fitting vehicle of Catholic worship it has ever possessed, and the greatest evidence of good faith in the desire for reunion, though we should be prepared for a copious use of the vernacular as a temporary concession to popular ignorance and prejudice."

There is no mistaking the intentions of this body of Anglican priests, and Churchpeople cannot shut their eyes to the ultimate aims so candidly expressed. They accept not merely this or that ceremony or practice of the Roman Church, but its whole system and discipline. In every detail the work of the Reformation is to be undone. This is the question which, in effect, the Church of England is engaged in deciding at the present time.

Some Frank Admissions.

The third Tract on Catholic Truth and Prayer Book Teaching bears even clearer testimony to the difference between our present Prayer Book and the teaching of the Anglo-Catholics. It states that two things are of primary importance to them, the Real Presence and the Sacrifice of the Mass, and it points out that neither of these is contained in our present form. In it the views of Cranmer are represented, that while the Body and Blood of Christ are truly received by the faithful, there is no real connection between the sacred Presence and the bread and wine. Christ is present in the heart of the worthy receiver, not in the Sacrament. Consequently there is no provision for adoration of the elements. Their objection to the present form is expressed strongly :

“ Let us have done with shuffling and juggling, let us look facts in the face ; the Communion Service in the present Book of Common Prayer has no adequate expression of belief in the real objective Presence of our Lord in the Holy Sacrament . . . it is therefore not a fit or tolerable vehicle of Catholic worship.”

As to the Sacrifice of the Mass, it says that our present form is so skilfully worded as to exclude the doctrine. “ There is in the whole service not one word about offering the divine Victim ; on the contrary all such expressions are rigidly expunged.” It regrets the omission of all commemoration of our Lady and the Saints, of prayer for the dead, and of all mention of the prayers and merits of the Saints. The conclusion is that “ the majority of Church of England people have no faith.” They are in a state of “ invincible ignorance.” In our opinion there was no adequate repudiation of these views on the part of the Anglo-Catholics, and we must take it that they represent the attitude of at any rate a strong section of the extremists.

Purpose of the Alternative Forms.

Bearing this in mind, we may ask, Is it wise to pursue the policy of adopting alternative forms of the Canon ? It is easy to say that the proposed forms do not imply any change of doctrine, but here we have evidence that at least one section of the Anglo-Catholics definitely desire not merely a change in the direction of the Roman Mass, but the Roman Mass itself. If no change in doctrine is desired, what is the necessity for any alteration in our present

Consecration Prayer? For over three hundred and fifty years all Schools of Thought in the Church of England have been content to use it. The change is now desired mainly by one party, and the sympathies of that party are distinctly with those who lament the Reformation with tears and in ashes. We shall only deceive ourselves if we do not clearly recognize that the desire of those who require the Green Book alternative is to secure some form of words that will either definitely state or sufficiently imply the Presence of our Lord under the forms of the Bread and Wine. Having obtained this, their next step is to secure the introduction of some words that again will either definitely state or sufficiently imply that with Christ present in the elements some form of sacrifice is offered. We maintain that this is the aim, however it may be disguised for the present in the first alternative form. Evangelical Churchmen have to decide if it is a policy that they can support. It is no use saying that we must not adopt a "non possumus" attitude, that we must be positive and not negative, dynamic not static. This is a plain matter of principle on which a decision must be made.

The Real Presence and the Doctrine of Sacrifice.

The assertion of the Real Presence is contained in the words, "bless and sanctify these Thy gifts and creatures of Bread and Wine that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of Thy most dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ." Having secured this, the idea of a sacrifice is contained in the following sections, in the words: "We Thy humble servants do celebrate and make here, before Thy divine Majesty, with these Thy holy gifts, the Memorial which Thy Son hath willed us to make," followed immediately by the petition: "We entirely desire Thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving."

