

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/robbadshaw>

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

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

selves on their strict attention to the letter of the law, and are so bitter in their opposition to the advocates of Evening Communion, will at least lay this point seriously to heart. If it comes to a matter of Church rule, it is clear where the right is. But, as we have said, we have no desire in the least to press a point of this kind. Our object has been, by examining all authorities, to show those who are advocates of the Evening administration, with a view to bringing the people into the full Communion of the Church, that they are perfectly right, and are justified in doing so. We must adapt the services of our Church to meet all the changes and exigencies of the times. If she is to retain her high position as the National Church, it will only be as she thus meets the religious wants of the nation. It is clear from the manner in which our churches are crowded in the evening, as compared with the earlier services, that the evening service is that which the masses are best able to attend. On this ground, therefore, although we ourselves may prefer the midday celebration, we strongly recommend the practice of administering the Holy Communion in the evening.

PRESBYTER.

Reviews.

Memoir of Henry Venn, B.D. By WILLIAM KNIGHT, M.A., Rector of Pitt Portion, Tiverton, and Chaplain to his Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; formerly Secretary of the Church Missionary Society. A New Edition. With Portrait and Appendix. Pp. 515. Seeley, Jackson, & Halliday.

IN the CHURCHMAN of June, 1880, in reviewing the "Memoir of the Rev. H. Venn," published in May, we gave a sketch of Mr. Venn's career down to the year 1841. The CHURCHMAN of November contained an article, written by one who well knew Henry Venn, dealing with the second portion of the biography, that portion which relates to the last thirty of the fifty years of Mr. Venn's ministerial life—1841-1872—during which he was the honorary secretary of the Church Missionary Society. The volume which was published in May, 1880, contained, as our readers may remember, "The Missionary Secretariat," written by Mr. Knight, and a "Biographical Sketch," by Mr. Venn's sons. We have now before us a new edition of this work, a revised and compressed Memoir, prepared, as the Preface tells us, "at the instance of many friends, who hoped that such a life and such a character might be more widely studied if presented in a less costly form." For the book as it now appears Mr. Knight is solely responsible. He has adopted "the valuable Biographical Sketch almost without change," endeavouring to carry forward, as far as the materials at his command enabled, a record of the latter and more important years of his life. The additional matter to which Mr. Knight has had access will be found full of interest and highly characteristic.

"I have had the opportunity," he writes, "of availing myself more largely of his private journal; many important and graphic letters have been added; and I have to express my thanks to the Rev. Prebendary Wilson, the Rev. Canon Clayton, and the Rev. G. T. Fox, for very valuable additions to the correspondence; and last, but not least, to Miss Caroline E. Stephen, for a life-like portraiture of her revered uncle." Mr. Knight, in his Preface, further states, that in order not to interfere with the continuity of the work, he has, along with other documents, removed to the Appendix Mr. Venn's own narratives of the early years of the Church Missionary Society, and his Suggestions for the Organization of Native Churches. To the new edition, also, have been added Mr. Venn's own memoranda of his share in the debates of the two notable Commissions of which he was a member. The result of the various changes and additions made by Mr. Knight—made, we venture to remark, with literary tact and good judgment—is a really interesting as well as valuable volume; not too bulky, not too costly; full of useful matter, but very readable.

To show the arrangement in the present edition, we may quote the Table of Contents, abridged, as follows:—

Early Years, 1796-1827.
Ministerial and Domestic, 1827-1839.
Letters, 1835-1846.
The C.M.S.
Private Journal, 1849-1856.
Personal Traits.
Letters, 1846-1872.
The Close.
Appendix.

In the Appendix, as we have said, appear, with other valuable documents, memoranda of Mr. Venn's speeches in the Jerusalem Chamber, on Clerical Subscription, in the year 1864, and on Ritual in the year 1867-8. Mr. Venn's share in these two Royal Commissions is mentioned in the "Recollections" of the Earl of Chichester. "Few of the members of these Commissions," says the noble Earl, "came to the consideration of the subjects referred to them with a fuller or more accurate knowledge of the questions involved."

