## WHY I BECAME A CATHOLIC.

HORACE E. CHAPMAN, M. A. IN ENGLISH C. T. S. PUBLICATION, VOL. XXXIV.

That which first led me to disbelieve in Anglicanism as having any other than a human origin, was the government of the Established Church—or in other words the exercise of the Royal Supremacy, through the Privy Council, which Court without doubt is the final Court of Appeal of Anglicanism in matters of Faith.

The first time I ever heard of the Privy Council was when I was a student at a Theological College. A clergyman at Brighton, a certain Mr. Purchas, used to indulge in a very elaborate form of ritual, and thereby raised the wrath of an exceedingly Protestant population. The result was an ecclesiastical prosecution, which was carried to the Judical Committee for ultimate solution. The judgement of the court was unfavorable to Mr. Purchas, and by it among other things, the eastward position of the celebrant was condemned. Now the eastward position was regarded by the Ritualistic party of that day as being of supreme importance, because its object was to symbolize the sacrificial character of the Holy Communion. I knew then nothing whatever about the Judical Committee, or the position it occupies as being the expression of the Royal Supremacy, and thereby the final and Supreme Court of Appeal in all matters, whether ecclesiastical or civil. But I do remember the great stir the judgement created, and what was at that time all-important to me, the statement that we were to take no notice of any of the decisions of the Judical Committee.

Afterwards, another thing occurred which threatened serious disaster to all who held the Doctrine of the Real Presence of our Lord in the Holy Communion. Mr. Bennett of Frome had published sermons on this subject in which he protessed belief in the doctrine, and the sermons were accordingly deemed so extravagant and unorthodox by the Protestant party that the Church Association decided to prosecute him.

This case also was eventually carried to the Judical Committee of the Privy Council. That august and spiritual tribunal, representing the Queen as supreme governor of the Church of England, decided that though Mr. Bennett had gone perilously near infringing the Articles, yet he had not absolutely done so—on the hand, it was not to be supposed that his view in any way represented the teaching of the Church of England, for any one might hold, as against Mr. Bennett, that the presence was only real in the heart of the faithful.

This satisfied everyone. It only now remained to preach the objective doctrine more strongly than ever. But what a denial of all Truth! Mr. Bennett was right or he was wrong. Such a doctrine as the Real Presence does not, before God, admit of the doctrine of the Real Absence.

Three other events of supreme consequence to the Anglican Church occurred whilst I was in Brighton (1) the passing of the Public Worship Regulation Act; (2) the publication of the Oath of Homage, in the House of Lords, by Lord John Russell; and (3) the appointment of Lord Penzance to be Dean of Arches.

The Public Worship Regulation Act was a measure brought in by Archbishop Tait, supported by Lord Beaconsfield, which had for its object the suppression of Ritualism. By it, any three persons residing in a parish, even though not communicants, could bring a charge against a clergyman for any of the following points: lighting candles which were not required for the purpose of light, using incense, standing (when celebrating Holy Communion) with his back to the people, mixing water and wine, wearing "vestments." This Act passed into law, with a proviso that the Bishop, if he saw fit, could veto proceedings, and prevent their going further. A sharp struggle took place over the retention of this veto clause in the House of Commons; the Protestant party opposing it tooth and nail, and the Liberal and Church party generally supporting it. The measure was severe, and promised to be efficacious in putting down Ritualism, with the extravagance of which the English people were heartily wearied. It is of interest to remember that it was then that Mr. Disraeli raised the "No Popery" cry, and, with scathing sarcasm, spoke of the celebration of the Holy Communion by the Ritualists as the "Mass in masquerade!"

Undoubtedly it was a time of great excitement for all Catholic-minded people; and it looked as if, after all, the Church of England was nothing but a department of the State, or, as some statesman once described it, "the moral police force of the Government of England."

People did not know what to think or what to do. The more logical followed their reason, and became Catholics. Others wrote pamphlets, addressed meetings, protested, and threatened all kinds of things, none of which came to pass, and were content with what they did.

