

long after the grandeur of the larger truth has been discovered, kindles a passion of love, gives a perfect peace, inspires a vigorous faith and a victorious hope. The larger, the inclusive truth is that the Word became flesh in Christ, and that in becoming flesh the eternal relations between God and man were revealed; the truth which moves men and converts them is that, having become flesh, Christ died for our sins."

The other point has reference to the future consequences of sin. It is to be feared that the abandonment of the old-fashioned method of preaching about the torments of hell has given place to a somewhat shallow way of thinking and speaking of the future destiny of mankind. Here again we may profitably listen to Dr. Dale:—

"It may seem that whatever passion for the salvation of men came from the belief of our fathers that those to whom they preached were in danger of dwelling in eternal fires, eternally unconsumed, must be absent in all to whom that belief has become incredible. But this is not quite clear to me. The words of Christ, however indefinite they may be with regard to the kind of penalty which is to come upon those who live and die in revolt against God, and however indefinite they may be with regard to the duration of the penalty, are words which shake the heart with fear. There is a judgment to come, and its issues, though varying with varying guilt, are to be awful to all the condemned. Even while the question of the ultimate destiny of the impenitent remains unsolved, there is enough to fill us with a passion of zeal for the salvation of men from the certain doom—whether it be temporary or final—which threatens them if they live and die without God. . . . "On any theory of eschatology there is a dark and menacing future for those who have been brought face to face with Christ in this life and have refused to receive His salvation and to submit to His authority."

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

CHAP. II.—Continued.

THE DIVINE MINISTRY BEFORE CHRIST.

THE WORD PRIEST.

It has been already remarked that we are not contending for words, and in particular for the word priest. As, however, it is a word which will be frequently employed in this inquiry, it may be as well before going further into the subject, to say a few words on its meaning, and on the remarkable prejudices which are by many entertained against its use.

PROPHET AND PRIEST.

It is a very curious illustration of such prejudice which is found in the ordinary statement that the Christian Ministry possesses the prophetic character but not the priestly. It is thought by some persons that it would be a very dangerous concession to allow that the Christian minister is endowed with the priestly office, but it is thought to be perfectly safe to concede to him the prophetic. This notion cannot be said to be borne out by the testimony of Holy Scripture. Might we not say that the prophetic is the most awful of the three great offices which are disclosed in the economy of redemption, especially in the system of the Mosaic Law? A priest was a man who performed certain official acts, merely because he was appointed to the priest's office, and was not disqualified for that office in any of the ways described in the law. The prophet, as distinguished from the priest in the higher use of the word, was one who had a special mission and message from God to His people, and upon whom a far more awful responsibility was imposed. Comparatively, it was of less importance, what was the personal character of the priest, so long as he performed the acts which were commanded by the law under which he acted. It was

of the utmost importance that the prophet should have a heart that was pure, and lips that were clean, lest his message should be falsified by passing through a distorting medium. To speak to the conscience of men in the name of God is a more awful work than to minister at the altar.

The objection to the term priest is frequently urged by saying that there can be no priest now, because a priest is one who offers sacrifices, and sacrifices involve the shedding of blood. Both of these statements are inaccurate. It is not of course denied that sacrifice is an attribute of priesthood; nor is it denied that, in the later and more restricted sense of the word, a priest commonly meant a sacrificer. But it may be confidently asserted, first, that true sacrifices may be offered to God which are not bloody sacrifices, and secondly, that neither in its etymological meaning nor in its original use did the word priest signify merely one who offered sacrifices.

THE MEANING OF PRIEST.

The Hebrew word for priest (*Cohen*) is of uncertain etymology, but it certainly has not this for its primary meaning. According to Gesenius it signified a minister, according to Ewald, one who *set in order*. It does not appear that any one has referred the word to a root which involves the idea of sacrifice. The Greek word *Hiereus* simply means, in its original sense, one who is employed about sacred things, a minister of religion. What the minister of any religion may be, and what his functions, must be determined from the authoritative documents or living voice of that religion. It cannot be decided by the etymological meaning of his name. To raise questions of this kind, therefore, is simply to appeal to ignorance and to prejudice.

That which is the constant element and principle of the divine ministry in all ages, and the fundamental conception of it, is the idea of mediation. The minister of the sanctuary, alike in heathenism and in Judaism, stands in a certain sense between God and man, speaking to man in the name of God, and to God in the name of man. It was the priest's office, "says Grotius," to be in God's stead to the people, and the people's stead to God." (Com. on Heb. ii. 17).

NECESSITY OF MINISTRY.