The resolutions proposed by Mr. Venn, in 1867, have an especial interest at the present time; and those of our readers who have the first edition of the Memoir, will be glad to see them in the CHURCHMAN. We make no apology for quoting them in full:—

Resolutions proposed for adoption by the Rev. H. VENN.

1. That it appears, from evidence taken by the Commissioners, that during the last few years a diversity of practice has arisen in the ornaments used in the churches and chapels of the United Church of England and Ireland, and in the vestments worn by the ministers thereof at the time of their ministrations.
2. That such diversity in the vestments has been of very recent origin, there having been almost perfect uniformity for the three previous centuries in the vestments worn—a uniformity to which witness has been borne by the conscientious testimony of the episcopal and archidiaconal Articles of Inquiry during that period; and that the practice with respect to the ornaments of the Church during the same period attained almost the same degree of uniformity.
3. That it is in the highest degree advisable that the clergy should have clear and definite directions having the force of the law to guide them in such matters.
4. That, nevertheless, the rubric on ornaments and vestments has received different interpretations from high legal authorities, and consequently the clergy are left in a state of doubt and uncertainty as to what is required of them in these matters.

5. That as the resumption of certain ministerial vestments has been attempted by a comparatively small party in the Church, Her Majesty's injunctions to the Commissioners to secure a general uniformity of practice can only be fairly attained by checking the novel usages of a very small minority in favour of the usages of an overwhelming majority having the sanction of three centuries in their support.

6. That as it appears to the Commissioners that some of the clergy who have adopted the peculiar vestments have done so with a view of assimilating the services of the Church to those which existed before the Reformation, and that a very large majority of the members of the Church regard the practices in question in the same light, it is essential to the future peace and welfare of the Church that the directions of the Rubric should be made clear and explicit in favour of the usage of the last three centuries, fortified as it is by the order of the 58th Canon (1604) passed by the Clergy themselves in Convocation, and by the unanimous voice of the Bishops and Archdeacons of the Church during the same period, as proclaimed in their Articles of Inquiry at their visitations.

H. VENN.

In a speech on July 18th, 1867—headed in the work before us—“Fears of Secession not to be considered in Legislation,” Mr. Venn said:—

If I did not regard the time of the Commission too precious, I should have no difficulty in showing the essential difference between the position of Whitefield and Wesley and the Ritualists of the present day—between the liberty accorded to zealous men to preach the Gospel of salvation to crowded churches, and liberty accorded to innovators upon the usage of three hundred years in the matter of vestments and ornaments; but I content myself with simply entering a protest against the analogy which it has been attempted to establish.

In the same speech Mr. Venn pointed out that the introduction of vestments is a step towards the introduction of Romish doctrine. He entirely concurred with the Bishop of London that the exclusion of vestments must be made absolute—that this was the main matter referred to in the terms of their Commission as “essential.” Upon all non-essentials, “he trusted, he should be found as willing to make concessions, and to allow to bishops a controlling and dispensing power, as any other member of the Commission.” He would venture once more (we still quote from the memorandum) to urge upon his brother Commissioners the importance of acting upon their own conviction of what was best for the interests of the Church as an institution for maintaining the truth, and instructing the people in the fear and love of God. He trusted that none would depart from this principle in deference to the supposed wishes of any considerable body of the clergy, or from the fear of secession. He had no apprehension of anything like a secession; but, he added, “amongst those who are hovering between the Church of Rome and the Church of England, a few might leave us if our decision be at variance with their wishes.”

On Dec 8th, 1867, the position of the Communion Table being under discussion, Mr. Venn pointed out that the removal of the Table from the place where the Romish altar had stood was one of the most important and significant acts of the Reformers. It swept away all idea of the Mass. So long as the present rubric remained, the dangers of the Laudian position, at the east end of the chancel, were minimized. A resolution which took away the lawful alternative of placing the Table within the body of the church, he argued, would compromise a great Protestant principle. Here and elsewhere, we may remark, Mr. Venn's argument is terse and lucid; he touches the point; no words are wasted, while no flaw can be detected, for he had taken pains to be thoroughly well-informed. The disastrous results of Laud's policy he touches upon with a note of warning really needed in these days.

