

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

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

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

¶ Then may follow immediately :

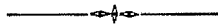
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, etc. Amen.

¶ Or, if in the forenoon, *Benedictus* may be first said or sung; or in the afternoon or evening, *Nunc Dimittis*; and this may be followed at the prayer-desk by the versicles and responses, O Lord, show Thy mercy upon us, etc., the Collect or Collects for the day, and the two which follow, with such of the Prayers and Thanksgivings upon several occasions as would have been said that day in the ordinary course, concluding with the Prayer of St. Chrysostom and the Grace.

At the end of the office for public baptism in the Prayer-Book of 1549 this direction is given: "And so let the congregation depart in the name of the Lord." This must mean that the remainder of the Morning or Evening Prayer was to be omitted after a baptism, and in that book the service ended with the third collect.

I am not vain enough to suppose that this form is ever likely to be adopted. And I have not troubled the printer with all the varieties of type that would be required in a prayer-book. But I think somebody ought to make a beginning in such reforms as I have indicated; and I commend my attempt to the fair consideration of those who, like myself, are not satisfied to go on indefinitely with the forms we have.

J. FOXLEY.



THE MONTH.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury's Call to Prayer for spiritual revival and the appointment of Whit-Sunday as the day of universal intercession throughout the Church of England are dealt with in another part of this issue, but we cannot refrain from expressing our deep thankfulness for this Call from the Chief Pastor of our Church. The following extract from the Archbishop's letter points to the greatest need of the Church to-day :

We are accustomed to dwell, and rightly, upon the multiplied activities, the manifold opportunities of service, which "our times," to use a large phrase, have brought within the reach of all. There is real need that we should recall ourselves and one another to the permanent necessity of personal fitness for such service—a fitness which He alone can give, for it involves deliberate self-surrender and the opening of the heart to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God.

Spiritual fitness and force for the purpose of doing God's work are primary essentials. As water never rises above its source, so work for God cannot possibly be higher or more effective than the state of our personal life of communion with Him. As is the source, so will be the stream, and if we

are to do work of the best possible kind, and in the best possible way, we must imitate those royal workmen of David's day, and "dwell with the King for His work" (1 Chron. iv. 23).

The Declaration on Biblical Criticism, issued privately in April, and made public last month, has come with a great shock of surprise and pain, even to many who were aware of the extent to which Biblical Criticism of an extreme type has been making way in the Church during recent years. The Declaration is put forth by 101 clergymen, among whom are included some names of prominent dignitaries. They put in a plea for a New Testament criticism which shall be welcomed in the same way as, according to the signatories, modern Old Testament criticism has been received. They urge the danger lest the door of Ordination should be closed to a number of men "who patiently and reverently apply historical methods to the Gospel records," and they consider it perilous that the faith of souls should be built "primarily upon details of New Testament narrative, the historical validity of which must ultimately be determined in the court of trained research." There is no little indefiniteness, not to say ambiguity, about these utterances, but this vagueness is probably inevitable when it is remembered that the signatories include men of very different views and tendencies. We are not surprised at this attempt to do for the New Testament what certain forms of modern criticism have done for the Old Testament—dissecting it, separating its supposed strata, pronouncing some parts as possessing only "inferior attestation," and rejecting other portions as unhistorical. But what is very perplexing is how all this is to be reconciled with that "unfeigned belief" in all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments which the signatories expressed at their ordination. It has long been evident that criticism could not, and would not, stop at the Old Testament; but it has come as a profound shock that the incursion into the New Testament sphere should be expedited and welcomed by so large and important a body of English clergy. While, however, we do not minimize the gravity of this pronouncement, we are in no sort of fear either for the New Testament or for the Church of England. The basis of the historic credibility of the Apostolic writings is too well assured to be affected by any genuine criticism. What we do deprecate and oppose with all possible force is the relegation of the decision of the historical validity of the New Testament narratives to a "court of trained research." It is as though the New Testament, which the Church has had and lived by for centuries, were still in the

crucible, and cannot be relied upon until this court has pronounced its decisions. It is no mere obscurantism that counsels and demands opposition to the attitude maintained in this Declaration. Discussion has ever been welcomed in the Church, and there is no wish to stifle it; but, at least, we may demand that all the factors of the situation shall be taken into account in the course of our considerations. The able editor of the *British Weekly*, Dr. Robertson Nicoll, a little while ago gave expression to these very true and pertinent remarks :

It seems to be assumed that a knowledge of original documents and the latest critical pronouncements confers the critical faculty. Nothing could be further from the truth. The faculty of judgment is often entirely absent from many minds steeped in the literature of their subject. . . . The faculty that sees Christ is spiritual. . . . The fact remains and is cardinal—spiritual things are spiritually discerned.

