

to drive out clergy from all educational offices throughout the country. If our Church shows the white feather and does not build up as fast they pull down, our children's children will be educated, not by laymen merely, that were a small matter, but by materialists and atheists.

M.A. OXON.

ART. VI.—“ALMS AND OBLATIONS.”

A CRITICISM.

THE Dean of Chester contributed an article to the January number of THE CHURCHMAN, drawing out what he considers to be “the true meaning of the phrase” *alms and oblations* “in our book of common prayer”; and my Very Reverend friend has paid me the compliment of inviting my criticism on his arguments. We have often been antagonists in Convocation,—perhaps nearly as often have spoken and voted together—and he most good-naturedly tells me to do my worst, and the Editor, at his request, has very courteously placed these pages at my disposal for the purpose.

In my remarks I shall endeavour to keep within the lines marked out by the Dean, without touching on the doctrinal considerations that underlie the question, and “simply inquire what our prayer book says and means in this particular.”

It may be well to clear the way by explaining that the conclusions which I had arrived at many years ago, and as yet have seen no reason to abandon, must not be confounded with the opinion of those who hold that the “*oblations*” of the prayer refer exclusively to the gifts then set on the holy table. It was against them that the Dean’s argument was in the first instance directed; and though my disclaimer relieves me from the necessity of meeting a part of his argument, I have to admit that it brings me under the lash of an afterthought which appears as a note in the reprint of his essay:—“Some have thought that the “term *oblations* in our prayer book includes both the bread and “wine, and also money offerings. This seems to me the worst “theory of all. It has all the features of a helpless compromise, “and is refuted at every turn of the argument.”

This is plain-spoken. We, however, have to deal with the proofs. The Dean, no doubt, shows, with great variety of illustration, that *oblatio* in Latin, *oblations* in English, and the “collective phrase” *alms and oblations* were used, both before and after the last revision, of devout gifts for pious and charitable

uses. So far I agree with him; and more than this, I should have to admit that one of his quotations would be most damaging, unless we remembered, that when we call blacks men, we do not mean that whites are not men also. I cannot deny that Sancroft in his visitation articles of 1668 did use *oblations* in the narrower sense for which the Dean contends; and this, sixteen years after it had been otherwise used by the Revisers.

The Dean has proved that *oblations* is used in the sense of devotions or devout gifts; still this does not in any way tend to refute the "helpless compromise." In order to do this and exclude the oblations of bread and wine, it is not enough to have proved that *oblations* was used in some other sense, unless it had also been proved that this exhausted its significance, or, at least, that it could not have been used by the revisers in the sense to which he objects. But the word is of the very largest use, extending from the petty payments, which the law recognizes as due to the parochial clergy, to—with reverence be it spoken—the one Oblation on the Cross; and, inasmuch as it includes what is offered either to God or man, larger than sacrifice offered to God, whether material or otherwise, whether offerings for sin, or sacrifices of thanksgiving. I may add that oblation, according to the received use of this class of words, is employed actively and passively—actively of the manual or verbal act of offering; passively of that which is offered.

The Dean quotes the statutes of his own cathedral as an instance of the use of the Latin *oblatio* before the Reformation, in the restricted sense upon which he insists; but *oblatio* is used in the Vulgate of sacrifices and offerings—as for example, Acts xxiv. 17, Leviticus i. 3; and so too the *oblatio munda*, Malachi i. 11. From this prophecy, no doubt, came the liturgic use of the word. It is used in different forms of the *Ordo Romanus* of the bread and wine, and similarly by the Latin fathers; but I will only borrow from Bishop Bull a single quotation, where St. Augustine is blaming the man who is able to offer, but communicates from out of the oblation of another: "*Oblationes quæ in altari consecrantur offerte, erubescere debet homo idoneus, si de aliena oblatione communicet.*"¹

In the beginning of the ninth century the use of the word, for the bread and wine placed on the altar before consecration, seems to have been so general that, in a capitular of Charles the Great, it was thought necessary to explain that it was also used in the sense to which the Dean would now have us confine it.

Non solum sacrificia, quæ a sacerdotibus super altare Domino

¹ "Discourse on the Sacrifice of the Mass" (1688), p. 46.

consecrantur, sed oblationes fidelium dicuntur, quicquid Ei a fidelibus offeruntur.¹

But to come to our own country. In Anglo-Saxon times we have one of "the Canons of Ælfric" speaking of the "offrunga" (*oblations of bread and wine*) being set upon the altar.² In the coronation office in the "Liber Regalis," *oblatio* occurs in the rubric, where it is appointed that the king shall, by the hands of the celebrant, "place (*imponet*) *oblationem panis et vini*."³ In Bishop Lacy's Exeter Pontifical (fourteenth century) we have these same words, but here it is *manibus consecratoris sui*.⁴

Not to give any more examples from the Latin, in a late service for the consecration of nuns we have the English "oblations."

