

which we are the recipients.¹ Canon Simmons, near the end of his paper, speaks of the bringing back of "the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Apostles' time, with its visible and vocal oblation." But what does he mean by "the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Apostles' time?" The evidence of any such thing must be sought in the times of the Apostles—or, in other words, in the New Testament. The sacrifice of our goods, of our charity, of ourselves, is there made very conspicuous and very imperative. It is impossible, too, that the Lord's Supper should not be accompanied by our praise and thanksgiving. But nowhere in the New Testament is the Eucharist represented as a sacrifice. Here, however, we are on the confines of serious doctrinal questions; and this paper has been regarded throughout as not involving any such questions. I thank Canon Simmons for his courtesy; and I set a high value on the large agreement of opinion which subsists between him and myself. If he and I were to argue together in our Northern Convocation in favour of the literal observance of the rule laid down in our Prayer Book regarding the indivisible phrase "alms and oblations," I believe it would be very difficult for any member of either the Upper or the Lower House to refute us.²

J. S. HOWSON.



ART. V.—THOUGHTS ON SOCIAL SCIENCE. (PART III.)

THE proposal of Government to introduce an Affirmation Bill, for the scarcely disguised purpose of admitting into the House of Commons one who unblushingly proclaims his disbelief in the existence of a God, is a climax to the instances already given of atheistic tendencies telling upon a nation in its legislative capacity. Even though the Bill be rejected, the bare proposal of such a measure by Government is unmistak-

¹ See "The Catholic Doctrine of Eucharistic Sacrifice," by Mr. Tomlinson, a book which deserves to be widely known and carefully studied.

² I have been asked what the exact line is which I draw between "alms" and "oblations." To this I answer that though the literal original meaning of the two words is plain enough, no absolute line can be drawn between them in their liturgical use. In fact, the terms, when thus employed, overlap one another. Oblations may be of various kinds; and alms, when offered to God, become oblations. One great advantage of the collective phrase, "alms *and* oblations" is that it includes all things that may be fitly collected at the offertory, whether according to strict definition they be "alms *or* oblations."

ably significant. The true nature of this new departure was plainly indicated by the Prime Minister. In an early debate on this subject he is reported¹ to have said :

We have been driven from the Church ground, we have been driven from the Protestant ground, we have been driven from the Christian ground, and now it appears there is to be a final rally upon this narrow and illogical basis of Theism. That will go whither your Protestantism and your Christianity have gone.

But there is another phase of national life more sensitive to change than the Statute Book, and therefore more valuable for our purpose. There are laws, many of them unwritten, which are observed in the management of public institutions, and there are customs which are continually and by almost imperceptible degrees changing according to the times, in other words, changing in obedience to prevailing tendencies. These form no inconsiderable part of the life of a nation.² Here, also, the same atheistic tendency is telling. There is, for instance, a meeting held at the Mansion House in London, or in a Town Hall in the provinces, for some philanthropic purpose ; the occasion is one of national magnitude, such as the persecution of the Jews on the Continent, or some local catastrophe—an explosion in a coal-mine—any circumstance, in short, of sufficient interest to justify an appeal to the public. At such a time what commencement could be more appropriate than the acknowledgment of the hand of God, an appeal to Him for help, and ask for His blessing on the forthcoming effort ? It used to be so as a matter of course. So again at the laying of the foundation-stone of any public building, and at the completion of the fabric—the very instance³ given in God's Word for teaching us to “ acknowledge Him in all our ways ”—prayer was wont to be made. Committees used officially to act in obedience to the command, “ If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God.” But of late years (and increasingly so) though the business even be such an one as the management of a school, prayer is oftentimes not on the agenda. When Board Schools were first established there was an effort made, notably in London, to secure the use at least of the Lord's Prayer at the meetings of managers ; but the atheistic tendency has prevailed in many places to the exclusion of this, so slight an acknowledgment of our dependence upon God. Nay, more, where the school is denominational, and where the *raison d'être*

¹ *Times*, April 23, 1880.

² Arnold's *Lectures on Modern History*, p. 18.

³ Ps. cxxvii. 1.

of its existence is for the purpose of securing religious teaching, it requires constant watchfulness, and sometimes more than watchfulness, to secure this so suitable a mode of commencing business.