If the criticism of the New Testament is conducted on such lines as these there need be no fear of the outcome, though we venture to predict that the results will not be at all in keeping with the principles that underlie this Declaration.

In connection with the above subject, we cannot do better than call renewed attention to the admirable and weighty letter written by the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe to his clergy :

1. No "discussion" of any subject has ever been held to be "inadmissible for our Church." From Atheism, through Pantheism, up to the highest Arianism, the Church has encouraged her sons, duly equipped and qualified, to discuss every opinion upon every subject amply and fearlessly. But it does not follow that heresy is entitled to a place in her shrines and to be maintained by her children. It is a very transparent fallacy to confound liberty of thought with indifference to the contract solemnly undertaken when Holy Orders were conferred.

2. With regard to the fear expressed "lest the door of ordination should be closed to men who patiently and reverently apply historical methods to the Gospel records," is it proposed to open these doors to all such men, whatever be the conclusions they accept? Are all doctrinal tests to be swept away? Are patience and reverence to be the only requirements? If so, the Ordination Services and the Creeds must be promptly and thoroughly revised; but in the meantime the use of our present service must not be made a sacrilegious mockery.

3. But if any *credenda* whatsoever are to remain, upon what should the Church of Christ insist, if not upon these—that the humanity of her Lord was miraculous and stainless, and that He has overcome the grave?

With these, as facts in history, our historical religion must stand or fall. So far as I know, these are the only dogmas for the denial of which Holy Orders have lately been refused. I must therefore suppose that the object of the document under consideration is to have these treated as open questions.

These able and forceful words sum up the whole matter, and the Declaration will, after all, not prove an unmixed evil if it

elicits such valued comments as those of Bishop Chadwick. It will also serve a very useful purpose by showing more clearly than ever where men are on this solemn subject. It is always well to have issues definitely marked, and if the publication of this document tends to make men who hold by the Apostolic authority of the New Testament declare themselves still more fearlessly on the side of Apostolic and Catholic truth, untold good will arise to the whole Church.

At a recent sitting of the York Convocation the Archbishop made a useful and welcome statement on the subject of the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection of our Lord. Some two years ago he received from the Lower House an *articulus cleri*, praying the Upper House to take steps to make it manifest to all that Convocation holds fast to the primitive faith on these subjects, and that only those who hold this faith should be permitted to exercise ministry in the Church of England. The Archbishop said that he had been quite unable to discover any departure in these respects from the true faith within the Church of England, and that under these circumstances he did not feel justified in obtaining such a pronouncement in respect to errors of doctrine. It is very reassuring to be informed of this result of the Archbishop of York's inquiries, and, although we never imagined such a possibility, to be told that no Bishop of the Church of England would think of admitting to the ministry anyone who denied either or both of these doctrines. In this connection we may call attention to the valuable words of Bishop Welldon at the May Meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in the course of an able and forceful speech on the general subject of Biblical Criticism :

As regards the question of miracles there can be no compromise whatever. The greatest of all miracles is the Incarnation, and when that miracle is believed no other miracle of the New Testament, or of the Old, can be held to be entirely impossible. To whittle away those miraculous events which lie about the Incarnation, such as the Virgin-Birth of our Lord and His Resurrection, is not to afford any relief to one who believes. who has faith in His Divinity ; it is to make that faith more arduous and more difficult.

The Bishop's attitude is assuredly the right one. To rationalize and reduce the supernatural element in Christianity is practically to destroy its characteristic features and essential power.