In a speech on the repetition of the words of administration (Jan. 30

1868), Mr. Venn gives some very interesting facts. Dr. Scott, son of Lord Stowell, it appears, was consulted by the Rev. J. Venn, who had been inhibited because he repeated the words once when he delivered the bread to a rail-full. Mr. Venn, and his brother John, had recourse to the best legal advice which Doctors Commons afforded; and Dr. Scott's opinion was (1) as to *ambiguity*: there being an ambiguity in the expression ". . . to any one . . ." the bishop must interpret and decide according to the preface to the Prayer Book; and (2) as to *necessity*, (in cases where there are large numbers of communicants): the Bishop being bound by his office to see the law of the Church carried out, he alone could give any sanction for its relaxation. After receiving this opinion Mr. Venn's brother at once, of course, gave way; he delivered the Communion to near 400 communicants individually. His Bishop, however, shortly afterwards, advised him to revert to the old plan. The conclusion drawn, and rightly, as we think, is that *where the Bishop sanctions it*, the minister is justified in repeating the words once to a "rail-full" of communicants.¹

A letter from the Rev. C. Baring, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, and subsequently of Durham, to the Rev. John Venn, in the year 1845, is one of the treasures of the new edition. Mr. Baring, one of the noblest men the Church of England has ever known, took a lively interest in the secretariat of Mr. Venn.² He wrote:—

I have now been almost a year and a half in constant attendance at the Committees; and much as I value your brother's talents generally, it is only there that his real value can be seen, as a most influential and successful promoter of his Master's Kingdom; his calm judgment and long-sighted views of results, his firmness and settled opinions upon all doctrinal and ecclesiastical matters, his kindness of heart and manner, his straightforward honesty and candour,—all these have won him not merely the confidence of the Committee, but have given him a power with these and authority which no other secretary has before possessed. Again and again have I heard from the lips of many of the Committee almost the same language—that they considered it one of the most marked proofs of God's goodness to the Society, the having raised up such a person at a most critical time, without whose aid they could scarcely have hoped to have weathered the storms which were surrounding them.

Miss C. E. Stephen's Recollections are also added. They derive, perhaps (says Mr. Knight), an especial interest from their being the estimate of one whose associations were not confined to those over whom Mr. Venn exercised a leading influence.

"My father³ used to say that my uncle lived in a 'paradise of certainties,' and so, indeed, he did. The effect of his 'steadfast immovable' 'grasp, not only of divine things, but of all the deeper and broader truths 'of human nature was to reassure weaker souls, and, by the sense of 'stability and security it imparted, to afford a shelter for the freest play 'of natural feeling and of innocent merriment. Indeed, his abundant, 'racy humour, and his unfailing sweetness of temper, made a perpetual 'sunshine around him in family life. To me, there was always a strange

¹ It is quite unnecessary, perhaps, to add, that the words of the Prayer Book should not be altered, i.e. the plural form should not be used.

² In a deeply interesting letter from Lord Chichester appear some striking sentences. The venerated President of the Church Missionary Society remarks that perhaps Mr. Venn's "greatest service to the Society and to the cause of missions was his firm unflinching adherence to the great Evangelical principles upon which the Society was originally founded."

³ The Right Hon. Sir James Stephen, K.C.B., who married Mr. Venn's second sister.