A natural consequence of this neglect of prayer is the neglect of thanksgiving. Reports of schools, orphanages, hospitals, and other public institutions are not unfrequently issued in which full expression is given of thankfulness to all other benefactors (men, women, and children), but not a word is there to indicate any sense of indebtedness to God! Similarly in certain changes that have taken place in our customs, the same atheistic tendency may be observed. It is not a mere accident that disestablishment of the National Church is often the first step in this downward course. For example, at a public dinner the next toast after the "Queen" always used to be "Church and State." This has for some time given place to the "Bishop, Clergy, and Ministers of all Denominations," an act of courtesy to the latter, but for all that an act of disestablishment. It happens occasionally, now, that the toast is altogether omitted. So, also, a difficulty is occasionally felt, both on public occasions and in private life, as to the person who ought to be asked to say grace, and this leads very easily to its omission. An instructive instance of this occurred at a Social Science dinner; it was given in a private house to Lord Brougham. The master of the house, according to old fashion, said grace. The Vicar was one of the guests, and Lord Brougham intimated somewhat bluntly that the Vicar ought to have been called upon; but he, overhearing the remark, promptly replied, "Not so, every man is priest in his own house." The Vicar was right. If it had been a public dinner Lord Brougham would have been right. But Vicars in these days are not wont to teach the people so; and mark the consequences—when there is no clergyman present, grace is left unsaid; when two or more are present, a difficulty is often felt as to who ought to be called upon. The difficulty is solved sometimes in a ludicrous manner by a choir who sing a Latin grace, even after one has been said in English. At the conclusion of the dinner another hitch occurs. The cloth used to be withdrawn, and at least two words, "Thank God," were uttered before the guests sat down again to dessert. But now, all is put on the table at once, so that the time for returning thanks is not easily determined. This, unless care is taken, is enough to cause that grace *after* dinner be not said. Let no one laugh at these things as trifles; straws indicate the direction of the stream. When once attention is given to such "little" matters, so different to what used to be in our fathers' time, it is only too plain that this atheistic tendency is telling. In every station and

circumstance of life, extending to the households even of those whose personal piety is unquestionable, it is more and more necessary to be on the watch, it is more and more difficult to withstand the God-denying spirit of the age in which we live.

A yet more emphatic proof that "tendencies tell" upon nations remains to be mentioned. The changes that have taken place in Church-life furnish the most striking proof of all, because that it should be so in such an instance as this is naturally so little expected. This, therefore, gives so far presumptive proof that we are dealing with a law.

Faber¹ has observed how subtly the Church is affected by the movements that are prevalent in the world. They are reproduced in her; the forms are modified, but the substance is there. The idea that the Church can be affected by an atheistic tendency is one from which at first the whole soul shrinks with abhorrence. Each one will say, "Impossible—least of all in the Church to which I belong." He will assume that an atheistic tendency, though prevailing in the world, can operate upon the Church only in one way, viz., as a stimulus to call forth champions of the faith. Undoubtedly it has been so to some extent. God-deniers have been met and overthrown by God-defenders. But this does not touch more than the surface of the inquiry. To revert to the illustration given in the previous article. A person is ill of an eruptive fever; the eruption may be dealt with, and even checked, but this does not necessarily touch the disease. In like manner defenders of the truth may arise and defeat its assailants without reaching, perhaps without even discovering, the "fons et origo mali."

In this appears the value of Social Science as a science. It does not wait for proof. It assumes as certain that the prevailing sentiment of a nation operates upon every department. If the nation, therefore, is affected by an atheistic tendency, the Church *must be* affected too. Moreover, Social Science knows no distinction in this respect between one Church and another.

If one Church is affected all must be affected, the National Church, and the so-called² free and independent Churches—Baptist, Congregational, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Plymouth, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan—all without exception, only not all equally. The difference between one Church and another will be only one of degree. This or that Church may by constitution be presumptively affected more than another, but of none can it be assumed that it is an exception; least of all

¹ "The Creator and the Creature," p. 394.

² "The Dead Hand in the Free Churches."

would such an assumption be allowed in respect of the National Church.

It is an ungracious task to draw attention to the fact that the Church of England is affected by an atheistic tendency. Would that it were more difficult of proof! There is a difficulty in making such an assertion; but it is not the difficulty of proving that it is true. The difficulty is in giving proof without seeming to make the charge against individuals. But both as an act of simple justice, and also, which is still more important, to make possible a thorough and impartial investigation, it must ever be borne in mind that Social Science deals not with individuals but with communities. In the last paper a policy was characterized as Jesuitical, and a special caution was added against the conclusion being drawn that the individuals who supported such a policy are Jesuits—a conclusion not justifiable even against the prime movers. In like manner certain laws of the nation, and certain practices and customs, have been specified as atheistic without thinking it necessary to defend from the charge of atheism even the originators of those laws, or those who adopt those customs. So now, when the proof is given that an atheistic tendency is at work even in the Church of England, it cannot be necessary to do more than repudiate, which I do in the strongest possible terms, the inference that there are in the Church of England, or, indeed, in any other Church, individuals who themselves are atheists. Let me repeat, that such an inference would be both unwarrantable, and, further, would effectually close the eyes of those, whom it most nearly concerns, against a truth which, if it be substantiated by facts, imperatively claims their serious attention.

