

THE PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY.

NO. 41.—JULY, 1897.

I. PHILIP MELANCHTHON, SCHOLAR AND REFORMER.¹

OF the many brief descriptions of the Reformation, none is more striking than that which represents it as the return of Christendom to a book. Of course, so continental, profound and complex a movement cannot be described in a single sentence. But with a rough kind of truth it may be said, that when the hour of the great religious revolution struck, the various lines on which its historical causes had for centuries been moving converged and terminated in the Holy Bible. If we were limited to a single statement as to what the Reformation, in its inmost essence, was, and what, as it perpetuates itself in the Protestant churches, it still is; after all our study of the historical events which preceded it as coöperating agents—the papal schism, the reforming councils, the struggles between Gallicanism and Ultramontanism, the classical revival, the destructive and constructive forces which tore down the mediæval and built up the modern society, as the inventions of printing, of gunpowder and of the mariner's compass and the great voyages of discovery, the religious labors of local and national reformers like Wicliff and Huss and Savonarola—if, I say, after all this study, we were called to select a single sentence in which to embody the idea of the Reformation, we could find no better sentence for the purpose than that of Wil-

¹An address delivered in the chapel of Princeton Theological Seminary on the occasion of the celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Philip Melanchthon. The Rev. Dr. Green, Chairman of the Faculty, presided; and the Rev. Dr. Jacobs, Dean of the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, took part in the services. The hymns sung were written by Melanchthon and Luther.

III. POPE LEO XIII. ON THE VALIDITY OF ANGLICAN ORDERS.

It is now several months since the Pope gave his answer to certain high churchmen in the Anglican communion who asked him whether he could recognize the validity of Anglican orders. We trust, however, that sufficient interest in the subject lingers in the minds of our readers to justify our inviting their attention to some reflections growing out of it. Of course, the validity of Anglican orders is not a matter of any practical importance to dissenters. If they are valid, we gain nothing, as we obstinately refuse to avail ourselves of the benefit which their validity is supposed to confer. If they are not valid, we lose nothing. We can look, therefore, at question and answer from a purely disinterested standpoint. In fact, we have never known a question asked in which we felt less personal concern; nor have we ever known an answer to a question that had less influence on our judgment. Had our Anglican friends asked the Pope that famous question with which the minds of the mediæval schoolmen wrestled, "How many angels can stand on the point of a needle?" it would have come as close "home to our business and bosoms" as the question touching the validity of their orders; and the Pope's answer to this angelic problem would have carried the same weight of conviction. Let no one suppose that we should have been mightily tempted to enter the Anglican fold had the Pope's answer been different; and let not our Episcopal friends think that our confidence in the validity of their orders has been in the slightest degree impaired by the Pope's unfavorable response. What we propose to say grows out of a merely curious or speculative interest.

THE MOTIVE OF THE QUESTION.

Why did Lord Halifax and his company go to the Pope with such a question?

1. They had much staked on it. Cardinal Vaughn, speaking

of them, says: "This minority holds, in common with ourselves, that the divine founder of Christianity established his religion as a sacramental and sacrificial system, absolutely dependent upon a sacerdotal order, instituted by Christ himself. Its earnest and devout members believe, with us, that the supernatural life of the soul is created, nourished and perfected through the sacraments; and that the priests administering them possess miraculous powers whereby they daily offer the true sacrifice of Jesus Christ upon the altar, forgive the sins of men, and teach the truths of salvation with divine authority. This priesthood is nothing less than the priesthood of Jesus Christ." No doubt the Cardinal has stated accurately the religious views of those who asked for the Pope's judgment on the validity of Anglican orders. They are those who have departed, both in heart and practice, from the Protestant faith. The question with them is not a question as to whether the bishops and priests of the Anglican Church have derived authority by uninterrupted succession from the apostles to preach the word, administer the sacraments, and exercise discipline. It is altogether a different question. Have the bishops and priests of the Anglican Church succeeded to the apostolic right to offer up Jesus Christ as an expiatory and propitiatory sacrifice, and on the ground of this sacrifice forgive the sins of those who come to the confessional? Do the bishops and priests of the Anglican Church possess the miraculous power to change the bread and wine of the sacrament into the body and blood of Jesus Christ? Are they really and truly priests, *sacerdotes*? Are they performing the vital priestly functions of expiating sin, propitiating God by offering atoning sacrifices, and do they actually forgive sins in pronouncing sentence of absolution? According to the views of those who are asking as to the validity of their orders, unless they are discharging these genuine offices of priesthood they are incurring great sin, the sin of Nadab and Abihu, and are fatally deluding the souls of those to whom they minister. Nothing, then, can be a matter of graver concern to these believers in Romish salvation who still worship in the Anglican Church than to know whether their worship is true and saving, or false and delusive. "How shocking," says Cardinal Vaughn, "to adore

as very God elements that are but bread and wine, and to bend down after auricular confession in order to receive a mere human and useless absolution!" Believing as they do that the supernatural life of the soul can only be "created, nourished and perfected through the sacraments," and that the sacraments are effective to this end only when administered by priests of Christ's appointment, the question is viewed by them as involving the highest interests of the soul. It is a question of life or death, heaven or hell.