"sense of freedom in his presence. He could afford to sit loose in trifles, "and there was nothing severe in his positiveness. He would give his "opinion with a characteristic decision even upon subjects upon which he "had no special knowledge ; but he would welcome everyone else's opinion, "however opposite to his own, and however inferior to his their experience "or information. In his capacious sympathy he would find room and tender "indulgence for everyone's fancies, even for the minutest of feminine "weaknesses. None but those who lived in close daily intimacy with "him could fathom the self-denying tenderness of his dealing with others. "There was no talk about it ; no apparent putting of himself on one side. "Yet, somehow, the smooth sides of things did invariably turn towards "others ; and anything troublesome or uncomfortable would naturally "gravitate towards him, and be silently disposed of by him, unless we "were perpetually on the watch to prevent his already overburdened "strength being spent in sparing us young and idle ones some little dis- "comfort. Not that he would treat anyone as idle or useless. On the con- "trary, he would set us all to work, and would, at times, work the willing "and able ones rather hard. He was openhanded in everything, and would "willingly give anyone a share in his work. The impulse to give was most "characteristic of him : time, money, sympathy, attention—all were ready "to be bestowed at a moment's notice. But there must have been a stern "self-control ordering everything, for there never was any waste, or any "running short. He had to a remarkable degree the power of keeping "things in their proper places ; of laying aside the most anxious work "when his part for the time was done. He would go out from heavy "work into his garden for a spare ten minutes with a mind as free as if "Salisbury Square had never existed. No one surely ever had a keener "delight in Nature, or enjoyed it with a more elastic freshness of spirit. "Those were indeed happy days, when, after endless patiently accepted "delays, he would at last get free for his short yearly holiday, and would "abandon himself with the innocent whole-hearted glee of a child to the "enjoyment of expeditions on the Scotch or Welsh hills—barometer or "spy-glass in hand-full of schemes for measurements to be taken, or "observations to be made, but first, with almost equal interest, showing "points of view for the sketches of the party, and comfortable resting- "places for the less active ones. And then in the evenings how he would "delight in the hour or two spent together in talking over the adventures "of the day, or telling stories (who else ever told them as he did ?) of old "times, or in reading and discussion. One year I remember his choosing "the Epistle to the Romans for our evening reading, and many and lively "were the discussions to which particular passages gave rise. He made it "wonderfully easy for the younger generation to speak their minds to him, "even upon points of difference of a very serious kind. He met one with "such downright fairness and respect for whatever was serious and genuine "that it was impossible not to be frank with him. And to me, at least, "though there were to the last some points upon which I could not see "eye to eye with him, there was in his utterances upon religious subjects "a weight of testimony such as I think but one other human voice ever "carried with it to my mind. It was not the fact of his 'certainty' that so "impressed me, but a sense of a depth of the experience out of which his "convictions had been wrought. The texture of his faith was of an ex- "traordinary solidity ; and to those who knew him long and intimately "it derived an awful authority, from the holiness and the pure uprightness "of his most faithful life. None who so knew him could fail to know "certainly that his life was fed from within by a deep and fresh spring of "living water, springing up into everlasting life."

C. E. S.

We had marked other passages in the new edition of this Memoir for quotation and comment; but, from lack of space, we must content ourselves with earnestly recommending it. No book, probably, is better calculated to explain the true principles of sound and practical Evangelical Churchmanship. We ought to add, perhaps, that the book is well printed in good, clear type.

Ritual Conformity. Interpretations of the Rubrics of the Prayer Book, agreed upon by a Conference held at All Saints, Margaret Street, 1880-1881. Parker & Co. 1881.

(Concluding Notice.)

IT only remains to consider the Interpreters' view of the Ornaments Note. A brief sketch of its history may be prefixed. The Ornaments Note stood in King James's Prayer Book, of 1604, exactly as Elizabeth had left it. The only objection raised at the Hampton Court Conference which bore on it is thus recorded by Fuller, ("Ch. Hist." iii. 187):—

Mr. Knewstubs: I take exception at the wearing of the surplice, a kind of garment used by the priests of Isis.

His Majesty: I did not think, till of late, it had been borrowed from the heathen, because commonly called "a rag of Popery." Seeing now we border not upon heathens, neither are any of them conversant with or commorant amongst us, thereby to be confirmed in Paganism, I see no reason but for comeliness sake it may be continued.

Mr. Chaderton afterwards fell on his knees and requested that the surplice might not be urged on some godly ministers in Lancashire, especially on the vicar of Rochdale. As the king seemed inclined to give way, Mr. Knewstubs made a similar request for Suffolk; but this roused his majesty's ire, and he "concluded on unity and conformity."