This form has been adopted by the House of Clergy, and we can only regard it as a reversal of the doctrine maintained by the great divines of our Church since the Reformation. We may recall that this is practically the form that enabled Bishop Gardiner to say that it contained all he required to express the doctrine of the Mass, and that led Cranmer in consequence to adopt our present form in order that the intention of the Reformers could not be misunderstood. We have no doubt that in spite of any assurances that may

be given by the present representatives of the Anglo-Catholics, we shall soon hear complaints of the inadequacy of the new form, if adopted, and we shall then have a bold demand for a clearer expression of the Real Presence and the doctrine of Sacrifice. This policy has been definitely stated. It is the intention "to familiarize the main body of the Church of England with the general conception of an extended Eucharistic prayer," and after ten years' use of it to request the authorization of any Canon they please.

The House of Laity and Reservation.

The chief decision in the House of Laity was the rejection of an amendment to the proposal for the providing for Reservation for the Sick. After a very full discussion in which the weight of the argument was in favour of the amendment it was lost by a majority of 127 to 96. The serious nature of this decision cannot be exaggerated. It indicates another reversal of the teaching and practice of our Church since the Reformation. In our present Prayer Book provision is made for the actual consecration in the presence of the sick person. There is abundant evidence that even in the poorest parish no difficulty need be experienced in carrying this out, and in the great majority of cases it is consonant with the desires of the Communicants. The practice of Reservation has been urged on behalf of those clergy who object to celebrate unless they are fasting. This ecclesiastical custom, which has never been the rule of the Reformed Church of England, is allowed to interfere with the spiritual comfort of the sick. The practice mentioned by Justin Martyr of conveying the elements to sick members of the Church is often quoted, but it should be remembered that this was done immediately after the actual service, in order that those who were prevented from being present might join in the fellowship of the worshippers. It was not the practice of Reservation in the modern sense. It has been more correctly described as Concurrent or Extended Communion, and probably few would object to it today, if the elements were conveyed simply and without ceremony to the sick, if they so desired.

The True Purpose of Reservation.

But the desire for Reservation on the part of a large section of those who are clamouring for it has quite a different origin. In the

Roman Church the wafer is reserved in the Tabernacle behind the altar in order that "the faithful" may offer their prayer and adoration to our Lord present there as "the Prisoner of the Tabernacle." A large number of the Anglo-Catholic clergy have made it clear that they desire Reservation for the same purpose. In fact the Sacrament is so reserved in some of our Churches at the present time, in spite of the definite instructions of the Prayer Book, which the Clergy have promised to obey. No secret is made of the desire, and indeed the intention of using the Reserved Sacrament for purposes of adoration. The Roman Catholic service of Benediction has already been adopted in some churches. The Bishop of Zanzibar has exhorted the Anglo-Catholics to fight for the Tabernacle. At the Anglo-Catholic Congress at the Albert Hall he begged his hearers "not to yield one inch to those who would for any reason or specious excuse deprive you of your tabernacles." They were to make a stand for the tabernacle, as a step towards reunion—obviously with the Church of Rome. Other members of the party have made their desire equally clear, while a few years ago nearly a thousand priests addressed a Memorial to the Bishops asserting that as they understood an attempt was to be made to deny to the faithful the right of access to the Reserved Sacrament for purposes of devotion, they thought it their duty to state their conviction that compliance with such a restriction could not rightly be demanded and would not be given. In face of these facts we can only regard the decision of the House of Laity in regard to Reservation as unwise. Five members of the Committee appointed to draw up the revision proposals expressed their view very strongly on the point in a note appended to the Report, which note was reprinted in the January number of *THE CHURCHMAN*.

The Voice of the Laity.

That great numbers of the faithful laity of the Church of England hold the view disapproving of Reservation expressed in the Note of Protest signed by the majority of the lay members of the Revision Committee, is becoming increasingly clear; and their opposition to any change being made in the central part of the Holy Communion Service is hardly less marked. Whenever they are given the opportunity of expressing their views on these questions, they declare themselves in no uncertain terms in support of the

position taken up by those who, in the House of Clergy and the House of Laity, have resolutely opposed the changes sought to be introduced into the Communion Office and the Order for the Communion of the Sick. Two illustrations of this fact come readily to mind.