After the offertory he (*the bishop*) shall turn to the virgins then professed to receive their oblations, which virgins . . . then one after another by order, beginning at the eldest, shall offer an host and wine at the bishop's hand for their communion.⁵

I now pass on to the Coronation Service, only remarking that the service at the coronation of Charles II. was in all the main points essentially the same with our present service, and especially as to the Sovereign "offering" the bread and wine, and the subsequent "offering" of a wedge of gold "into the bason."

The coronation took place on the 23rd of April, 1661, the month after the signing of the warrant for the Savoy Conference (25th March).

Of the nine bishops who are named as taking part in the ceremonial (and others were probably present) five were members of the conference, or the Ely House Committee, or both, and therefore will have been witnesses of the King's oblation, the Bishop of Ely (Wren) being the one who "at the King's approach to the altar, delivered unto him bread and wine, which he there offered."

The rubrics of the existing service are as follows:—"And first the Queen offers bread and wine for the Communion, which. . . are by the Archbishop received from the Queen and reverently placed upon the altar." A prayer is then said, taken from the *Super oblata* of the Pontifical of Anglo-Saxon times, or *Secreta* as the prayer was called when the "Liber Regalis" was written. Then the Queen, kneeling as before, makes her second oblation, a purse of gold.

¹ Capit. ii. incerti anni, c. xiii., Baluzius, i. 522. This, with a correction of the grammar (*offertur*) was included in the canons of Isaac, Bishop of Langres.—Baluzius i. 1270.

² Thorpe, "Ancient Laws," ii. 348.

³ Maskell, "Monumenta Ritualia," 1846, iii. p. 42.

⁴ "Liber Pontificalis," Ed. Barnes, p. 148.

⁵ Maskell, "M. R.," ii. 326, 7.

. . . . And the Archbishop, coming to her, receives it into the bason, and placeth it upon the altar."

"After which the Archbishop says, O God, . . . graciously receive these oblations," &c. It may be observed that this prayer is in substitution of the oblatory portion of the prayer for the Church militant, and that "oblations" is in the plural, applying to the first oblation of the bread and wine, and the second of the purse of gold; just as of old this part of the service was called *oblatio panis et vini et unius marce*.¹

I have now to consider Cosin's Consecration Service. The Dean very justly observes that his authority "if it can be quoted for a point like this, is very worthy of attention." I entirely agree with him; but, inconsistently enough, he discredits his own witness, by charging him with contravening the Prayer Book as received by the Church and Realm; and this on a point where he is altogether to be trusted, and was very probably speaking with a quasi-synodal authority. He quotes the service from Canon Ornsby's "Correspondence of Bishop Cosin," who tells us it was used in 1668. The Dean remarks that we have no means of knowing when it was compiled, but it claims to be "according to the use of the Church of England;" and if I may venture on the conjecture, it is very probably the form which the bishop was commissioned to draw up by the unanimous vote of the united Upper Houses of Convocation on March 22, 1661.²

Certain offertory sentences are appointed to be read. "*Then shall the bishop reverently offer upon the Lord's table the act of consecrating the church. . . . then the bread and wine for the communion; and then his own alms and oblations. Then one of the priests shall receive the alms and oblations;*" and afterwards "*shall they go on in the service of the Communion*"—the prayer for the Church Militant being no doubt used without leaving out the words *alms and oblations*. The Dean finds in this only an example of *oblations* in the sense Sancroft used it in 1668, and begs the main question by asserting that "the second of these oblations was disallowed by Convocation and Parliament;" that is to say, that it contradicts the Prayer Book. But he says, "We have no reason for believing it was so used as to contradict the Prayer Book." Here I agree with him; but then I, unlike him, see in this rubric a very clear proof that the bread and wine were included in the prayer for the Church Militant. The bishop "offers" them; and according to the sound principle asserted by the Dean under his first head (though I differ from him as to the application he there makes of it), what is offered is an offering, and the words *offering* and *oblation* are synonymous.³

¹ Maskell, "M. R.," ii. 42 n.

² See Cardwell: "Syn. Anglic." 228. Ornsby, note, p. xiv.

³ The evidence of the Abbey Dore consecration service is still stronger

I have now proved, first, that "*oblations*," according to the received *usus loquendi* both before and after the revision, was used in the sense which the Dean disallows; and secondly, that the Revisers must have been familiar with this use—not that this does prove that they did so use it, though it goes a long way towards it.