The statement of the Bishop of Birmingham on the subject of Evening Communion has naturally attracted great attention, and we confess to a feeling of great disappointment, though

not altogether of surprise, as we read it. The one fact that stands out from all others in Dr. Gore's statement is the virtual ignoring of the testimony of Holy Scripture in this connection. The institution of the Lord's Supper in the evening and the records of the Acts and the Epistles seem to count for very little in Dr. Gore's pronouncement. This, however, is exactly in keeping with the Bishop's discussion of the Holy Communion itself in his well-known work, "The Body of Christ," which he calls "An Enquiry into the Institution and Doctrine of Holy Communion." Notwithstanding this subtitle, Dr. Gore does not consider the teaching of the New Testament until after nearly 250 pages of discussion, and even then he takes only twenty pages for Scripture teaching. Yet at the Church Congress at Bristol in 1903 Dr. Gore spoke very clearly of Scripture as "the final testing-ground of doctrine." The Church, by which is meant the Church from the third century onwards, and not the Church as including its most primitive ages, is to Bishop Gore and his school, to all intents and purposes, the supreme authority, and Scripture is, in consequence, virtually set aside. This, to us, is the most serious issue involved in the present controversy. It is not only, or even chiefly, whether Holy Communion may or may not be administered in the evening, but whether or not the Word of God, as received from Apostolic days, is to be accepted by us all as the final and ultimate source of authority for things essential. Yet even on the question of the history of Evening Communion we have the weighty, and we should have thought conclusive, testimony of Bishop Lightfoot that Evening Communion continued in the Church for at least 150 years, and in view of this fact it is difficult to understand on what grounds Bishop Gore and others are opposing Evening Communion from the standpoint of primitive Church history. All that is asked for is liberty to engage in a practice which has the sanction of the authority of our Lord and His Apostles, of the earliest ages of the Church, and of the spiritual experience of thousands at the present day. We claim the liberty for Evening Communion which we gladly give for Early Communion. This is the wise and true policy of the Bishop of Carlisle, who recently wrote to a clergyman, leaving it to him to take such steps as he considered were best calculated to lead to the fullest edification of his flock. It is impossible not to regret the way in which the Bishop of Birmingham has thus thrown the weight of his great influence on one side of his diocese. If it be said that he was bound to reply to the appeal made to him, and in replying was compelled to state his own views, we would venture respectfully to urge that a Bishop is, after all, the Bishop of the whole diocese, and not of a part

only, and that in any case he might have avoided issuing a document which, on any showing, must seem to many to convey a rebuke to some of the most valued clergy of his new diocese.

The evidential value of the May Meetings has again been proved this year. When the number of the Societies, their varied operations, and the extent of their work, are considered, it can readily be seen what a testimony they bear to the vital principles of Evangelical religion. In spite of acute denominational differences, the underlying unity of aim and effort is manifest to all. These Societies, working at home and abroad, stand for the great principles of the New Testament in a way that should command the attention of all who are interested in the religious phenomena of our time. Almost day after day for weeks Exeter Hall and other places are filled with large audiences of keen, enthusiastic folk from all parts of the country, whose hearts are aglow with love to Christ and His cause, and who meet to encourage one another and for the furtherance of their views by means of the Society in which they are interested. Is there anything at all like this in other sections of the religious life of our day? Can those who favour other aspects of Christian thought and life show anything to equal this exhibition of vital and essential Christianity? It is, of course, easy enough to wax sarcastic over the "bray of Exeter Hall," but there is truth and reality behind the "bray" which demands attention, and, what is more, gets it. The vitality and vigour of the May Meetings were never more in evidence than this year, and in spite of large deficits in several Societies there was no note of depression or discouragement. The almost infinite possibilities of missionary work throughout the world formed the keynote of the gatherings, and in this attitude of faith and hope is the best assurance of spiritual revival all over the world.