The Manchester Conference.

We refer, first, to the very remarkable voting in the Manchester Diocesan Conference, which throws an interesting light upon the real attitude of the laity. The Standing Committee prepared five sets of questions dealing with various matters connected with Revision; these were sent to members of the Conference with the convening circular, and, after discussion, were voted on in the Conference. Passing over the questions with which we are not now immediately concerned, we find that on the question, "Are you in favour of permitting any alternative forms of Holy Communion Service?" the voting of the lay members showed a majority of 133 against such permission, the actual figures showing that 120 answered the question in the affirmative and 253 in the negative. In like manner the question, "Are you in favour of permitting the use of Vestments?" was negatived by the laity by a majority of 107, the figures being *Yes*, 131; *No*, 238. The voting against Reservation was the most decisive of all. The question, "Are you in favour of permitting reservation for the purposes of Communion?" was rejected by a majority of 137, the figures being *Yes*, 117; *No*, 254; whilst the further question, "Are you in favour of permitting reservation for any other purpose?" was defeated by 319 negative, against 29 affirmative votes—a majority of 190 against such permission. The significance of these figures is unmistakable, and can hardly fail to make a deep impression upon the House of Bishops, with whom, so far as the Church Assembly is concerned, the final word rests. It is much to be hoped that the Manchester *questionnaire* will be adopted by other diocesan conferences. The result would be singularly illuminating. But we cannot pass from this subject without saying a word or two about the clerical votes on these questions at the Manchester Conference. On alternative forms of the Holy Communion Service, 94 clergy voted *Yes* and 64 *No*; on Vestments, 101 voted *Yes* and 56 *No*; on reservation for Communion, 81 voted *Yes* and 71 *No*; and on reservation for any other purpose, only 6 voted *Yes*, and 135 *No*. It is satisfactory to

find that only half a dozen clergy voted for reservation for any other purpose than the Communion of the Sick, but on the other questions the clerical voting is to be regretted. A survey of the whole position seems to show that certainly in the Manchester diocese there is a deep cleavage between clerical and lay opinion, and we believe that if similar voting were taken in the other dioceses of the country it would show that on these great controversial questions there is a wide difference of opinion between clergy and laity—the majority of the laity being determined to stand by the Reformation settlement, and the majority of the clergy being willing to allow changes to be made which, in their practical effect, would tend to undo the work of the Reformation. The laity will, we hope, stand firm: if they do so they may yet save the Church of England.

Bishop Knox's Memorial.

The other illustration of the attitude of the laity on these questions, to which we refer, is to be found in the widespread acceptance of the Memorial to the House of Bishops, prepared by Bishop E. A. Knox, late Bishop of Manchester. The Memorial, which is open to the signature of adult communicants, is directed against (1) any alteration in the Communion Service; (2) any alternative Communion Service; and (3) the practice of Reservation. The Memorial, at the time of writing, has been signed by upwards of 79,000 adult communicants, and fresh signatures are being received every day. It is proposed to close the list on March 31, but we hope that, if need be, the time will be extended, as it is difficult sufficiently to cover the whole country within a limited period; and this much may safely be said, that wherever the Memorial is made known and its purpose explained to the people there is never any lack of signatures. Copies of the petition may be obtained from the Secretary, Bishop Knox Memorial, New Alliance Club, 10 Stratford Place, W.1; and should there be any of our readers who have not yet seen it, we counsel them to get a copy at once, sign it themselves, and seek to get other signatures. But even if no other signatures are received, the fact that the Memorial has already been signed by upwards of 79,000 adult communicants—and these, rather than the clergy, are the persons most vitally interested in the changes proposed—should be sufficient

to show the Bishops that to sanction changes in the Communion Service and to permit Reservation will most certainly not bring peace to the Church of England, but will tend to bring strife, disunion, and disruption into almost every parish in the land.