I will now examine the several heads of the Dean's argument, so far as they bear upon the question between us. He begins by remarking, under the first head, that at the last revision "some very important and influential members of the Church of England desired that the unconsecrated bread and wine in the communion service should be made an oblation." I shall have occasion to supplement the evidence he here adduces by that of contemporary witnesses as to the feeling within the Church for the restoration of the oblation "in set form and ceremony." I may now first point out some confusion in the description of the three "prayer books with manuscript notes," as it affects the accuracy of the Dean's inference from them.¹

The earliest, or Durham Book, is rightly described as containing Bishop Cosin's preliminary notes. They are in his own writing, with some corrections in Sancroft's hand. The second, preserved in the Bodleian, is hardly described correctly as containing Sancroft's preliminary notes, although they are in his handwriting. We hear of him afterwards as Archbishop and Confessor; but at this time he was Cosin's chaplain and ama-

in my favour, whilst the words I mark in capitals seem to make more for the distinction as to the restricted use of *oblations* than any instances the Dean has brought forward, not excepting the one he quotes from Bishop Wren himself. The church was consecrated by Bishop Field in 1635 under a commission from Wren, then newly consecrated to the See of Hereford. Mr. Fuller Russell printed the service from a MS. in the British Museum. At the offertory, after the sentence "Let your light so shine," &c., the bishop "*offers and lays upon the table, first his act of consecration.*" He "*likewise layeth on the table*" certain conveyances in law for the erection and dotation of the church and rectory. "*Then . . . the bishop offereth [the bread and wine] also.*" "*The priest treatably proceedeth to read other of the sentences especially those that are FOR THE OBLATIONS AND NOT FOR THE ALMS—viz., the 2nd, the 6th . . . &c.*" "*All this while the chaplain standeth before the table, and receiveth the oblations of all that offer.*" It will be seen that the name "*oblations*" is given only to the money offerings; but as the parchments, and the bread and wine also were *offered*, they were "*oblations*" according to the Dean's own showing. The prayer is for the acceptance of "*oblations*," not "*alms*," the word alone authorized in the ordinary service as then prescribed in the prayer book.—"Form of the Consecration of the Parish Church of Abbey Dore" (1874) p. 27.)

¹ As the Dean mentions he did not know it had been done, he will be pleased to know that these books have been brought together, and every minute particular noted and recorded, with all the care he can have desired, by Mr. James Parker in his "Introduction to the Revisions of the Book of Common Prayer."

nuensis, though that position may very well have given him an opportunity of "pleading earnestly for" and "strongly urging" alterations he desired, which the Dean mentions that he did, upon some authority I have not had the advantage of examining, and he has not happened to specify.

This second book—the "Sancroft's Fair Copy," of Mr. Parker—contains the *secundæ curæ* of Cosin, in the form in which, as I have been in the habit of regarding it, he presented them to the Bishops' Committee at Ely House.

As I understand the question, the third, or photozincographed book, is the result of the Bishops' deliberations, as noted by Sancroft, with a summary¹ of the alterations and additions drawn up by Bishop Nicholson, the junior bishop on the committee. It was in that form presented to the Upper House, and certain amendments were afterwards entered in it, as they were resolved upon in the Upper and Lower Houses of Convocation. It was practically the official copy, and appears to have been so considered in the council chamber, and both Houses of Parliament;² but the Dean is mistaken in supposing that it was the book "which was subscribed by the Convocations of Canterbury and York, and annexed to the Act of Uniformity." The book so subscribed and annexed was in manuscript, "out of" this "fairly written."³

The Dean quotes from Cosin's "preliminary notes" (the book now in Cosin's library at Durham) the rubric there noted by him for the oblation of the bread and wine. In this certain erasures were made, but the rubric, as modified by him in Sancroft's corrected copy, still suggests "the priest shall then offer up and place upon the table" as in the Scotch book. The words "*offer up and*" were not adopted by the Ely House Committee. The rubric, as amended by them, is entered by Sancroft in the photozincographed book, and was passed by both Houses of Convocation without alteration. The Dean tells us, as noted above, that the phrase was "strongly recommended both by Cosin and Sancroft," but nevertheless "decisively rejected;" and he thereupon jumps to the conclusion that "the present rule embodies the deliberate rejection of a proposal that the placing of the bread and wine should be made an oblation."

