

The word "liturgy," in ancient writers, denoted especially, if not exclusively, the public service of the church, in the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice. (2.)

A priest officiating at an altar; all the prayers used on this solemn occasion point to the true body and blood of Christ existing on that altar, and offered to God truly and indeed, in a mystical manner, in commemoration of the bloody offering once made on Calvary. This vivifying dogma formed the very essence of Christian worship; and this faith is so deeply implanted on all ancient liturgies, that it is impossible to read them over with an unprejudiced mind, and not be convinced of its existence. On points of minor importance, there were some variations in those used in the various portions of Christendom; but so remarkable is the uniformity found in all, not merely as to the faith which they express, but in the arrangement of their various parts, and in many of the prayers which are used, that many learned writers have not hesitated to assert that they must have proceeded from some liturgy formed by the Apostles themselves.

The public worship of the Christian church, deprived of this, its essential constituent, is what the Christian faith would be, deprived of its fundamental doctrine of an atoning Redeemer. A liturgy, which would contain the other prayers which she used, while it omitted those that expressed this essential dogma, can be compared only to an edition of the Bible, from which every thing expressing the mysteries revealed by God would be excluded, and nothing retained but those historical facts and maxims of morality which reason itself must approve. The one and the other would contain much to edify, but when considered as a complete exposition of what they would purport to be, should be designated as a sacrilegious perversion of the word of God.

This, then, is the first fault I find with your "Prayer Book." It purports to contain the full order of Christian worship, while the very essence of Christian worship is excluded from it altogether. Some ambiguous expressions, it is true, are inserted, to which "the Churchman," who has acquired proper notions from the study of antiquity, may point and say—"It is there." A clause, I know, has been introduced into the American edition of the "Prayer Book," which, having the appearance of recognising the Eucharist to be a sacrifice, affords some consolation to the Oxford divines, while they bewail the pervasions of those who deformed the English liturgy; but their complaints of Calvinistic and Socinian influence, in modifying the book, clearly show its real character. The "Tractists" are evidently most anxious to find all the doctrines, which they discovered in the ancient fathers, retained, some way or other, in the approved formularies of their church; yet when they passed, even with their mutilated notions, from the writings of these witnesses of the ancient faith, to the examina-

[2] Palmer says, "In treating of the liturgy I would be understood to use the term in that restricted sense which it generally bears in the writings of the ancients; and noting the service used in the celebration of the Eucharist."

tion of the "Prayer Book," as it now stands, they are compelled to say—"It makes, in truth, a man's eyes gush out with water," to see in these notices, how the glory of our church, the days of her youth, and her first love, are departed; and to think what she might have been, had she stood in the old paths. "The virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow." (3) That the clause in the American edition cannot be looked upon as a return to better principles, is evident from the fact, that Bishop White, the author, I presume, of the clause in the American "Prayer Book,"—in his lectures on the Catechism, (4) devotes a whole chapter to refute an "error held by some Protestants," in which he undertakes to prove that "these terms" ('priest,' 'altar,' and 'sacrifice,') "in their proper sense, and in their relation to one another, have no relation to the Eucharist."

That our doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and its sacrificial character is contained in the prayers which we use at Mass, will hardly be denied by any one. Now sir, I venture to assert, that you cannot point out one expression in the prayers of Mass used by Roman Catholics this day, having reference to these points, which, in identical or stronger terms, is not found in the most ancient copies of the Christian liturgies—Clearly as these doctrines are expressed in the prayers of our Mass, there is no ancient liturgy of the Oriental Church, in which they are not expressed, if possible, more clearly and more forcibly. I refer to the Oriental or Asiatic liturgies in a special manner, because you seem inclined to make us believe, that these passed into the British church. Did the columns of a weekly paper permit me to give long extracts, I could easily establish this assertion. For the present, it is sufficient to refer to the collection of Renaudot, or the copious extracts in Lienhart. (5) Those who cannot profit by the learned labours of these writers, may find enough to convince them in "Poynter's Christianity," and in the "Faithful Catholics" by Messrs. Berington and Kirk. (6) I will but indicate a few passages from the many selected by them.

In the Liturgy of Jerusalem, which is considered to be the most ancient in existence, we have the following passages. "We offer to thee, O Lord, this tremendous and unbloody sacrifice, &c."—"Grant thy blessing, O Lord, again and again through this holy oblation, and propitiatory sacrifice, which is offered to God the Father, &c." The Priest breaks off a small part of the Eucharistic bread, which he dips in the chalice, saying: "The blood of our Lord is sprinkled on his body in the name of the Father, and

[3] Tracts for the Times, vol. iv., No. xviii. p. 19.

[4] Dissert. viii., sec. iii. p. 369. Edit. Patis. 183.

[5] De Antiquis Liturgiis et Disciplina Arcani, Argentorati 1829.

[6] The fidelity of the liturgical citations, in the last named book, is evident from the fact that Mr. Pope in his late work, does not attempt to call them into question.

of the Son, &c.;" and distributing the Eucharist he says: "The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, is given to thee for the pardon of offences, and the remission of sins, in this world and the next." The Eucharistic bread is called "the life giving body—the saving body—the heavenly body—the body giving health to souls, and bodies—the body of our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ."—What stronger expressions could they have used?