Thus the Ritual question of the day was "Surplice or no Surplice," and no other garments savouring of pre-Reformation ceremonial were brought to the front.

In the Millenary Petition, presented at about the same time, various matters of complaint touching Church Services were brought forward, and among them that the cap and surplice should not be urged (194).

The Prayer Book was issued the same year; and after Queen Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity, there was inserted the King's Proclamation, in which it was stated that certain explanations had been agreed to after the consultation he had with the bishops and others (conforming and non-conforming). All persons were now required to conform, and offenders were to be punished.

This same year came the *Canons*, which are to our Church what college statutes are to a college; and the directions as to vestments and ritual given therein, are the Canonical interpretation of the Ornaments Note and of other Rubrics, and must hold good as such, until that interpretation is overthrown by further Canonical authority.

The directions are remarkably explicit as to vestments. The twenty-fourth Canon gives order, that in Cathedrals and Collegiate Churches the principal minister at the Holy Communion shall use a decent Cope, being assisted with the Gospeller and Epistler agreeably according to the Advertisements published anno 7 Eliz.

The twenty-fifth Canon orders that in these same Churches when there is no Communion, it shall be sufficient to wear surplices. The official clergy (Deans, &c.), being graduates, shall daily, at the times both of prayer and preaching, wear hoods with their surplices.

The seventeenth Canon also gives rules for University students to

wear surplices and hoods in their chapels on Sundays, Holy-days, and Eves. So much for Colleges.

The eighteenth Canon states that "no man shall cover his head in the church or chapel in the time of Divine Service, except he have some infirmity; in which case let him wear a night-cap or coif." This Canon, however, is aimed against irreverence on the part of the laity, rather than against birettas, &c., which do not seem to have been in vogue at that time.

We now come to the directions for Parish Churches.

The fifty-eighth Canon directs that every minister saying the public prayers, or ministering the Sacraments or other rites of the Church, shall wear a decent and comely surplice, with sleeves, to be provided at the charge of the parish. And if any question arise touching the matter, decency or comeliness thereof, it shall be decided by the discretion of the Ordinary. Graduates shall wear their hoods, at such times, upon their surplices. It shall be lawful for non-graduates to wear upon their surplices, instead of hoods, some decent tippet of black, so it be not of silk.

Preaching is not included under this Canon, and is dealt with as distinct from "ministration" all through the Canons. The right to minister did not, and does not, carry with it the right to preach. The seventy-fourth Canon gives certain directions for the apparel (*i.e.*, the outer garments) of ecclesiastical persons, from archbishops down to curates, and from head to foot, first in the public capacity, secondly, when at a journey, and thirdly, in private houses and their studies. The Canon does not, indeed, name preaching, but in regulating the academical dress as gown, hood, and square cap, practically determines that as the proper costume of the preacher, unless ordered otherwise.

We now pass on to the Prayer Book of 1662. A great deal had happened since the time of James I., and one most important step had been taken by Charles I., in 1637; a Prayer Book had been drawn up for use in the Church of Scotland. This book is a link in the history of our Rubrics, and was evidently before the revisers of 1662. Its influence may be seen in a number of minute changes, but especially in two things, first, that to some extent it reverted to King Edward's first Book (1549) in the arrangement of the Communion Service, and secondly, that the word "minister" was changed therein to presbyter, a change which paved the way for the introduction of the word priest into a considerably large number of Rubrics in our Prayer Book.

The Ornaments Note¹ in the Scotch Prayer Book throws no light on the present question, and we pass on to Charles II.'s Prayer Book.

As the Prayer Book of 1604 was preceded by the Hampton Court Conference, so the Prayer Book of 1662 was preceded by the Savoy Conference. A paper of exceptions against the Book of 1604 had been drawn up as a preliminary step by Bishop Reynolds, Mr. Calamy, and others.

Under the eighteenth general head exception is taken to the fact that public worship may not be celebrated by any minister that does not wear a surplice, and when the writers of the paper come to particulars they remark on the Ornaments Note: "Forasmuch as this Rubric seemeth to bring back the cope, albe, &c., and other vestments forbidden by the Common Prayer Book, 5 and 6, Edward VI., and so our reasons alleged against ceremonies under our eighteenth general exception, we desire that it may be wholly left out."