Proof has already been given by implication of the truth of this charge. The changes indicated in the Statute-Book; in the disuse of special days of national humiliation and thanksgiving; in the modes of conducting public business; in customs both of public and even of family life, have all of them taken place without any protest, worthy of the name, being made by the Church of England. Other Churches may plead in excuse, with some force, the inaction of the National Church: but even so an excuse is a tacit admission of the truth of the charge.

The most noteworthy, in fact the only, public request for a day of humiliation made by the Church of England of late years, has been the resolution proposed and carried in the Lower House of Convocation by Canon Wilkinson, now Bishop of Truro (May, 1882), on the occasion of the assassination of Lord F. Cavendish. Even this was weakened by the addition of a proviso in case of failure. Sir Wilfrid Lawson does not

thus anticipate defeat when he urges local option. And, after all, what has become of the resolution? Did the Upper House present it, or put it into their waste-paper basket? In regard to the Education Act, the Church of England tried to get the Catechism recognised as a school-book; but when this was found impracticable, there was no further stand made. Even now, after ten years' experience of the working of the Act, when an amendment has been called for, the voice of the Church of England is not raised against the continuance of this God-dishonouring system. Matthew Arnold points out that we cannot afford to exclude the Bible because of its pre-eminent literary merit; but the Churches, National and Nonconformist, say not a word upon the religious aspect of the question. In like manner the changes that have been made in the Prayer Book, if not originated by the Church itself, have been accepted by it with full approval. The shortened services, too—shortened by five minutes, or ten at the most—have savoured as much of disestablishment as anything else. The prayer for the Queen, for the Royal Family, and for the Houses of Parliament—are the prayers left out! The same acquiescence on the part of Churchmen and of Nonconformists attends the omission of the hitherto customary recognition of God on all public occasions. Occasionally an old-fashioned gentleman, more often a layman than a clergyman, makes a stand, and if possessed of tact and perseverance he may succeed.

But these, again, are only symptoms: the root of the evil lies deeper; and with this one observation I conclude. By all who have eyes to see, it will be admitted that the Church has become of late years more and more churchy. Churchmen must be churchy-men or they are said to be "bad Churchmen," "three parts Dissenters," and so forth. The latest programme¹ issued may be tersely expressed in three sentences:

1. There is much to be done which is left undone;
2. All work worth doing had better be done by the Church; and,
3. All Church-work ought to begin with the Bishop.

This means practically, *the Church to which you belong is to take the place of Christ; and the voice of the Church is to be your guide instead of God's Word under the teaching of His Holy Spirit.* Let anyone who disputes this make the experiment. Let him attempt some good work that wants doing, simply in the name of Christ, in preference to adopting what is euphemistically, but often most absurdly, called working on Church-lines. Even secular work is being gradually drawn

¹ *Church Congress Report* (Newcastle). Paper by Mr. Spottiswoode.

into this ecclesiastical net. Other Churches, if only in self-defence, follow the same line of action. In one word, the form of a tendency which in a nation is atheistic, is in its churches anti-christian.¹

The effect of this upon the Churches is most disastrous. They are occupied, they are overwhelmed with business, good in itself and even necessary; but which would be done as well, Social Science would say better,² if the Churches would let it alone. But further, their own work—the spiritual needs of their members—is proportionately, and of necessity, neglected; and worse still, that which is done, though it no doubt makes more show, is of a lower spiritual type. The effect upon the outside world has been sufficiently set forth. It is to exclude God.

W. OGLE.

¹ This identity between atheism in the nation and churchy-ness in the Churches is a sad discovery; but it were worse that it should remain, as heretofore, undiscovered. There is, however, no ground for despair, nor for the yet more fatal policy of compromise. There have been before this times as bad in Church and State, and God raised up deliverers. There were "children of Issachar that had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chron. xiii. 32). When "the holy seed had mingled themselves with the people of the land, the princes and rulers being chief in the trespass, Shecaniah" could discern ground for "hope in Israel," and at his instigation "Ezra arose" (Ezra ix. 2; x. 2, 5). When also "the wall of Jerusalem was broken down, and the gates thereof were burned with fire," and "the remnant that were left were in great affliction and reproach," Nehemiah "prayed before the God of heaven" (Neh. i. 3; ii. 4), and said, "Come, and let us build;" and the people responded (ii. 17, 18), neither discouraged by the "laughter" of Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, nor cowed by their "wrathful conspiracy" (iv. 2, 7, 8), nor ensnared by their invitations to "come and take counsel in the plain of Ono" (vi. 2). To doubt that there are children of Issachar, Shecaniahs, Ezras, Nehemiahs, now living, as well as Sanballat and his friends, is to distrust God's providence; and we have the same God to whom to make our confessions and supplications. Also this very same Social Science, by which the disease has been found out, and by which concealed batteries have been unmasked, and the crooked policies been brought to light, can teach those willing to learn what, under God, are the most successful modes of treatment, both curative and preventive; and can point out the most effective means both of defence, and if need be, of attack.

² According to the law of singleness (THE CHURCHMAN, March, p. 418).