Cardwell⁴ also laid great stress upon the omission of this word "offer"; and no doubt the objection proceeds upon the supposition that it is the only operative word of the rubric in so far as it recognizes the manual act as an act of oblation. But this seems to be an entire mistake. "Place" is, or at all events

¹ "Facsimile," pp. 3-6.

² "Journals, H. L.," xi. 393, 409; "H. C.," viii. 406.

³ "Journals, H. L.," xi. 426.

⁴ "Conferences," 382.

represents, the word that in our own and other languages has been used from the first for *setting on* the Lord's table the gifts which man drew near to offer. The rubrical use of *offerit* in this connection is a Roman peculiarity. It was new to any Anglican use, but was adopted in the Scotch book—not that for one moment I allow the justice of the sectarian invective that was heaped upon its framers as “Papists in disguise,” “factors of superstition,” and so forth. In so far as the charge of Romanizing did apply to them, it is but one of those many examples where, for want of better information, men (in those days as in the present) honestly opposed to distinctive Roman doctrines nevertheless are too apt to take Rome at her word as the witness to Catholic tradition on other points, especially of ceremonial and ritual, and accept Roman use, often recent Roman use, as a true survival of antiquity.

But to return to the “deliberate rejection.” It seems to me that the rubric as altered does direct an act of oblation, and that the bishops may have had reasons for considering it more suitable for the purpose than the form proposed by Cosin, which they did not adopt, or, as the Dean prefers the phrase, they rejected.¹ What their reasons may have been must be entirely matter of conjecture; but the instructions of the Savoy Conference were morally binding on them. It was required to “advise upon and review the book of common prayer, comparing the same with the most ancient liturgies which have been used in the Church in the primitive and purest times;” to “make such reasonable and necessary alterations . . . as shall be agreed upon as needful or expedient for the giving satisfaction unto tender consciences, . . . but avoiding as much as may be all unnecessary alterations in the form and liturgy wherewith the people are already acquainted, and have so long received in the Church of England.”²

Of the eight bishops on the Ely House Committee, Sheldon, Cosin, and Morley had been members of the Savoy Conference; and though that unhappily had come to nothing, they could not have had a better guide than the prudent and charitable principles laid down for its guidance. The mere name of the Scotch book was an offence to a large party favourable to the restoration in church and state; and the bringing back of the oblation had been singled out for special denunciation. The bishops certainly did not object to the primitive doctrine. Wren, as we have seen, had sanctioned the use of “offer” in the consecration

¹ It must be remembered that Cosin proposed “another method” with a prayer of oblation as in Edward VI.'s first book; but, as noted in Sancroft's handwriting at the bottom of the page, “My Lords, the Bishops at Ely House ordered all in the old method.”—See Cosin, “Works,” v. 518; Parker, “Introduction,” p. cccxii.

² See Warrant, Cardwell, “Conferences,” 300.

service at Abbey Dore. Cosin afterwards introduced it in the consecration service he was commissioned to prepare, or at least used, in 1668; and all of them must have sanctioned it by their presence at the coronation a few months before, or in any case have been familiar with its use in the service.

How then did they deal with the rubric so as to retain its purpose, and not endanger its acceptance by Convocation or Parliament? The first book of Edward VI. used the old English "set on" and (as their warrant suggested though the Dean,¹ puts "earlier liturgies" aside) they turned to the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom, perhaps not without a side-glance at the "ponat" of the Sarum use, and the "componat" of the Ebor. They would there have found, καὶ ὁ μὲν ἱερεὺς ἀποτίθει τὸ ἅγιον ποτήριον ἐν τῇ ἁγίᾳ τραπέζῃ—"And the priest shall set (place) the holy cup on the holy table." And so too of the dish, which, and not a paten, is used in the Eastern Church, for the holy loaf: Τὸν δὲ ἅγιον δίσκον . . . ἀποτίθει καὶ αὐτὸν τῇ ἁγίᾳ τραπέζῃ. "And the holy dish . . . he shall also set it upon the holy table."

And where do we find the authority of the Eastern Church for their rubric with its "place" and "table"? Where least of all some objectors would expect to find it—in the words of the Old Testament in their Septuagint version:—

Καὶ ἐπιθήσεις ἐπὶ τὴν τραπέζαν ἄρτους ἐνώπιόν μου διαπαντός.—Exodus xxv. 30. In our authorized version, "And thou shalt set upon the table shewbread before me always." In the Vulgate, "Et pones super mensam."

The bishops omitted the "offer up," which was modern and unnecessary—retain the "place," which we have seen is the *verbum sollemne*, and give us the words of our present rubric.