I was greatly upset. The Privy Council was now no longer looming in the distance, but standing out clear and sharp in the near horizon: for the process by this Bill was: First, the Bishop; then the Court of Arches; and then the final arbiter—the Privy Council—representing the Sovereign.

The Public Worship Regulation Act was passed to put down Ritualism. It has signally failed, and the license to do what you like and "go as you please" has enormously increased since the attempt. To my mind the publication by Lord John Russell of the "Oath of Homage," on the presentation of the Bishops to Her Majesty, was likely to produce a deeper impression on reflective minds.

Lord John Russell, in order to expose the pretensions of Ritualists and Sacerdotalists in the Church of England, alluded to this oath in the House of Lords, and wrote a letter to the Times, in which he made public its form. This came like a blow from a sledge hammer. No one had ever heard of it. Simple people thought that when a Bishop went to Windsor to do homage, he went as a citizen to do fealty to the Queen. Not at all! The process is this: Dressed in his full canonicals, he is taken by the Home Secretary into the royal presence, and then on his knees, after kissing the Bible, says:

"I——Doctor in Divinity, now elected, confirmed, and consecrated Bishop of ——do hereby declare that your Majesty is the only Supreme Governor of this your realm in spiritual and ecclesiastical things, as well as in temporal, and that no foreign prelate or potentate has any jurisdiction within this realm: and I acknowledge that I hold the said Bishopric, as well the spiritualities as the temporalities thereof only of your Majesty. And for the same temporalities, I do my homage presently to your Majesty—so help me God. God save Queen Victoria!"

"It would be impossible, I think," says Mr. Allies, "to devise a more unambiguous declaration that spiritual mission and jurisdiction are derived, in the Church which was set up by Queen Elizabeth and continues what she made it, from the Crown and nobody but the Crown, than this charter professed by each of the Bishops of that Church as he enters on his office. There is a completeness of statement about it, which tells of the sheerness with which the Tudor axe severed heads, and does away with every attempt to palter and shuffle. From Elizabeth to Victoria, every Bishop humbly confesses on his knees 'I acknowledge that I hold the said Bishopric, as well the spiritualities as the temporalities thereof, only of your Majesty.' What is become of the succession of the Apostles? What of the jurisdiction belonging to episcopal, or metropolical or patriarchal sees? Where, above all, is the mission of the world's Redeemer, 'Go, and make disciples of all nations?' The Elizabethan crosier is a stick which the temporal sovereign first lays over her Bishop's shoulder, and then gives him to keep his clergy in order with."

Now this most extraordinary oath, like a great many other remarkable things, came in with Elizabeth: but except the Bishops, I doubt until Lord John Russell published it whether ordinary persons knew of its meaning and import.

It was at once attempted to explain it away, but it remains—and my firm belief is, that in this oath is to be found the reason for the apparent indifference of the Episcopate to all definite truth. They can do nothing after taking it, and they cannot disobey the law in any particular without resigning their see.

I was however myself to experience something of the meaning of the Royal Supremacy, for when rector of Donhead, I was prosecuted for ritual irregularities. And among other charges brought against me was that I was guilty of ceremonially mixing water with wine in the administration of the Holy Communion. The Bishop of Salisbury at that time was Dr. Moberly, for whom as long as I live I shall retain a very real affection. He availed himself of the power granted him by the Public Regulation Act, and quashed all further legal proceedings against me. He had in an interview previously asked me whether I mixed water with wine in the presence of the congregation. I said, "Yes, I do, and I feel most strongly about this, as having undoubtedly the authority of apostolic times." I was determined to let the Bishop know my position, and I said at the end of the investigation, "My Lord, I wish to tell you that my mind is made up, I shall either obey you implicitly, or resign."

"Is there not a third course open to you? said the Bishop. "Sin bravely. *Pecca fortiter.*"

I replied: "You mean by that, resist your authority?"

"Yes," he said.

"That is impossible for me, my Lord. With my views of the office and position of a Bishop, I could not do so, especially as the appeal from your judgement would finally be to the Privy Council."

And then the good Bishop said with real feeling:

"Would that I could deal with you as a Bishop, but I cannot! I am convinced that it is impossible for an Anglican Bishop to disobey the law, though the day may come when he will have to resign his see."

