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Review.

The Church and the Ornaments Rubric. Letters between the REV. HENRY M. FLETCHER, M.A., and E. B. WHEATLEY BALME, Esq., M.A. Rivingtons, 1883.
The Church Quarterly Review. October, 1883. Spottiswoode and Co.

OUR readers, it may be, will be tired of this subject. They cannot be more so than we are. But as long as the besiegers of a fort continue their attack, those whose duty it is to hold it must needs be on the watch to resist.

IN THE CHURCHMAN for July 1880, and May 1881, it was shown that Mr. James Parker's attacks on the Folkestone Decision had not only failed to shake it, but left it stronger than before.

But we suppose the Ritualists, strong in the sense of their own infallibility, took no more notice of our arguments than the Bishops at the Savoy Conference did of what they considered the Puritan hypercriticism.

A letter, however, from Mr. Fletcher led Mr. Wheatley Balme to make a fresh and independent search into the original authorities, from which he has drawn, in the book now before us, a clear and forcible argument in a style which goes far to make a dry subject interesting.

He comes nearly to the same conclusion which we have done. He rightly takes his stand on the ground, that not only in the title to the Acts of Elizabeth and Charles, but also in the express intention and aim of the legislators, UNIFORMITY, and especially in the ornaments of the minister, was one main object: and that the theory of a maximum and minimum is "absolutely without foundation; an ingenious device suggested by the exigencies of recent controversy."

This work the *Church Quarterly Review* endeavours to answer. But what is the answer? It is, in fact, little more than a *rechauffée* of Mr. James Parker, though avoiding some of his blunders. Space only permits us to notice the main points.

On the Injunctions of 1559 the Reviewer, after noticing Mr. W. Balme's admission that their issuing was not the "other order" required by the Act, argues (p. 51) that the Bishop's "Interpretations" of 1561 could not mend the defect. "Could," he asks, "two incompetent authorities make up a competent one? Obviously not." But if the defect of the first consisted only in its wanting the consent contained in the second, the obviousness is the other way.

Again, in p. 56, we have Mr. Parker's old argument against the Advertisements, drawn from the fact that in 1561 the Queen, in her exercise of another power given to her by the Act, wrote a formal letter under the great seal. And the Reviewer says, "had she meant to act on the first proviso in the same clause in 1566, we may be morally certain that she would have done so with similar publicity and explicitness." For our own part we do not perceive that "moral certainty." Few people act with perfect consistency at all times. And to expect a woman to show that rare faculty, in a matter which involves so much of a woman's weakness as dress, argues small knowledge of human nature.

To the objection against the maximum and minimum theory there is an attempted answer (p. 58), drawn from the change of directions given in 1559 and 1666 respecting the more or less frequent celebration of the Holy Communion. But there we have the words "AT LEAST." And common sense might teach us, that there might well be a desire to have

more frequent services in some places and at some times than could always and everywhere be had ; while yet in the mode of performance absolute uniformity was aimed at. But uniformity is so utterly scorned now, that people find it difficult to realize the importance of it in the minds of our forefathers.

On the Advertisements we may make two other remarks. (1) Several of the strongest proofs of their adoption by the Queen, as for instance her letter of August 1571, and the Articles of 1583-84, are not noticed either by Mr. Wheatley Balme nor by the Reviewer. (2) Cosin's note, quoted in this Review, as so often before, does not show an accurate acquaintance with the fact. It assumes that some "qualification" is appointed as to the "other order," whereas in fact there is none, except the "advice" which was given. His other note, which the Reviewer *does not* quote, is equally inaccurate. "But the Act of Parliament, I see, refers to the Canons, and until such time as other order be taken" (Works, v. 42). The reference to the Canons is only in Cosin's imagination. It would have been better if Nicholls had left the notes of Cosin's youth in the obscurity in which he himself had left them. He knew far less of the history of Elizabeth's day than we do. On this his namesake Richard Cosin, who was Dean of Arches in 1583, was a far higher authority. In his "Answer" he speaks of "the injunctions and advertisements published by sufficient authority," p. 66. (See also pp. 67 and 74.)

And now for the last revision, on which the conclusion arrived at by the Reviewer seems to us to rest on two false assumptions: 1st, that to the Committee of Revision the meaning of the rubric must have been just as plain as if the words "Alb and Chasuble" had been printed there: and 2nd, that THEIR understanding of the meaning of the rubric must govern the law, although neither Convocation nor Parliament so understood it.

But the latter assumption is untenable. It is the intention of the legislators that governs the law.

And for the former the only evidence given consists of, 1st, some "considerations," evidently of Puritan origin, which are said to have been laid before a committee in 1641 not mentioned by Clarendon, and which certainly came to nothing; 2nd, the objection taken by the Puritans at the Savoy Conference; and 3rd, some proposals also made by the Puritan party six years after the Act was passed. So that from first to last the meaning now attached to the rubric by the Ritualists was that given to it by the Puritans. We need not tell the Reviewer that it is quite possible for one party to attach one meaning to a document, which to another party conveys a very different one.

We have shown in our former paper that there was quite ground enough to lead Churchmen to interpret the rubric by the Canons. We know that in fact Sparrow, Sancroft, and others, *did* so understand it. And we can see that they all *MUST* have so understood it, unless they meant the title, preamble, and main purpose expressed in the Act to be contradicted by a single obscure clause in a schedule, and which, in the sense now given to it, it is confessed they never acted or meant to act on; unless, that is, they meant variety when they spoke of uniformity.

We have been so far compelled to differ from our contemporary; but we entirely agree with one observation he makes. After noticing what Mr. Wheatley Balme says of the primitiveness of stole and surplice, he goes on (p. 68): "and a distinctive Eucharistic vesture is both prized and assailed on grounds much more serious . . . because, specially, it is associated with a belief in the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacerdotal character of the celebrant." Let those of us who are disposed to give way, remember this.