Under the second head, there is nothing as to the narrower question between us; but under the third the Dean contrasts the rubric for the oblation of the alms with that for the oblation of the bread and wine, which we have just been considering, to the great advantage of the former; and no doubt it is very unlike the old style of rubric, which simply directs something to be done. He dilates upon its *reverently bring*, and *humbly present*, and the "sermon" it preaches. But of the other he says, "It is simply this: 'When there is a Communion, the Priest shall then place upon the table so much bread and wine as he shall think sufficient.'" Its simplicity may be a recommendation to some of us, less inclined to be impressed by the sententious expletives of the Laudian period, and the reminiscence of an ill-timed lesson forced upon reluctant Episcopalians. But we know the proverb, and in matters of feeling there can be no

¹ THE CHURCHMAN, p. 264.

argument, *non disputandum*.—Still I cannot help noticing the Dean's question, when he asks, "Is it credible, if the placing of the bread and wine on the table was intended to be received as a solemn offering to Almighty God, that language would be used so *bare and mean*?" The shewbread has been regarded as especially prefiguring this aspect of the Eucharist: it was an unbloody sacrifice, or pure offering, on behalf of the whole Jewish people, in a state of acceptance by reason of the atoning blood of the typical victims. I will not ask the Dean whether this "most holy of the offerings of the Lord" can be viewed as a solemn offering to Almighty God.

I know him too well to suggest that he would have used these unworthy epithets, if for one moment he had thought the terms of the rubric might be so nearly identical with the word of God; and I will not ask him whether the language of the inspired rubric, so to speak, of the shewbread, is "bare and mean;" but I do ask wherein it is less bare or less mean than our rubric, which I have shown may be traced upward through "the most ancient liturgies," to which the Revisers were referred, and to be moulded in the very words of Exodus. I do ask wherein it is more mean, or more bare than the rubrics directing other things to be done in "the Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper:" "*He shall say the prayer of consecration.*" . . . "*Here the priest is to take the paten into his hands.*" . . . "*and here to break the bread;*" . . . "*and here to lay his hand upon all the bread;*" . . . and so of others.

Under his fourth head the Dean brings forward an objection as to the bread and wine being *provided at the charges of the parish*, and he claims the support of two well-known scholars, whose opinions are entitled to every respect. To this I will answer by again appealing to the law of the shewbread. Was this less an "offering of the Lord" because it was taken "from the Children of Israel by an everlasting covenant;" and not provided by the free-will offering of individual Jews; or were other national sacrifices less offerings before the Lord, because they were provided from the half shekel that was taken from the Children of Israel and appointed "for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation."

The fifth and sixth heads bring forward examples of the use of *oblations* in one sense which I quite allow, although, as I have already said, I am not prepared to admit that the word cannot be used in other senses, which do not, as the Dean supposes, "utterly separate the term from all connection with the bread and wine."

Under the seventh head the Dean undertakes to show how "parallelism becomes contact also." He is a Cambridge man, and a wrangler, and it would be presumptuous in me to question

his ability so far as geometry is concerned; but I do question his logic, or at all events his accuracy in quotation. It would seem that he trusted to his memory; and his mistake reveals a misconception, which may account for much of the inconsequence I seem to trace in his reasoning. He says: "In the rubric before the prayer for the Church Militant, we find "alms and other devotions;" in the prayer itself, "alms and oblations." If this quotation had been correct, it might have counted for something towards the contention that by *oblations* we ought to understand no more than "other devotions." He tells us in his prefatory remarks that though "the sums of money collected from the congregation and solemnly presented, are literally *oblations*, they are not, in all cases, literally *alms*." The Dean has taken *alms* for *alms for the poor*, much as charity has been limited in the same way. He has referred us to his statutes; and if he will examine the muniments of his own or other cathedrals and ecclesiastical corporations in general, he will find grants of land for the fabric fund, for endowments and other "*pious uses*," in *franc-almosne, in liberam eleemosynam, in perpetuam eleemosynam*, and so forth. The Revisers understood *alms* in this larger sense, and accordingly the rubric does actually run, "alms for the poor and other devotions"—these being co-ordinate species of alms; and the offertory sentences, if not "an expression of the parallelism," at all events bear witness to the logical division. In accordance with this larger use of *alms*, the "*alms for the poor*" in the marginal rubric of 1552 becomes *alms* in that of 1661, and a new rubric is added as to the disposal of the "money given at the offertory to pious and charitable uses."

Here, then, we have one of two distinct series; and we may notice that it tallies in every point of the Dean's parallel lines, and includes all and more than all that was included in the injunctions quoted by him, or in the Prayer Book as it stood before the revision.