2. Their question implies doubt. They only believe, they do not know, that their line of bishops extends in unbroken succession back to the apostles. Their belief is timid and tremulous. They cannot avow it with the confidence of a certain writer who says: "I suppose it cannot bear any dispute, but that it is now more easily proved that the Archbishop of Canterbury was canonically ordained than that any person now living is the son of him who is called his father; and that the same might have been said of any archbishop or bishop that ever sat in that or any other Episcopal see." It is an old saying that "it is a wise child who knows his own father." According to the *dictum* of the foregoing writer it is not necessary that one be so wise in order to know the truth of apostolic succession. We are willing to concede as much. Indeed, we should not object to conceding that the less wise one is the more certainly he knows apostolic succession to be true.

It is noticeable that the higher the churchism, the more important the validity of orders becomes. At a certain height of churchly pretentiousness, it is deemed a matter of very great importance, because only those in the line of apostolic succession can properly administer the sacraments; and, therefore, only those who enjoy their ministrations can be sure of the "covenanted mercies of God." But they do not believe that saving grace is so restricted to the sacraments thus administered as that no one can possibly be saved without them. Honest and sincere, though misguided, souls may be saved by the "uncovenanted mercies of God." Those who have attained to this height insist strongly on apostolic succession, and lay great emphasis on the validity of Anglican orders. These are they who have no doubts, who are able to

say to dissenters: "You are no church, because you have no valid ministry. We can have nothing to do with you until you acknowledge your fatal defect, and accept our historic episcopate." When they grow higher still, and come to believe that all spiritual life is dependent on the sacraments, and that the sacraments are dependent on the validity of orders, then their tone is not so confident. When the conviction is reached that the soul's salvation is bound up inseparably with the validity of orders, then the degree of certainty that satisfied before does not satisfy now. Mr. Gladstone, by a strange process of mathematics, demonstrates that the chances for the true consecration of any given bishop are eight thousand to one. "Be it so," says Macaulay, "this only diminishes the probability that in any given case the suspicion of invalidity is unfounded. According to this theory, no man in the Anglican communion has a right to say that he is commissioned to preach the gospel, but only that he has seven thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine eight-thousandths parts of certainty that he is!" Mr. Gladstone is not seriously disturbed by the probability that one out of eight thousand priests is performing his functions without divine commission. He does not think that his soul is imperilled by the want of absolute certainty. But let a person once seriously entertain the horrible suspicion that if the priest at whose hands he is receiving the sacraments is not in the line of apostolic succession, then his own hopes of heaven are delusive, and he begins to look with frightened face toward Rome. Lord Halifax and those who joined with him in seriously propounding this question to the Pope thereby seriously confessed their doubts as to the validity of Anglican orders.

3. Why did they apply to the Pope? Did they recognize him as the most learned man in the world, and, by reason of his greater learning, more capable of giving a trustworthy answer? Manifestly not. They applied to him because, in their heart of hearts, they believe in his asserted prerogatives, they bow down to his ghostly authority. If it were a matter to be settled by historical investigation, they were as capable of settling it as the Pope. Whatever facts bear on the question are as accessible to others as to Leo XIII. They admit that, after the most careful investiga-

tion of history, and the most careful study of all obtainable facts, and the most ardent desire to believe in the validity of their orders, the question is still in doubt. In such a case there is only one resort, and that is to a supernatural source of information. For this reason they resort to the successor of Peter, Pope Leo XIII., the vicegerent of Christ, who is evidently supposed by them to speak on this vital subject with infallible authority. They doubtless believe with Cardinal Vaughan, that "the pope is the chief guardian of the sacraments, and he is a debtor to God and to souls for the due discharge of his supreme office as judge in these matters." The Pope does not need to investigate history, does not need to worry his mind with facts. He has but to consult his feelings and what he conceives to be to the interests of the papacy, and, without further ado, he is prepared to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth!