The Bishop gave effect to these words after he had stopped all further procedure, by asking me to forego, at his request, the use of lights and the mixed chalice, and he wrote:

"I am anxious to convey to you my very earnest, affectionate, and sympathizing desire that you will, in deference, not to the declaration of the Court only but to the urgent request of your Bishop, forego these things."

I yielded to the Bishop in so far as the ceremonial mixing of water and wine was concerned. Whether the Bishop would have acted as he did had he not felt bound by law so to act, you can best judge by this letter which he wrote to me on receiving my submission.

"On the question of mixed chalice I own that I have a clear and strong opinion; and though I do not think that that opinion would justify me in going counter to the decision of the Reformed Church of England (whether that decision was deliberate and doctrinal, or, as seems not improbable, more or less casual and unconsidered), yet I think it a grave misfortune and wrong that a practice so ancient and *original*, so universal in the primitive ages, and considered so important by the greatest writers of antiquity, should be forbidden, to the extent of being made penal, in the Church of England."

I quoted these remarkable words, "I am convinced that it is impossible for an Anglican Bishop to disobey the law etc.," in a letter to the present Bishop of Salisbury in 1887. They are to mind the only explanation of the reason which prevents the Bishops of the Established Church from taking action in any matter, however serious, which could bring them in opposition to the law.

And why? Simply because without the law they are powerless: they have no authority except that given them by the law: and even if they should think the law has allowed anything which is contrary to the teaching of Christ, still they cannot take action against the law.

The plainest illustration of this is to be found in their past and present attitude towards the grave evil of divorce. Our Lord says: "Whosoever marrieth her that is put away doth commit adultery." The human law has torn into shreds the plain command of Christ, and has legalized adultery: and yet men who are by some supposed to be Apostles of Christ, have come to tolerate, and even directly give their sanction to it; for licences are still issued from the Bishops' Courts authorizing the marriage of divorced people, and according to high authority, they cannot be refused. The law does not compel a clergyman to marry divorced people, but it does compel him to lend his church to any clergyman who has no scruple in performing the ceremony, and the Bishops cannot, and dare not, prevent this frightful act of profanation.

I know myself of a case of a man twice divorced, and re-married a third time according to the service of the Church of England. Is not this really amazing? And yet it is not so, for divorce has dogged the Church of England from the very beginning. It is divorce which to-day threatens to destroy the sanctity of all home life, and is yearly increasing. The marriage bond, which is pronounced by the clergyman to be indissoluble, is easily snapped asunder. The solemn words of the service, "Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder," have become a sacrilegious farce, and the Bishops, the pretended successors of the Aposties, do nothing. No, because they have sworn before Her Majesty that they derive their spiritualities and their temporalities from the crown, and so, what the law decrees, that they must allow, or, which they never do, give up their palace and their princely incomes.

What a position! And what a striking object lesson in the cuckoo continuity cry of the identity of the present Established Church with the old Catholic Church of England!

"I am convinced that it is impossible for an Anglican Bishop to disobey the law: though the day may come when he will have to resign his see." What words could more eloquently express the real condition of things than these?

I have said that what led me to disbelieve in Anglicanism as having any other than a human origin, was the government of the Church of England—or in other words the exercise of the Royal Supremacy through the Privy Council, which is without doubt the Final Court of Appeal of the Church of England in matters of faith.

I know of course what is usually said on the other side. The kind of argument used by Anglicans is this:

1. The Privy Council is unconstitutional and a violation on the part of the Crown of the Reformation settlement. It should be treated therefore as of no authority and be disobeyed.

2. The appointment of Lord Penzance, a layman, to be Dean of the Court of Arches was irregular, he also is therefore to be disobeyed.

3. And even for the Bishop himself since he is only to be obeyed when he acts according to Canon Law, he must be disobeyed whenever he attempts to sanction the irregular proceedings of the Judicial Committee or Lord Penzance.