There is a second distinct series of rubrics corresponding with the other, as to the provision of the bread and wine; the placing on the table; the alteration of the marginal rubric by the mention of *oblations*; and the distinction as to what remained of them after communion, as it was consecrated or unconsecrated—as to which I need only here say that I cannot agree with the Dean in ignoring them, at least so far as the changes made at the revision bear upon the significance of *oblations* as then added to the prayer for the Church Militant.

Upon the eighth head, I will only remark that whilst I quite allow that the alterations made at the revision were for the

¹ THE CHURCHMAN, 262, Essay, II.

promotion of order and reverence, I should be disposed to attribute to them a doctrinal significance and origin, which is outside the terms of our present inquiry.

The Dean attaches great importance to the argument under his ninth head. I entirely agree with him as to "the formula" being used entire, when used at all, and fully admit that when there is not a communion, "oblations" in the prayer cannot apply to the oblations of bread and wine, which are not there—but "when there is a communion," they are there, they are placed on the table, and, as I think I prove, they are included in the prayer for acceptance. The Dean says "it would have been quite easy to say; *If there be no communion, then shall the word oblations be omitted;*" but that would have been to imply that alms offered before the Lord are not oblations, and I, for one, hold that they are, whether intended for pious or charitable uses; and I hold this quite as strongly as I hold that the prayer was altered, primarily, but not exclusively, with reference to the oblation of bread and wine.

Here, in the reprint of his essay (*page 14*) the Dean appends a note in which he puts the case of "a communion without money offerings of any kind;" and he adopts an opinion that—

In this case the minister has no authority for the use of the words "alms and oblations" in whole or in part; not in whole, because no alms have been collected; not in part, because he has no right to use the word "oblations," and to omit the word "alms."

So far we must all agree. In the communion of the sick the rubric requires the minister to leave out the offertory and the prayer for the Church Militant; and no provision is made for a case of public administration of the Lord's Supper, where priest and people alike appear before the Lord empty.

And what does this prove? I have fully admitted the severity of the Dean's afterthought against those of us who do not accept the meaning of *oblations* in the sense of his decision; but I cannot allow that he adds "force" to his argument, as he seems to imply, by his *esprit d'escalier* in this last instance. We are not forced to admit, either that the Revisers "separated *oblations* from all reference to the unconsecrated elements;" or else that they failed in "care and exactitude."

They did neither the one nor the other. They were practical men, legislating, or rather proposing legislation, for practical purposes. They were not speculative casuists, and therefore they did not provide for a case, which I am very sure has never occurred within the Dean's own experience; and most probably not in that of any clergyman of our communion. They cannot have thought it conceivable that in a congregation where the rubric contemplated deacon, churchwarden, or other

fit person to receive the alms, and at least three or four to communicate with the priest, there would not be found one at the least with somewhat of the spirit of a certain poor widow, who cast her two mites into the treasury.

Under this head the Dean appeals to "church authority." The question between us is rather as to how we read language that has the authority of the church; and if, for my part, I do not claim its decision, I will not dispute the Dean's right to a *consensus* of nonconformist authority. It counts for something in favour of mine being the straightforward explanation, that those who have left the church, have decided to alter its language as it stands into unmistakable accordance with the Dean's gloss upon it. The so-styled "Reformed Church of England" have struck out the rubric for the oblation of the bread and wine, and the word *oblations* in the prayer. The Wesleyan Methodists retain the full phrase "*alms and oblations*," but restrict its meaning to alms "*for the poor*," by modifying the first rubric, and omitting the second as to the bread and wine. The "Book of Common Prayer for Evangelical Churches" removes "*oblations*" from the prayer, and expunges both rubrics. Here we have three different solutions of the Dean's problem—all arriving at his conclusion, but all, of set purpose, rejecting his hypothesis.¹

I have now reached the Dean's tenth and last head. My contention is not directly concerned with his observations as to the "theory which *identifies* oblations with the unconsecrated bread and wine," but in reference to his remark as to its contradicting history, is he quite sure that his own theory, which identifies them with the alms in the bason, is consistent with historical facts he has not taken into consideration?

