

CORRESPONDENCE.

ANGLICAN ORDERS.

To the Editor of THE TRUE WITNESS.

DEAR SIR.—We have seen that the Anglican claims cannot be maintained from a historical standpoint, and that the historical facts necessary even on the Anglican theory of valid orders are highly questionable. They have never yet been proven. Until they are, Anglican Orders must be held as historically doubtful, and for all practical purposes dealt with as if they had no existence.

We shall now go back to the early ages of the Church, and from a theological point of view, see wherein the Anglican rite for the administration of sacraments differs from that used by the Ancient Church. As far back as A.D. 398, the Fourth Council of Carthage, Canon 11, decreed: "When a bishop is ordained, let two bishops place and hold the copy of the Gospels over his head and neck, and while one is saying over him the Benediction, let all the other bishops touch his head with their hands." The Benediction, as given in all the liturgies of the Western Church, begins with the words *Propitiare Domine* and continues *Deus honor omnium*, as we find in the Roman Pontifical of to-day. And to lay stress on its significant importance, accompanied with the imposition of hands, it is styled the *Consecration*. So essential is this portion of the rite to the matter and form of the Sacrament that even its accidental omission in the case of a Catholic Bishop, would, according to the Sacred Congregation of Rites, (Benedict XLV., de Syn. 1, 8, c.) necessitate his being consecrated over again conditionally. This being so, how much more reason would there be for doubting the validity of the Sacrament, if the omission was culpable. It is a patent fact, in the case of Anglicans, on set purpose, and on doctrinal grounds, the omission was intentional, and consequently is much more serious. For, according to a general theological principle, he who purposely mutilates a sacramental rite must be understood not to intend to do that which the Church intends to do when she makes use of that rite, and hence the conclusion must be drawn, under such circumstances, that the Sacrament is not conferred. How could the Anglicans, then, be said to confer Sacraments validly, when they mutilated, and for doctrinal purposes almost destroyed the ancient rite for the Administration of Sacraments, handed down from Apostolic times. It was left to the genius of Cranmer to devise a new ordinal according to his Calvinistic ideas, and in so doing, he swept away the whole of the rite prescribed by all the Western liturgies, by which alone all the bishops of the Church of England had been consecrated up to the fourteenth century.

But our Anglican friends aver, very modestly of course, that "there is no essential difference" between the Church of England before the Reformation and after; at the Reformation the Church merely threw off the authority and corrupt doctrines of Rome." Then, there is "no essential difference" between "blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits," and "the pure religion of the Gospel," "no essential difference" between the true Church of Christ, as the old Church of England claims to be, and the reformed Church of England, whose Homilies say of the former "had been drowned in damnable idolatry for the space of eight hundred years or more." Surely there is no sense, much less reason, in this. If there be "no essential difference, where, then, was the necessity of "reforming," and what right had the Reformed Church to create a schism which separates them from the Old Church ever since." Let one of their own defenders, the Anglican Bishop of Worcester, declare the "No (?) essential difference" in meeting a charge made on Cranmer's ordinal, June, 1883. "There is, perhaps, no formulary or document which marks more clearly the essential difference between the office of the ministers of the Church of Rome and the functions of ministers of the Church of England. He goes on to point out the necessary change that had to be made in the old rite for consecrating bishops in order to bring it down to the level of a Calvinistic ordinal, and very reasonably concludes that the powers conferred by these rites, which were made to differ essentially and intentionally, must be essentially different. He is perfectly sound and logical in his deductions. It is the argument of the great Doctor of the Schools, St.