¹ It runs thus:—And here is to be noted, that the presbyter or minister at the time of the Communion, and at other times in his ministration, shall use such ornaments in the church as are prescribed, or shall be by his Majesty, or his successors, according to the Act of Parliament provided in that behalf.

The Bishops, in their answer to this last point, content themselves by saying:—

For the reasons given in our answer to the eighteenth general, whither you refer us, we think it fit that the rubric continue as it is.

And their answer to the eighteenth general begins thus:—

We are now come to the main and principal demand as is pretended—viz., the abolishing the laws which impose any ceremonies, especially three—the surplice, the sign of the cross, and kneeling. These are the yoke, which, if removed, there might be peace.

After examining with some force, not to say asperity, the reasons for such proposals, they continue (§ 16):—

This in brief may here suffice for the surplice; that reason and experience teach that decent ornaments and habits preserve reverence, and are held, therefore, necessary to the solemnity of royal acts and acts of justice, and why not as well to the solemnity of religious worship. And in particular no habit more suitable than white linen, which resembles purity and beauty, wherein angels have appeared (Rev. xv.), fit for those whom the Scripture calls angels; and this habit was ancient. [They add a reference to Chrys. "Hom." 60, ad Antioch.]

The Ornaments Note was thus one out of a large number of rubrics to which Baxter's party made objection, but the Bishops did not deign to discuss the objection in detail. Other things were more important, and came up again and again. Bishop Cosin suggested that any points which objectors considered contrary to God's Word, or inexpedient, should be referred to Convocation. Baxter, in his answer, reverted to the cross at Baptism, the surplice in ministration, and kneeling at Communion, but to no other vestments or ornaments ("Reliquæ Baxterianæ," 340-343).

This was in 1661. In the following year the new Prayer Book was issued, having prefixed to it Elizabeth's Act and the new and more stringent Act of Charles II.

The Ornaments Note was shortened, the reference to Elizabeth's Act being left out of it, and the old ornaments for church and minister to be in use. Is there anything in the change of expression in the Note which would invalidate the canonical interpretation of it as established in 1604? Were any new Canons introduced, rendering the Canons of 1604 obsolete, and ordering the restoration of those church ornaments and vestments of 1549 which had become practically illegal? There are no such Canons. Thus the old canonical rules stand—viz., the cope at the Communion for colleges and cathedrals, the surplice for ministers in parish churches, and the gown for preaching.

That this is the case is further to be shown from the fact that we possess the Visitation Articles of the very Bishops to whom we owe this amended form of the Ornaments Note—Archbishops Sheldon and Sancroft, Bishops Cosin, Wren, Sanderson, and others—who with one voice enforce the surplice as the vestment for public prayers and ministering the Sacraments and other rites of the Church. Thus any interpretation of the Ornaments Note which would introduce a vestment instead of or over and above the surplice for the administration of the Lord's Supper, excepting the cope in certain cases, goes against both the canonical interpretation of King James's Prayer Book and the official judgment of those who revised the Prayer Book in 1662.

How it is that the stole or scarf is retained, or how it is that the cope has dropped out, remains a mystery, so far as Church documents are concerned; but, with these exceptions, the duty of the minister as to vestments seems clear as daylight.

But what say the interpreters to these things? They shut their eyes to the canonical and official commentaries on the Note as given in 1604 or 1662; they shut their eyes to the fact that Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity, referred to in the Note as it used to stand, provided for further action as to vestments; and that this action would become (and, by the issue of the Advertisements, *did become*) an authoritative explanation of the way in which the Note was to be obeyed. To all this they shut their eyes; and they read the Note as if there had been no official acts settling its interpretation in the reigns of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles II. More than this: they pass glibly over the "Erastian" words, "*By the Authority of Parliament*," which have been significantly retained in the Note all through the changes of the Prayer Book. These words impose considerable restrictions on the usages which might be adopted on the supposition that no changes had been authorized since 1552. But, as we have seen, such changes have been authorized,¹ and it is in vain that we are told to ignore the documents of the past 330 years, and go back to that date.