But these pleas for disobedience are easily answered: (1) The Privy Council.—The late Lord Selborne in his defence of the Church of England, says, in contrasting the Privy Council with the Court of Delegates which preceded it, "It is needless to add that there cannot possibly be any difference in principle between an appeal to the King in Chancery, given by Statute in A.D. 1533, and an appeal to the King in Council, given by Statute in A. D., 1832: the latter may, or may not be, a better Court than the former: but there cannot be any *difference in principle.*"

As regards (2) Lord Penzance, what did the irregularity of his appointment amount to, when, without any question, an appeal from his decision went to the Privy Council? And as regards (3)—only obeying the Bishop when he was supposed to act according to Canon Law, it seemed to render nugatory all obedience whatever on the part of the clergy to their Bishop—for have Anglican Bishops since the Reformation ever thought of grounding their exercise of authority on Canon Law—as distinguished from the "King's Ecclesiastical Law," which is nothing else than such Statute Law as relates to ecclesiastical matters?

I asked this question and I need scarcely say, I obtained no reply.

It was clear in short that, whilst repudiating every existing authority on earth (and this on so-called Catholic grounds), we were becoming an exhibition to the world of ultra-Protestantism, and of lawlessness run riot. There is not, nor can there be, the slightest doubt about the fact of the Royal Supremacy being the ultimate authority for the Church of England, as well as the source of all jurisdiction and order for the Anglican Episcopate, as I shall presently show.

The ground is indeed cleared, if only people who desire an explanation of so much that is contradictory and perplexing in Anglicanism will face and work out this point first of all; and then investigate, and seek explanation for, whatever difficulties of detail they may find in the doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church. For this investigation must, if honestly and fearlessly undertaken before God, lead people to ask, "By whose authority was all this done? and by what law of God, written or unwritten, was the determination of religious causes transferred to the King from the Pope, who had exercised in this country supreme authority in things spiritual ever since the mission of St. Augustine?" Obviously, if the conclusion arrived at be that the present Church of England, both in its origin and Government, is the creation of the State, we shall no longer be mystified by first having taken for granted, on the pure basis of assumption, the Church of England to be divine, nor shall we, by any power of intelligible reasoning, ever again identify the Establishment with any part of the Catholic Church, which claims submission from us all, only because her origin and government are from God.

And that the crown is supreme in all causes, ecclesiastical or civil, requires no labored argument to prove, and the following quotation from Lord Campbell and Lord Coke, which will be found in Mr. Allies' book Per Crucem ad Lucem, p. 28, will suffice for my present purpose.

"Lord Chief Justice Campbell delivered judgment on the 28th, April, 1850, upon a point raised by the opponents of the decision in the Gorham case—the point namely, maintained by Sir Fitzroy Kelly, on behalf of the Bishop of Exeter, that, in a matter touching the Crown, an appeal does not lie to the Queen in Council, but lies to the Upper House of Convocation. Lord Campbell, deciding in the negative this claim, says:

"In the following year (1534) Henry, finding that there was no chance of succeeding with his divorce suit with the sanction of the Pope, and being impatient to marry Anne Boleyn, resolved to break with Rome altogether, and, preserving all the tenets of the Roman Catholic Faith, to vest in himself the jurisdiction which the Pope had hitherto exercised in England. Sir Thomas More had now resigned the Great Seal, and it was held by the pliant Lord Audley, who was ready to adopt the new doctrines in religion, or to adhere to the old, as suited his interests.'"

He proceeds to say that this seizure of the Papal jurisdiction was effected by the Statute 24, Henry VIII. c. 12, by which, instead of allowing the decisions of the Archbishops "to be final" as it was by Statute 24, Henry VIII. c. 12, the Legislature now enacted that, "for lack of justice at or in any of the courts of the Archbishops," "it shall be lawful to the parties grieved to appeal to the King's Majesty in the King's Court of Chancery, where delegates are to be appointed under the Great Seal, who are to adjudicate upon the appeal.

The appeal is given in all causes in the courts of the Archbishops of this realm—as well in the causes of a purely spiritual nature which might hitherto have been carried to Rome, as in the classes of causes of a temporal nature, enumerated in Statute 24, Henry VIII. c. 12.