The enthronement of the Bishop of Worcester was made the occasion of a happy innovation in the form of a Charge to the Diocese, and Dr. Yeatman-Biggs' earnest and forceful words afford high promise of his able and statesmanlike guidance of his new diocese. First and foremost among the needs of the Church he instances that of "the close attention to the practical effect of religion on the common life," which could only be done "by quiet men working out duty in the daily round and the common task." This, the Bishop urged, was the bounden duty of the whole Church, both clergy and laity, and he pleaded for a fuller recognition of the presence of the Holy Spirit as dwelling in the entire Christian body. The

following words reveal a bold policy which the Bishop is prepared to further :

The work of the many supplementing the special gifts of the few must, I earnestly believe, be found not only in the priestly and pastoral action of the clergy, but in a ministry of the laity, exercised not only in such things as counsel, philanthropy, and finance, but in actual ministering in the congregation. A well-considered, well-agreed plan, for admitting into our consecrated buildings the ministrations of laymen, duly qualified, and licensed with as great care, in regard to doctrine, discipline, and morals, as we take in licensing the priest and deacon, would at all events, in some instances, enable work to be done which is now not done, and would restore to the Church a strength which belongs to her, but has been for centuries half lost.

This is full of hope, and it is along some such lines that the truest Church Reform will be accomplished.

Canon Beeching, preaching recently in Westminster Abbey, asked what might at first sight seem to be a very unnecessary question. He wondered whether men are giving up reading the Gospels. He made this inquiry because of a book which presented "a caricature of the portrait of Christ, and especially a travesty of His doctrine about sin," and yet had, with one or two honourable exceptions, been praised enthusiastically by the daily and weekly press. The chief point of the writer of the book is that Christ consorted with sinners "because He found them more interesting than the good people, who were stupid," and that Christ "always loved the sinner as being the nearest possible approach to the perfection of man." Further, the book urges that our Lord "regarded sin and suffering as being in themselves beautiful and holy things and modes of perfection." Canon Beeching may well be astonished at the chorus of praise of a book containing this awful teaching. It is, we fear, another instance of that moral "decadence" which has come upon the present age by reason of the problem novels and other forms of shamelessness in current writing. We are profoundly grateful to Canon Beeching for this noble protest against some of the most dangerous tendencies of the present day, and we must add our cordial thanks for the review of the book to which Canon Beeching referred, in the *Guardian* of March 22. We have seldom read an acuter or more faithful notice of a specious and dangerous work. The book itself ought never to have been published, but, being issued, readers have a right to be told of its real character and warned against its dangers. This Canon Beeching and the *Guardian*, at any rate, have wisely and ably done.

It is not often that a secular paper has such a leading article as that which appeared in the *Liverpool Daily Post*

of April 17, on the visit of Evan Roberts, the Welsh Revivalist, to Liverpool. After speaking of "the strength of the personal redemption idea in the popular religion of this country," the writer goes on to suggest what he calls "the permanent moral" of the Welsh Revival. We had better give his own words :

Are our clergy in their regular ministrations justified in laying aside or leaving to occasional revivalists, as they undoubtedly have done for years, the active prosecution of the doctrine and practice of conversion ? Whenever British religion has been earnest and zealous this element has been its key. Because it is in the background in the beautiful quietism of Keble, the sacerdotalism of Pusey, the reasoned continuity of Newman's Catholicism, the Oxford Movement has, after all, been a penchant rather than a popular power. There is, of course, much converting grace in High Church teaching, and conversion was long the main business of the Evangelicals, who had to import it into Anglican usage and phraseology in order to do under Church of England forms their work in the world. But of late years the direct insistence on the New Birth has gone much into desuetude. Yet, if there is one irrefragable human fact, denied by none of any faith, it is that it must be right and saving (in every sense) to turn with full purpose of heart to good and to God. The extent to which this must be connected, either in rationale or method, with this or that dogma must be decided by this and that Church. The important thing for the world is that all Churches alike should insist on the one central necessity on which Evan Roberts has been insisting.

No truer word has been addressed to the clergy for a long while, and we could wish that it might find an entrance into every parsonage in our land. We must take heed to the writer's earnest and pointed criticism, and especially to his remark that whenever religion has been earnest and zealous the prosecution of the doctrine and practice of conversion has been most prominent. If the counsels of the article were heeded we should soon see a revival breaking forth all over the country.