The existence of a ministry was a necessity of man's social or corporate life. Man worshipping by himself, for himself listened to the divine voice teaching him, and presented his offerings in his own name. It is in this sense, although it is an improper use of the word, that every man may be said to be his own priest. We may add, as has already been noted, if that means that every man has, for himself, personal access to God, and must himself be a worshipper of God, and offer his prayers and praises, not by proxy, but by his own lips and hands, then this is a doctrine which is asserted and not denied by the office and work of a ministry.

THE SOCIAL PRINCIPLE.

But man, worshipping in association with his brother man, must present his common worship, not only by his own individual act, but by that of a minister who represents the whole community. Such a minister, therefore, is a necessary consequence of man's corporate life. And what is man's life if it be not corporate? What is its origin? What is its sustentation? Doubtless it has its origin in God, and it is sustained by Him; but it also springs out of the common life of humanity, and is maintained by it. It is a branch out of the trunk of the human race, and apart from it could have no continuous life.

"Man," says Montesquien, "is born in society, and there he remains." "Even from the very first," says an able writer, "man stood not alone. Not one of all his progeny can be truly viewed as an isolated individual. He is a member of a race. His individual life is connected with the life of the collective race. In that collective capacity, worship is due from the race to God." It is to be guilty of almost incredible folly to speak of personal and individual life as separated from corporate. There is no such thing in the world. Our natural life is derived from that of the race, and is maintained in connexion with it. Our national life is dependent upon our position in human society. We should be as low as idiots or brutes if we lived

alone, were such an existence conceivable. If, then, man must have relations with God, and relations as living in families and societies, there must be a minister or ministers who shall represent these relations. The various relations subsisting between God and man may be represented in one comprehensive ministry, as was the case in earlier and simpler times, as is the case in our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, or they may be indicated by different classes of ministers, each having its own office, and functions, and work.

GOD AND MAN.

The nature of the ministry is determined by the character of the relations subsisting between Almighty God and His creatures. What are these relations? What is God to man? Speaking in the simplest and most general manner, we may say that God is the source of light and truth to man, the ruler and guide of man, and the object of worship to man. It might be added that He is the strength and the sustentation of human life, natural and moral; but this idea need not be kept distinct from the three points already indicated, since it is involved in them. The complete idea, then, of a divine ministry, whether it be embodied in one person or in more, must represent this threefold relation. There must be a ministry of truth whose office is to teach men in the name of God, there must be a ministry of governance whose office is to rule men as the representatives of God; and there must be a ministry of worship, whose office is to present offerings to God in the name of the people. In some form or other, either in union or distinction from each other, these offices must exist in every community which owns the Creator as the source of truth, and power, and the object of worship.

(To be Continued.)

REVIEWS.

THE EARLY CHURCH.

This volume of lectures by eminent Divines, delivered under the auspices of the Church Club, in Christ Church, New York, is of manifold interest. Not only are the lectures in themselves of considerable value; but they furnish an interesting evidence of the wide interest taken in all questions affecting the religious interests of mankind. Men are no longer content to go to their own Church, to hold their own opinions, or even in an individual way to maintain what they regard as truth against all comers and gainsayers. The work is getting to be carried on in a highly organized manner by the founding of lectureships and societies in defence of the faith and the unification of the Church.

The present volume is a witness to both of these movements. In its outward form it resembles the Paddock, Bohnen, and Baldwin Lectures; but it differs from them in two respects, first in being the work not of an individual founder, but of a society, the "Church Club;" and secondly in containing a series of lectures by different authors instead of being all the work of one man. The series consisted of six lectures; but the last was not ready for the printer, so that only five appear.

For these lectures we are indebted, as we have said, to the Church Club, a Society of Laymen in the diocese of New York, "who have banded themselves together with this object, among others, of promoting the spread of sound Church doctrine, and building up a robust Churchmanship among the people." The editor points out the aim of the series in noting that "two facts stand out in bold relief in Catholic Christianity considered from the historic standpoint: First, the historic ministry, tracing its descent back without break or interruption to the Apostles times, and commonly and correctly described as the Ministry of the Apostolic Succession. Second, the fact that all Bishops are equal as touching their office, and that our Lord committed the supreme government of His Church to the apostles and their successors, that is to say, to the collective Episcopate and not to any individual Bishop."

Here we have the keynote to the whole volume. Bishop Cleveland Coxe opens with "the Pentecostal Age," and is followed by Dr. T. Richey who dis-

*The History and Teachings of the Early Church as a Basis for the Reunion of Christendom. E. & J. B. Young. New York. 1889.

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