“Still a Minority.”

There are not wanting signs that members of the Anglo-Catholic party are becoming not a little anxious at the development of the opposition to these features in the Revision proposals. The voting at the Manchester Diocesan Conference on the one hand, and the activities of Bishop Knox on the other, are portents the significance of which cannot be misunderstood. The *Church Times* (March 7) warns its readers that the Manchester decision, though “not unexpected,” is “a reminder of facts that must not be ignored.” “So much has been won,” it continues, “that there is a grave danger of exaggerating gains and forgetting the fact that the Catholics in the Church of England are still a minority, and that they are in anything but an unassailable position.” It essays to comfort its readers by the assurance that “the Catholic revival goes on with increasing enthusiasm,” and that “a very large proportion of the piety and devotion of the Church is to be found in the Catholic ranks”; but it urges that it must “never be forgotten—it is a fact that must shape policy—that Catholics are still a minority.” Of course there is nothing new in the disclosure that the Anglo-Catholics are in a minority—every one knows it; what is new is that the *Church Times* should so candidly show that it is alive to the position; and loyal Churchmen, who stand by the Prayer Book as it is, object to the “minority” seeking to impose its will upon the majority.

“Prayer Book and Press.”

Under this heading the *Guardian* (March 14) had a front-page note which showed it is very angry with Bishop Knox, so angry, indeed, that it forgot to be as courteous as it usually is. The Bishop's offence seems to be that he has been writing letters to *The Times* pointing out the disastrous results to the Church of England which would follow the passing into law of the scheme of Prayer Book Revision. These letters, which to most well-instructed people have appeared to be weighty and impressive, to the *Guardian* seem to

“contain positively grotesque pictures,” and Dr. Knox himself is said to be “so well qualified to evoke” the “prejudices of the average man, ill-educated in religious matters.” We do not stop to discuss the innuendo contained in these words, but we do suggest that there is no reason to be rude. The whole note, however, was in questionable taste. Complaining that no reply to the Bishop’s letters came from any of the members in charge of the Measure in the Church Assembly, nor from a single diocesan bishop, the *Guardian* says: “We are aware of the answer which can be made—that religious controversy in the daily Press is undesirable, and that Dr. Knox’s letters will have little influence. But Dr. Knox is a bishop; and the average layman does not know anything else about him; and judges that, being a bishop, he ought to be an authority on the Prayer Book. Further, there was no need for an extended controversy. A simple refutation of Dr. Knox’s misstatements, signed by one or two bishops, or some of the members in charge of the Measure, would have been a sufficient reply.” But this “refutation” is not quite so simple a task as the *Guardian* imagines, and it may well be that those whom it thinks should have replied, shrank from the task. In this they were wise.

England and Rome.

But Prayer Book Revision is not the only subject that has been and still is a distinct source of anxiety to Churchpeople. The Malines Conversations have had a seriously disturbing effect not upon Churchmen only, but upon the whole country. During the three months which have elapsed since the fact of the Conversations was first made known by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the subject has been very fully discussed and the objections to Reunion with Rome have been faithfully pointed out. But the matter has by no means been laid to rest; indeed, there is one outstanding point which cannot but continue to cause the very gravest anxiety. So complete has been the manifestation of the country’s displeasure that we should like to feel that there is no chance of the “Conversations” being resumed, but that is the one point upon which there is no certainty at all; on the contrary, the Archbishop’s original statement that it is impossible to doubt that “further conversations must follow from the careful talks already held” still holds good. His Grace has been approached by many corre-

spondents about the original conversations: not once has he said a single word, as far as we can discover, to show the matter will not be pursued. It may be, indeed, that "further conversations" have already taken place, for if the previous conferences were held in secret, why should not those that follow be secret too? That is the real danger, and the Primate should face the fact that the country is seriously alarmed about it.