Thomas, who lays down that where there is a question of the sacraments, if a person purposely alters the form which the Church uses, when she confers her sacraments, he must be taken not to mean to do that which the Church does when she uses that form, and hence the sacrament is not conferred. (Summa Theologica, p. 3, q. 60, 3, 7.) The same line of reason is maintained by Cardinal Newman, who, speaking of the Church's sacramental rite, says: "It is a concrete whole, one, and indivisible, and acts *per modum unius*, and having been established by the Church, it cannot be cut up into bits, be docked and twisted into essentials, and no essentials, genus and species, matter and form, at the heretical will of a Cranmer or Ridley, or turned into a fancy ordinal by a royal commission of divines without a sacrilege perilous to its validity." That faithful recorder of historical events, Sancta Clara, who has been claimed to look with favour upon Anglican Orders, coincides with the same theological principle, as the following testifies: "Since they have changed the Church's form *de industria* (on purpose) and declare that they do not what the Church intends, . . . and have solemnly decreed against the power of sacrificing and consecrating, that is, in the sense of the old and present Catholic Church, of changing the elements of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ our Lord, as appears in the twenty-eighth and twenty-first articles, it evidently concludes that they never did nor could validly ordain priests, and, consequently, bishops; having, as I said, expressed clearly the deprivation of their intentions, in order to the first and powerful part of ordination, which consisteth in the power *super corpus Christi verum* of consecrating and sacrificing his true Body, by them professedly denied, and the sacrifice declared a pernicious imposture" (Estcourt's Anglican Ordinations, p. 235).

If we wish for further proof to ascertain the mind of the Church in this important matter we may read the Fourth Canon of the first General Council of Nice, wherein is laid down the universal law of the whole Christian Church for a lawful consecration. Here we have it clearly defined that for a valid consecration three bishops were required who were bishops of the province and whose consecrations were beyond the probability of doubt. Now, does the consecration of Parker stand this test? Assuredly not. No three English bishops validly consecrated would have anything to do with him. Barlow, the consecrator, as we have seen, so far as history touches, was only a bishop elect, and Soory and Coverdale, as far as we know, and it is acknowledged by all, had never been consecrated by the rite of the old English church, but by Cranmer's ordinal, which even Anglicans have since rejected as invalid. Hodgkins, it is claimed, was a true bishop, though at the time excommunicated, but was present only as an assistant. So of the three but one was supposed to be truly ordained, and he was not the consecrator. Even if he had been the one appointed to lay hands on Parker, waiving the fact of his having been excommunicated, theology teaches that, except in cases of necessity and by Pontifical commission, a consecration in which three validly consecrated bishops do not take part is doubtful (St. Alphonsus Liguori, D. O. d. n. 755), and, as we have seen, this principle is sustained by the Council quoted above, by St. Thomas, Cardinal Newman, and Sancta Clara.

The Anglicans, even, are not consistent in the rite used for consecrating, for Cranmer's ordinal, the one used up to 1662, they afterwards changed completely, so on Anglican principles all previous consecrations in which it was used must be regarded as doubtful. The fact is, up to the time of the Oxford movement Anglicans themselves strongly maintained they had not, nor pretended to have a sacrifice offering priesthood as the old English Catholic Church had, but only in the sense of ministers or elders. How could they otherwise defend their position when the altars on which the living Victim was offered up daily for the living and the dead, were thrown down in the sixteenth century, the priests hunted like wild beasts, the faithful driven from the ancient Church, in which for centuries before they worshiped and adored the living God, and replaced by tables, ministers, a communion service and articles which denounce the Adorable Sacrifice of the Mass as a "blasphemous

fable and dangerous deceit." Now, for sooth, in the nineteenth century they began to realize that their position is scarcely tenable, and cannot be maintained by a clean record in the past, yet they wish to be accredited with a real priesthood. Are they sincere? If so, let them follow in the footsteps of Newman, Manning and a host of others, once Anglican ministers like themselves, who were really sincere in their search for the true priesthood, and having found it, they hesitated not to embrace that Church which alone has the power to confer it—*Secundum Ardinem Melchisedech*.