In the Prayer Book of 1549 a rubric directed the priest to set both the bread and wine upon the altar. In 1552 this was removed, and in the prayer which we know as the prayer for the Church Militant (though it is called "the general prayer" in our rubric) a petition was inserted, in the words we now have, "to accept our alms." By this, as far as an inference from what they did justifies us in hazarding a suggestion as to

¹ The Church of Ireland in its new Prayer Book has gone half-way to meet objectors by giving the priest the option either to place the bread on the table at some other time, than immediately before the prayer, or to leave this to be done by any one else. The Reformed Church in Spain gives the same option. It varies from our English and the Irish books (which, with the addition of features derived from the old Mozarabic liturgy, it follows for the most part) by describing the "*oblations of the faithful*" (*ofrendas de los fieles*) as "*the oblation of the (our) alms*" (*la ofrenda de nuestras limosunas*) in the prayer that follows, and pains seem to have been taken to eliminate from it all reference to an oblation of the "*gifts of bread and wine*"—"Oficios Divinos y Administracion de los Sacramentos en la Iglesia Española." Madrid. 1881.

what they intended, the Revisers of that day meant to exclude any offering by the Church in the Lord's Supper other than alms and prayers—and so for more than a hundred years the Reformed Church of England had no prescribed oblation of the bread and wine.

In the absence of any direction, some—probably the many—followed the ritual of private masses in the placing of the elements on the altar at the beginning of the office, which the first book of Edward VI. had guarded against; and others, though it subjected them to remark, retained the formal oblation.

Field had alluded to the subject in his work "Of the Church"¹ but it would seem that Mede, some years later, was the first to arouse general attention to it. In his argument for the oblation of the bread and wine, he answers the question:—

Is not our celebration of the Eucharist defective where no such oblation is used? I answer, this concerns not us alone but all the Churches of the West of the Roman communion, who as in other things they have depraved this mystery, and swerved from the primitive pattern thereof, so have they for many ages disused this oblation of bread and wine and brought in, in lieu thereof, a real and hypostatical oblation of Christ himself. This blasphemous oblation we have taken away, and justly; but not reduced again that express and formal use of the other. Howsoever, though we do it not with a set ceremony and form of words, yet in deed and effect we do it, so often as we set the bread and wine upon the Holy Table. For whatsoever we set upon God's Table is *ipso facto* dedicated and offered unto Him, according to that of our Saviour (Matt. xxiii. 19); the altar sanctifies the gift, that is, consecrates it unto God, and appropriates it to His use.—*Works*, 1648, p. 520.

Patrick, in his "Mensa Mystica," which was written some two years before the Restoration, says:—

The spiritual sacrifice of ourselves and the corporal sacrifice of our goods to him may teach the Papists that we are sacrificers as well as they, and are made kings and priests unto God. Yea, they may know that the bread and wine of the Eucharist is an offering (out of the stock of the whole congregation) to this service, according as it was in primitive times: when (as Justin saith) they offered bread and wine to the *προεστῶς*, chief minister of the brethren, who took it and gave praise and glory to the Lord of the whole world and then made *ἐπὶ πολὺ*, a large and prolix thanksgiving to him that had made him worthy of such gifts.²

After the Revision he added the following sentence: "We pray him therefore in our communion service to accept our

¹ Ed. 1849, vol. ii. p. 66.

² "Mensa Mystica," 1660, p. 43.

oblations (meaning those of bread and wine) as well as our alms.¹

Ten years after the Revision, Patrick published his "Christian Sacrifice," where he speaks in the same sense:—

You see the bread and wine set upon God's table by him that ministers in this Divine Service. Then it is offered to God, for whatsoever is solemnly placed there, becomes by that means dedicated and appropriated to Him.²

And afterwards, though here I do not agree as to the exclusive sense of oblations:—

These (*alms and oblations*) are things distinct; and the former (*alms*) signifying that which was given for the relief of the poor; the latter (*oblations*) can signify nothing else but (according to the style of the ancient Church) this bread and wine presented to God.³

My only other witness within the Church must be Hamon L'Estrange, who wrote before the Restoration:—

The first (division of sacrifices and oblations) is the bringing of our gifts to the altar, that is, the species and elements of the sacred symbols, and withal some overplus, according to our abilities, for the relief the poor.⁴

Nor was this opinion confined to lay and ordained members of the Church. Baxter, that most resolute of Nonconformists, held similar opinions very strongly;⁵ and, like Cosin and Wren, had prepared a form for insertion in the Liturgy, but was overruled before it was presented to the Commissioners at the Savoy, as he tells us himself:—"When the brethren came to examine the reformed Liturgy, and had oft read it over, they past it at last in the same words I had written it, save only that they put out a few lines in the administration of the Lord's Supper, where the word offering was used."⁶

In conclusion, let me ask—When the question was so prominent, is it probable that the bishops by inadvertence, or in

¹ "Mensa Mystica," 1674, p. 38.