Protest by Sir W. Joynson-Hicks.

If the Archbishop were inclined to ignore the protests of minor people—and we agree he could not be expected to answer every protest—he clearly could not pass over so careful and so reasoned a letter as that addressed to him by Sir William Joynson-Hicks, who expressed "amazement and alarm" at what had taken place. To private conferences of individual members of the respective churches he had no objection, but "the matter," he said, "takes a different aspect when such conferences have behind them any official or quasi-official authorization, and from your Grace's letter it is clear that some such authorization has been given in the present case." He continued:—

"Your Grace appears to consider that what has taken place comes within the spirit and letter of the appeal to all Christian people which was issued by the last Lambeth Conference, but the language of that Appeal does not in either of the passages cited bear this construction. In both it is formal and official action by the authorities of the Churches concerned which is contemplated." Sir William Joynson-Hicks then asked whether we are to suppose that His Grace regards persons holding the views of Lord Halifax, Bishop Howard Frere, Bishop Gore and Dr. Kidd as the only or the truest representatives of the position of the English Church? He quoted a passage from the Report of the Committee of the Lambeth Conference of 1888 on the subject of Union with Rome, and said that a similar Committee of the next Lambeth Conference (1897) took the same view. "I submit," he continued, "that nothing has occurred since to show that the Church of Rome is prepared to modify her claims or to reform her doctrines, and as Archbishop Benson wrote in May, 1895, 'Any corporate union with Rome, as long as she retains her distinctive and erroneous doctrines and advances her present unprimitive and unscriptural claims, is absolutely visionary and impossible.'"

This was well and clearly put and the argument was by no means met by the Archbishop in what he himself called his "careful"

reply. His Grace was evidently more concerned to suggest that his correspondent took "much too circumscribed and even petty a view of the great fact in our contemporary religious life that we are solemnly trying in the faith and fear of GOD to press upon the Christian people of our time a bolder and truer view of what Christian unity means as something for which our DIVINE LORD prayed on the last evening of His earthly life." The Archbishop gave his reasons why he cannot rule out the Church of Rome from efforts after unity, but he does not seem sufficiently to allow for the fact that it is impossible for the Church of England even to think of Reunion with Rome until Rome has reformed herself and shown some desire to return to Primitive truth. It is clear that Rome has no such intention. Cardinal Bourne, in his Lenten Pastoral, put that fact beyond dispute. How is it possible, therefore, for English Churchpeople to view with anything but the utmost dismay any "conversations" which have as their object the clearing away of misunderstandings with a view to reunion? There is no room for misunderstanding about the Roman position, and there ought not to be any concerning the position of the English Church. Between the two Churches there is a great gulf which can never be bridged until Rome changes.

The Cheltenham Conference.

In view of the discussions over the Malines affair it is all to the good that the subject chosen for discussion at the Cheltenham Conference in June next should be "The Church of England and the Church of Rome." The subject will be dealt with as follows:— "Historical Survey," by Mr. G. G. Coulton and the Rev. C. J. Offer; "The Theory of the Papacy," by the Rev. Dr. R. H. Murray and the Rev. G. Foster Carter; "The Doctrine of the Church and Ministry," by the Rev. Chancellor Kerr and the Rev. Harold Drown; "Transubstantiation and the Mass," by the Archdeacon of Macclesfield and the Rev. B. C. Jackson; "Penance and the Confessional," by the Rev. T. C. Hammond and the Rev. Oliver A. C. Irwin; "Approaches to Rome by Conferences," by the Rev. Alfred Fawkes and the Rev. G. F. Irwin; "Approaches to Rome by Doctrine and Practices," by Bishop Knox and the Rev. H. J. Carpenter. It is hoped to print the full text of all the principal papers in the July issue of THE CHURCHMAN.