The pamphlet on Ritual Conformity which we have been criticizing will hardly commend itself to the student of the Prayer Book as an accurate exposition. It cannot even be called ingenious. It will be but a broken reed for any incumbent to rely upon when refusing to obey the counsels of his Bishop.

How far a Bishop has a dispensing power is another matter. Probably it would be right to say that wherever long-established custom has departed from the letter of the rubric, wherever there are departures from the rubric in order to meet the changed circumstances of the people, or "for more expedition," or for "edification," wherever there are two possible interpretations of a rubric, wherever the Church as a whole or the congregation in particular takes offence, on some tangible grounds, at the proceedings of an incumbent—in these and similar cases a Bishop is called upon to intervene, and to see that the letter of the ritual is not strained too tightly nor relaxed too freely. As for the phrase, "canonical obedience," of which we have heard a good deal of late, it is not to be found in the Prayer Book, and can only mean obedience to the Bishops when acting in accordance with the Canons of 1604 and the Prayer Book of 1662, and with the law of the land and the rule of God's Word. The last question and answer in the Service for the Ordination of Priests seem to shut us up to obedience to our Bishops in all matters of ceremonial and rubrical observance on which there can be a shadow of doubt. And we may be thankful that the laity, as well as the clergy, may resort to the Bishop for help and guidance in these matters.

It only remains to be asked, and it is done in no offensive spirit, what is the real reason why certain obsolete and illegal ornaments and vestments are urged upon us? The answer is very plain. It is because they symbolize (or are supposed to symbolize) pre-Reformation doctrine—not primitive doctrine, but "Catholic," the word "Catholic" being used in a very restricted sense, and not in the grand sense in which we find it in the Prayer Book. Pre-Reformation doctrine called for pre-Reformation ritual. If this can be found in the rubrics, the "Catholic" party are satisfied; if not, the party will break the rubrics, and cover themselves by the assertion that the "Protestant" party do the same

¹ Any student who desires to see a careful discussion of the Queen's advertisements and kindred topics may be referred to a learned pamphlet called "The Rubric; its History and Meaning," by J. Lewis, of the Inner Temple. Hamilton.

This accusation, however, will hardly bear looking into. Every man of sense can perceive that to break the letter of a rubric for more expedition, or for the convenience of the congregation under particular circumstances, where the breach involves no doctrinal change, is one thing; but to break the rubric in letter or spirit in order to get back to that kind of ceremonial, and consequently to that line of teaching, which is abhorrent to Scripture, Articles, and Prayer Book, is another thing. The two cannot be discussed on the same grounds.

R. B. G.

The Formation of Vegetable Mould by the Action of Worms, with Observations on their Habits. By CHARLES DARWIN, LL.D., F.R.S. London: John Murray. 1881.

SINCE John Ray, the pious father of zoology in England, published, two hundred years ago his *Essay on the Wisdom of God in Creation*, it would be difficult to name a work more fitted to display the apparently insignificant instruments by which the Creator accomplishes stupendous results than the one before us. The almost human intelligence of the dog, the marvellous instinct of the ant and the bee, have in all ages afforded problems for men of science and wonder to the vulgar. But that "worms of the earth," the very emblems of feebleness and insignificance, should not only furnish a congenial object of study to a mind that has aspired to trace the history of creation, but be shown to play a most important part in the economy of nature, and to contribute in no small degree to changes in the aspect of the earth's surface, will take many readers by surprise.

In a paper read before the Geological Society five-and-forty years ago, Mr. Darwin called attention to the fact that cinders and fragments of burnt marl thickly spread over a meadow were found after a few years lying some inches beneath the turf, but still forming an unbroken layer. That this apparent sinking of superficial bodies is due to the quantity of fine earth brought up from below by worms and spread over the surface in the form of castings, was suggested to him at the time by Mr. Wedgwood, of Maer Hall, Staffordshire, but has been since amply demonstrated by Mr. Darwin, and by Von Hensen, in Germany. In fact, as Mr. Darwin puts it, it is probable that the whole vegetable mould of the country has passed many times through the intestinal canals of worms, and would more appropriately be called animal mould than vegetable.