Lord Chief Justice Campbell further cites Lord Coke in support of this judgment. In his fourth institute, p. 340, commenting upon the Statute 28, Henry VIII. c. 19, this great lawyer says "A general prohibition that no appeals shall be pursued out of the realm to Rome, or elsewhere. Item, a general clause that all manner of appeals, what matter soever they concern, shall be made in such manner, form, and condition within the realm, as is above ordered by 24 Henry VIII. in the three causes aforesaid:" and one degree further in appeals for all manner of causes is given, viz., from the Archbishops' Court to the King in his Chancery, where a commission shall be awarded for the determination of the said appeal, and from thence no further.

With this judgment Lord Campbell ended all attempts to dispute or limit the Royal Supremacy *in appeals for all manner of causes.*

There cannot be a better illustration of the reality of the Royal Supremacy, as being the final determining power in all things spiritual, than the recent case of the Bishop of Lincoln. Dr. King was prosecuted by the Church Association for ritual irregularities. The case was heard first before the Archbishop of Canterbury and his assessors and he gave their judgment. But the Church Association appealed to the Queen in Council, and the Privy Council spoke the last word on the points in dispute.

Now what, I ask, has been in the latter half of this century the *consequence* of the judgments of the Privy Council? Nothing less than the total destruction of all positive truth. For this court has had to deal, from the Gorham case inclusively, to the present time with questions which embrace the whole range of Christian belief and Christian life.

"Thus in the judgment of Heath *v* Burder, in 1862, it had to deal with our Lord's atonement, with jurisdiction, and the forgiveness and remission of sins. In the cases of Williams *v* Bishop of Salisbury, and Wilson *v* Fendale, it had to deal with the inspiration of Scripture, the doctrine of eternal rewards and punishments, the belief in prophecy, and many of the most intricate questions of theology. In the Gorham case in 1850, it had to deal with the point whether clergymen of the Church of England were bound to believe and teach the regeneration of infants, in and by virtue of Baptism. In the case of Liddell *v* Westerton, and Liddell *v* Beal, it laid down that in the Church of England there was no longer an altar of sacrifice, but merely a table at which communicants were to partake of the Lord's Supper: that the term altar is never used to describe it, and there is an express declaration at the close of the service against the doctrine of transubstantiation, with which the idea of an altar and sacrifice are closely connected.

And what has been the outcome of these judgments? The High Church party have taught, more strongly than ever before, all and every doctrine, as far as they understand them, of the Catholic religion, obedience to all authority except their own notably excluded. The Broad Church party have reached a position barely distinguishable from Unitarianism, and the Low Church party, caring nothing about Church and Sacraments, except as occupying an entirely subsidiary position in the Christian dispensation, and disowning all ideas of a Priesthood and an Apostolic Ministry, are as contented as ever with their Gospel of negation.

"Go ye, teach all nations," was the Divine Commission. Does the Anglican Communion fulfil the command? What doctrine do her ministers teach? How may the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, the heathen or the savage, know what is of Faith, what of opinion, what is truth, what is error, what the efficacy of the Sacraments, what position they occupy in the Christian dispensation as regards our Salvation, what the nature of the Christian Ministry, and how exercised in dealing with immortal souls, what the belief about the intermediate state, what the meaning of the Communion of Saints, what is well-pleasing to Almighty God, and how man ought to worship Him, and how is he surely to work out daily his own salvation? Alas! the answer is, no one can know; nothing in the whole range of the Christian revelation is any longer a matter of certitude, but every article of Faith is a matter of controversy, wrangled about and fought over, in pulpits, in the press, on platforms and in homes. The Babel of tongues is the only living voice to be heard in the English Establishment, the city of confusion.

But perhaps you will say, "All this may be true, and yet after all the English Church suits the English people, their ways and their habits. They do not care about inquiring too deeply into its origin, doctrines, or practice. They are content with things as they are; enough for them that the Established Church is English, and that it is a witness to that glorious policy of complete isolation which both in temporal and spiritual things seems to point to the fact that the world was made for the English, and that outside their sphere of influence every one else occupies a position of inferior mediocrity. It would be something too novel for us,

CONTINUED ON SIXTH PAGE.


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