² "Christian Sacrifice," 13th edition, 1708, p. 77. This was the year after his death, he being then Bishop of Ely, and his explanation is all the more important as contemporary evidence, when we remember that he had taken a leading part in the Royal Commission of 1689 for preparing amendments in the Liturgy to be presented to Convocation. It proposed no alteration in the rubric, except substituting *minister* for *priest* (as in 1552), and none in the oblatory portion of the prayer for the Church Militant. In this point of view the evidence of Bishop Burnet to the same effect is also of importance. See as to "the oblation of the bread and wine," "Articles," Oxford, 1831, p. 473.

³ "Christian Sacrifice," p. 78.

⁴ "Alliance of Divine Offices," 4th edit., p. 271.

⁵ "Christian Directory," III, 98, iv. 1.

⁶ "Reliquiæ Baxterianæ," I., 334.

ignorance of their import, would have recommended words that, to say the least, are capable of bearing the sense for which I contend? Or would Convocation have accepted them? And can we believe that upon the Dean's view of the scope of the alteration they would have challenged attention¹ for the sake of admonishing us that the offering of our substance is to be viewed as a sacrifice to Almighty God, when the form already contained a supplication for the acceptance of the alms and prayers "which we offer unto God's Divine Majesty?"

I think not. Richard Baxter's brethren were not the only men then who objected to "offering," word and thing. After the Revisers' proposals became law, their work was attacked and defended on the ground that the Prayer Book now taught an oblation in the Lord's Supper; but it was reserved for objectors of a later generation to explain away the received construction of its words.

We have seen the way in which other bodies have dealt with them—omitting or modifying one or both of the rubrics, or expunging the word *oblations*,—and I think we may fairly ask how many of those who think with the Dean within our Church would wish to "lay a sacred hand" upon the alms by calling them oblations, if the word were not already in the prayer? or how many would hesitate to do so as those others have done, if they had the opportunity?

I have produced contemporary evidence. I might have wound up with a whole catena from works of divines and charges of bishops from that time to the present, but I must be content with a few words of Archbishop Longley, spoken, as it were, from his grave:—

The only distinct oblation or offering mentioned in that office [*of the Holy Communion*] is previous to the consecration of the elements, in the prayer for the Church Militant, and therefore cannot be an offering or sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ.²

And now as to the Dean's summing up. He does not spare those who differ from him. He impugns our honesty "of dealing with the plain letter of the Prayer Book." He condemns the Revisers "of doing very loosely and carelessly," unless indeed they took "the view of the meaning of the word oblations" which he presents. Still there are those who thank God that they did remove the reproach laid upon our reformed Church for more than a hundred years. They brought back to our Liturgy a witness to the truth, against unscriptural development and mediæval corruption, in the eucharistic sacrifice of the Apostles' times, with its visible and vocal oblation. They neither com-

¹ "Facsimile," p. 5.

² [Posthumous] "Charge," 1868, p. 25.

posed a homily nor framed a canon under guise of revising the Prayer Book, but they did give us well-considered words—simple in themselves and pregnant in their meaning—words that are sufficient for their purpose, and still are, as from the first, *φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν*.

T. F. SIMMONS.

NOTE.—An objection is raised—not by the Dean in his argument against the recognition of an oblation of the “creatures” of bread and wine—but by some, who—the better to urge the acceptance of the Roman doctrine of sacrifice in the Mass—deny or depreciate the eucharistic character of our service. It is, that by the offering of the oblations and prayers *sub uno*, as liturgiologists express it, we deprive it of all reality and significance.

I may not discuss the doctrinal question, but—*ad hominem*—I answer that we have examples of a similar conjoining of signs visible and vocal in Eastern and Western liturgies, and examples that I can well believe the revisers had in view when they used oblations in the sense I contend they did.

In the “First Prayer of the Faithful,” in the liturgy of St. Chrysostom, they pray that God will make them worthy of offering to Him prayers and supplications and unbloody sacrifices—*τοῦ προσφέρειν σοι δεήσεις καὶ ἰκεσίας καὶ θυσίας ἀναιμάκτους*.

In the old coronation office (and there are *secretæ* in the modern Roman Missal to the same effect), we have “*Suscipe, Domine, preces et munera ecclesie tue,*” &c.

A somewhat similar objection has been raised in reference to the joining together of alms for the outward needs of man and gifts to God as signs of inward devotion, as if it were derogatory to the latter. It has, however, the sanction of St. Paul before Felix: “I came to bring alms to my nation and offerings,” Acts xxiv. 17. Here he joins the alms of which he was the bearer, not, indeed, with the pure offering of the New Testament, but either with the ordinary offerings at the feast of Pentecost, or with the special offerings of the Nazarite that were enjoined by the Mosaic law.

T. F. S.