Small as each worm cast may seem, it has been calculated that in one case the total weight raised and spread out in a single year amounted to no less than eighteen tons per acre. In another, twenty-eight years sufficed to bury a dressing of marl twelve to fourteen inches beneath the surface. But more striking was the case of a field adjoining Mr. Darwin's house clothed with an extremely scanty vegetation, but thickly strewn with flints, many of them half the size of a child's head. Gradually, without any aid from man, they all disappeared, the soil improved, and in the course of thirty years the whole field was covered with a soft carpet of verdant grass, and on digging a trench, and cutting the turf off close to the roots, the stones were found full two feet below the grass.

The terraced ledges, so often seen on hill sides, are doubtless due to the same cause, and it is easy to see how denudation, or the erosion of elevated land and filling in of valleys, may be aided by the pulverisation and raising of the subsoil by worms, a process not merely mechanical, but chemical, since Mr. Julien has shown that the so-called "humic acids" are secreted in their stomachs.

The anatomy and physiology of worms Mr. Darwin leaves to others, contenting himself, as is his wont, with close and patient observation of

their habits. He finds that, as regards hearing, they are totally insensible to aerial vibrations, but very sensitive to those of solid bodies with which they may be in contact, as seen by placing flower-pots containing their burrows on a piano, when on striking a single note they instantly retreated. Their smell seems cognisant of food only, for while they speedily scented out pieces of cabbage or of onions buried near them, they were quite indifferent to petroleum or tobacco-juice. If not engaged in feeding they are extremely sensitive to light, though the rudimentary structure of their eyes precludes the possibility of vision.

They draw leaves into their burrows, partly for food, smearing them with a secretion powerfully digestive both of starch and protoplasm, the only case of extra-gastric digestion in the animal kingdom, but strictly analogous to that of the carnivorous plants, *Dionaea*, *Drosera*, and the Pitcher plants demonstrated by Darwin himself, E. Ray Lankester, and others; partly to close their holes against the access of birds; and partly, he believes, to protect themselves from the contact with the cold night air. In this operation they generally seize the leaf by its apex, as the more suited to their purpose, avoiding the leaf-stalk, but choosing that end by preference when it happened to be the narrower. The same selective faculty (intelligence?) was shown when triangular pieces of paper were substituted for leaves, though, on the hypothesis of chance alone, they must at least as often have taken hold of one of the obtuser angles. When, as on gravel walks, there are no leaves, they close the mouths of their holes with heaps of small stones; and a lady, who had repeatedly swept these away, found one night, on going out with a lantern, the worms with their tails fixed in their burrows dragging with their mouths such stones as they could reach. One of these weighed two ounces.

Our space forbids our giving more, but we heartily recommend this study of the work of worms to those of our country friends who take an interest in the humblest creature that breathes as the handiwork of the Almighty.

Short Notices.

Swiss Letters and Alpine Poems. By the late FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL. Edited by her sister, J. MIRIAM CRANE. Pp. 340. J. Nisbet & Co.

In a prefatory note by Mrs. Crane we read:—"The world-wide interest excited by the writings and 'Memorials' of my lamented sister, Frances Ridley Havergal, has led her family to think that such of her letters as I have been able to collect, written to her home circle from Switzerland, will be acceptable to her many admirers. Some will feel pleasure in mentally revisiting the sublime scenery she describes with such vigour and simplicity; and others will be interested in observing how unconsciously these letters indicate her enthusiastic nature, her practical ability, and her ardent desire that every one should share her earthly pleasures and her heavenly aspirations." The frontispiece—a pleasing picture—is "Pension Wengen," with the Alps in the background; here, in 1876, Miss Havergal wrote "A Song in the Night," which begins,

I take this pain, Lord Jesus,
From Thine own hand:
The strength to bear it bravely,
Thou wilt command.