The discussion in the Canterbury Convocation on the proposed two new dioceses in East Anglia was a valuable and informing contribution to the question of the increase of the Episcopate. It is proposed, in view of the approaching vacancy in the See of Ely, to form two new dioceses, one for the County of Suffolk and one for the County of Essex, the Diocese of St. Albans to consist of Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. The Bishop of St. Albans was easily able to show the inconveniences and even absurdities of the present area of his diocese, while the Bishops of Ely and Norwich added their weighty testimonies to the necessity of subdivision and rearrangement. There seems every likelihood of the matter being carried forward to a successful issue at no distant date, and it will certainly conduce to the more effective life and

work of the Church in East Anglia. The question of Suffragan *versus* Diocesan Bishops is also being discussed, the Dean of Westminster apparently being strongly in favour of the former method of increasing the Episcopate. Surely, however, the status of a Suffragan Bishop is too uncertain and indefinite to allow this to be the way out of our difficulties. Far better would it be to form some statesmanlike plan of rearrangement of present dioceses which would provide for a large increase of Diocesan Bishops, with smaller stipends and without the incubus of episcopal palaces. Only in some such way as this can we expect the Church system to be at its best and to accomplish the greatest results for God.

The discussion in the Upper House of Convocation of Canterbury on the Athanasian Creed has again recalled attention to a perennial source of controversy. A resolution was first of all carried which expressed the view that the minatory clauses suggested to many hearers "a more unqualified statement than Scripture warrants." As a consequence of this, it was proposed to take steps to remove these clauses from the Creed, leaving the Confession of Faith in the Incarnation and the Trinity intact. Although this proposal seems to be the logical outcome of the former resolution, it was lost by a large majority, and a proposal of the Bishop of Birmingham was carried, to the effect that the Bishop of the Diocese should be authorized, upon application from an incumbent with sufficient reason shown, to dispense with the recitation of the Athanasian Creed. We cannot help feeling that this would create a very unsatisfactory situation. It would introduce confusion into congregations by leaving them to the mercy of clerical changes and personal idiosyncrasies, and it would also strengthen the position of those who contend for a *jus liturgicum* for the Episcopate, which the Church of England has never yet recognised. The omission of the minatory clauses, while continuing the public recital of the Creed, seems to us the fairest compromise, and we are sorry that after all the Bishops decided to postpone the permanent solution of the problem till the Lambeth Conference of 1908. To hang up the matter in this way is, we fear, only to continue the difficulties and confusions which attend the present state of opinion and practice in our Church in relation to the use of this Creed.

The Christian Endeavour Movement is making good progress in the Church of England, and we are not surprised that the clergy are discovering the value of this organization

for their young people. It originated over twenty years ago in America, and has rapidly spread over the world. It is intended to band together the young people of the congregation in loyalty to, and service for, their own Church. Its motto is, "For Christ and the Church," and the methods consist of various kinds of meetings and ways of active working in the parish. The special value of the movement is its spiritual character and the absence of all secular and merely entertaining elements. Its interdenominational (not undenominational) character has probably made Churchmen look askance at it; but there is no ground for fear, and no reason why the most pronounced Churchman should not have a society in his parish. The movement certainly stands for interdenominational goodwill in the same sense that the Bible Society and the Religious Tract Society do, but there is nothing prejudicial or contrary to the most devoted loyalty to our Church in adherence to the movement. Quite recently the Bishops of Durham and Liverpool have become associated with the Church of England Union of Christian Endeavour by becoming patrons, and the number of societies is increasing month by month. If any of our readers would like to become better acquainted with this remarkable and valuable movement, they should write to the Rev. F. J. Horsefield, St. Silas's Vicarage, Bristol, for information. For the development of young people's work, and for binding them to the Church, we know of nothing more effective than a Christian Endeavour Society.

Notices of Books.

The Holy Communion. By REV. A. E. BARNES-LAWRENCE. London: Bemrose and Sons, Ltd. Price, paper 1s. net.

We give a very hearty welcome to this most valuable little book. With one exception, to be mentioned presently, we have nothing but the warmest commendation and praise for it as a clear, definite, earnest, devotional statement of the doctrine of Holy Scripture and the Prayer-Book on the Holy Communion. Mr. Barnes-Lawrence walks with a sure tread over the ground, and we know of no manual that is so likely to be of use to thoughtful and educated people both old and young. The style is clear, the illustrations are apt and fresh, and the spiritual tone is truly delightful. The theological notes, which are wisely put at the end of the book, are models of clearness, balance, and