Again, after an interval of fifty years from the beginning of the controversy, 1613, when Mason, chaplain to Archbishop Abbot, seeing the difficulties attending Parker's consecration, published a book in which he alleged that at Lambeth it was recorded that Parker had four bishops consecrating him, the learned divines cried out that such a document, if it existed at all, was a forgery, and "unheard of till that date," and moreover, asserted, admitting it to be true it was of no avail, as Barlow, the supposed consecrator of Parker, though having sat in several sees, had not been consecrated for any of them (Richardson's notes on Godwin's Commentary says "Dies consecrationis ejus (Barlow's) nondum apparet." It is evident from the books of controversy extant, that the Catholic doctors Harding, Bristow, Stapleton, and Cardinal Allen, who had been fellow-students and intimately acquainted with the first Protestant bishops under Elizabeth: openly questioned the validity of their orders and in plain terms told them that they had never been consecrated, and they never refuted the charge only in so far as to ridicule the teaching of the old Church. Barlow, on one occasion in his eagerness to meet the objection that he himself had never been consecrated, openly declared that the king's appointment without any orders or ordination whatsoever suffices to make a bishop (Collier Eccl. Hist. v. II.) Mason is careful to explain that ministers are called priests *only by way of allusion* and he scoffs the idea of a real Christian Priesthood. Hooker is pretty much of the same opinion. "Seeing that Sacrifice is now no part of the Church's ministry, how should the name of priesthood be there unto rightly applied." Surely even as St. Paul applieth the name of flesh unto that very substance of fishes which hath a proportionable correspondence to flesh *although it be in nature another thing*. Even that very high churchman, Waterland, together with Mede, asserts that Anglicans have only a "material sacrifice, the sacrifice of bread and wine, analogous to the *Ulincha* of the Old Law," (Waterland's works, vol. II). This was two hundred years after Hooker's time. These are not the only arguments that can be brought forward against the validity of the Anglican ministry and their Orders. It can be argued in particular against, what theologians term, the *form* of them. According to the ordinal of Edward VI. restored by Elizabeth, priests were ordained by the power of *forgiving sins*, without any power of *offering sacrifice*, in which the very essence of the priesthood consists, and according to the same ordinal bishops were consecrated by the same power without even mention of episcopacy, by a *form* which might be used at the administration of baptism or confirmation. "Take the Holy Ghost, and remember that thou stir up the grace of God, which is in thee, by the imposition of hands," and again, "Receive the Holy Ghost; whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain they are retained, and thou a faithful dispenser of the Word of God and of His holy Sacraments" (Bishop Sparrow's Call, p. 158.)

Then, again, there is the same necessity of an apostolic succession of mission or authority to exercise the functions of the priesthood, as there is of the holy orders themselves. Christ Himself gave this mission to His Apostles, when He said to them: "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you," Matt. xx, 21. And they having the power transferred it to their successors. Of this St. Paul speaks when he says of his apostles: "How can they preach, unless they are sent." When and how did our Anglican friends receive this divine command to teach all nations? It remains yet for them to prove that they received it directly or indirectly in regular succession from those who originally received it from God. If they haven't received it in this way there is no other

source, they are simply not sent, and their preaching is in vain, "a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal."

These are a few of the reasons, historical and theological, why the validity of Anglican Orders has been ever since regarded by the Catholic world as a myth. "Show me," says the great Cardinal Newman, who himself was once an Anglican minister, "if you can, any religious communion of present or past time which has eventually on all hands been acknowledged to be a portion of the Catholic Church on the strength of its Catholic Orders which, nevertheless, has been for three whole centuries unanimously ignored by East and West, which for three centuries has employed the pens of its occasional and self constituted defenders in laboriously clearing away, with poor success, the aboriginal suspicions which have clung to it, in the past, of so many of the validity of those Orders; which, as if unthankful for such defence, has for three centuries persistently suffered the Apostolicity of those Orders, and the necessity and grace of such Apostolicity, to be slighted or denied by its bishops, priests and people with utter impunity; which has for three centuries been careless to make sure that its consecrating bishops, and the bishops who ordained the priests who were to be consecrated, and those priests themselves had been validly baptized; which has for three centuries neglected to protect its Eucharist from the profanations, not only of ignorance and unbelief, but of open sacrilege; show me such a case, such a long sustained anomaly, and such ultimate recognition, and then I will allow that the recognition of Anglicanism on the part of the Holy See is not beyond the limits of reasonable expectation."

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