In the Liturgy of Constantinople,—most generally used by the Greeks,—we find the following: "Bless, O Lord, the holy bread—Make indeed this bread, the precious body of thy Christ—less, O Lord, the holy chalice; and what is in this chalice, the precious blood of thy Christ—changing by the Holy Spirit. Amen, Amen, Amen! That it may be to those who receive it, available to sobriety of soul, to the remission of sins, to the communication of the Holy Spirit, to the plenitude of the kingdom of Heaven, to confidence in Thee; not to sin, or damnation."—The Deacon says:—"Give me, O Lord, the precious and holy body of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The Priest replies: "I give to thee the precious, and holy, and pure body of our Lord and God, and Saviour Jesus Christ, for the remission of sin unto life everlasting." Then receiving himself the holy bread he says: "I believe, O Lord, and I confess that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, &c."

In the liturgy contained in the work entitled the "Apostolic Constitutions," we find the following; "The Bishop gives the Eucharist with these words: "It is the body of Jesus Christ." The receiver answers, Amen. The deacon gives the chalice saying: "It is the blood of Jesus Christ the cup of life!"—The receiver answers, Amen." (7)

The following is found almost in the same words in various ancient liturgies, after the consecration of the elements.

"The Priest says the confession.—The holy body, and precious blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The people answers. Amen.

"Priest. 'The holy precious body, and the true blood of Jesus Christ.' The people. Amen. (8)

"Priest. 'I believe, I believe, I believe and confess to the last breath that it is the vivifying flesh of thy only Son, the Lord God, and Saviour Jesus Christ. He received it from our Holy Lady the Mother of God and ever Virgin Mary, and united it to his divinity &c. &c. He delivered it for our redemption, for the remission of sins, and for the eternal life of those who partake of it.'"

Numerous expressions of similar import might be produced.

Bishop White acknowledges, that what he undertook to refute was introduced at a very early period. "In the course of the discussion," he says, "it has been acknowledged, that the here supposed error concerning 'sacrifice,' 'altar,' and 'priest,' arose at an early period of the

[7] Faith of Catholics, chapter, Liturgies.

[8] The word Amen is used in answering the priest to express their assent to what was said.

*This is found in a verbal of the liturgies quoted Renaudot Tom. i.

Christian Church." (9) It must be remembered that these expressions were not 'articles of peace,' they were not expressions inserted for the purpose of reconciling an apparent belief in the real presence of Christ in the sacrament, with a real denial of the same. They were the spontaneous expressions of the faith that animated them, made in the words that were thought best calculated to convey the ideas they themselves entertained. In works that were likely to meet the eyes of heathens, they were often cautious to express only as much of the Christian doctrine as was necessary for the purpose they had in view at the moment, and they oftentimes endeavoured to veil their meaning under words which the initiated alone could fully understand. They were anxious to spare the blasphemies which a thorough knowledge of the holy mysteries, would be sure to elicit from unbelievers. (10) But in the liturgies they spoke without reserve. Hence though an immense mass of testimony shews what the doctrine of the fathers was, many obscure passages are to be found in their writings; but the liturgies of the church contain a full development of her doctrines on this point. Had their faith regarding the Eucharist been the same as the faith of the Protestant Episcopal church, their liturgy would have been as barren as that contained in the "Prayer Book."

I remain, Rev. Sir, respectfully

Your obedient servant,

CATHOLICUS.

DEPUTATION FROM EDINBURGH TO ADDRESS FATHER MATHEW.—A most respectable deputation arrived in town on Friday night, at the Temperance Hotel, Warning-street, on their way to meet Father Mathew, in Newry, on the 29th instant, in order to present that reverend gentleman with an address and splendid testimonial from the Catholic Total Abstinence Society and Scottish Union for the suppression of Intemperance. This Union is under the patronage of the Right Hon. the Earl of Stanhope.—*Belfast Vindicator.*

[9] Loc. Cit. pag. 492.

[10] "It was chiefly if, not only in the mystical liturgy of the Eucharist, that the primitive Church speaks without reserve of all the sublimities of Christian faith." "It was a remarkable part of the primitive discipline to conceal from all others (besides the baptized and perfect Christians) the mode of administering the sacraments. . . . The method of celebrating baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist; the nature and effect of these ordinances: . . . were only communicated to converts about the time of their baptism.—Where the early Christian writers speak on such topics, there is usually some reserve in their manner, some reference to the peculiar knowledge of the faithful, and very frequently allusions so figurative and remote as none but a baptized Christian could have understood. This primitive discipline is sufficient to account for the facts that very few allusions to the liturgy or Eucharistic service are found in the writings of the fathers, and that on the more solemn part of consecration, &c., they are almost entirely silent." Palmer Orig. Tom. i. p. 13. 14. Writers who know all this, even Bishop White himself, (loc. cit.)—think that they have proved the recent origin of the Catholic doctrine, when they imagine they have shown that it is not clearly expressed in the writings of the earliest fathers;