This question did not emanate from the whole Anglican Church. Only a minority, it is to be hoped a small minority, are responsible for it. We are naturally curious to know how the majority regard their act. It must not be particularly agreeable to have a party in their church, a party respectable in numbers and influence, asking the Pope of Rome whether or not he regards the Anglican Church a true church, or a schismatical body destitute of ministers and means of grace. Remember they have asked this question in a voice loud enough for all the civilized world to hear; and the civilized world has been sufficiently interested to give ear both to question and answer. Suppose that a presbytery in Scotland should seriously and solemnly, for the peace of its own conscience, propound such a question to the Pope touching the Church of Scotland? Would not the other presbyteries and synods rise up and rebuke it with indignant protest? Surely they could not easily bear that any respectable body in their church should gravely submit to a wily old Italian priest, on the banks of the Tiber, the question as to whether they had a right to regard themselves as members of a true church of Christ. But how absurd the idea that any high dignitaries in a Presbyterian Church should ever so far forget the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free as to ask permission of a trembling old fraud to claim an interest in the grace of

God. It almost sets one's teeth on edge to entertain for one moment the bitter thought of a truly Protestant church cringing again at the feet of the Pope. But we hear no protests from the majority in the Anglican Church. Some of them may have felt indifferent, but there is reason to think that many were profoundly interested, and would have been gratified if the Pope had given a different answer. Now, would there be any impropriety in the other churches of Christendom suggesting to the Anglican Church to withdraw its proposals of union until its members settle among themselves whether they have any church? It will be remembered that the Anglican Church has strongly insisted that validity of orders, based on apostolic succession, is essential to the existence of a church. Is it not asking too much that other churches should surrender their organizations to join a church, many of whose own members are in painful doubt as to whether it is a church? They have examined with anxious diligence the foundations on which it rests, and have in this most public manner expressed their apprehensions. They practically say that the testimony of facts is not satisfactory.

THE MOTIVE OF THE ANSWER.

Why did Leo XIII. return such an answer to their question?

1. The Pope was professedly very sorry that he was constrained to deny them the comfort which they craved. Most gladly would he have granted the answer which they so much desired. But he could not shut his eyes to evidence, and the evidence was such as to admit of no doubt. He had to suppress his feelings and fight against his heart. "They may rest assured," says Cardinal Vaughn, "that nothing could have induced Leo XIII. to have pronounced his final judgment short of overwhelming evidence, urgent charity, and imperative duty. No choice was left him in a matter so deeply affecting God's honor and the salvation of souls. He has condemned Anglican orders simply because the evidence has conclusively proved them to be null and void. I may say without hesitation that Leo's well-known large-mindedness and sympathies would have naturally led him to avoid an unfavorable judgment, had it been possible to have done so." A dissenter might be pardoned for doubting the Pope's sincerity. It

is easy to see that the answer is in a line with papal interests. The surest way to bring over the Anglo-Catholics into the fold of Rome is to convince them that they cannot have what they want, and what they deem necessary to salvation, while they remain where they are. If it were allowable to suppose that the Pope could be guilty of insincerity, it would be easy to ascribe his answer to no higher inspiration than that of subtle priestcraft. Of course, Lord Halifax and his associates would be restrained by their reverence for the Holy Father from making such a supposition. But *The Churchman* is not under the same restraint of reverence. It does not hesitate to say that the Pope pronounced his sentence against the validity of Anglican orders "with implicit confidence that five hundred Anglican clergymen would renounce their church and fly to the bosom of the Holy Mother." *The Churchman* implies that the Pope's answer was influenced by this expectation. We are not called on to mediate between the Pope and *The Churchman*. We only venture to suggest that if the Pope's answer had been in harmony with Anglican pretensions, his character would probably have escaped such an aspersion.

2. The question was already decided before it was submitted to Leo XIII. It has ever been the custom of Rome to reconfirm converts and reordain priests coming from the Anglican Church. The only reason for submitting the question was the hope that the present pope would make more generous concessions than had hitherto been made. He is looked upon as a man of broader mind and more progressive spirit than the average pope. Then his ardent and oft-expressed desire for the reunion of Christendom, it was thought, would prompt him to go to the extreme limit in meeting the advances of those who were showing themselves anxious for closer relations. But however broad-minded Leo may be, he cannot afford to disregard the decisions of his predecessors. Infallibility must not contradict itself too often. It must reserve this privilege for supreme exigencies, otherwise it will knock the supports from under its own throne. Unfortunately for broad-minded and progressive popes, the prerogative of infallibility belongs to narrow-minded and non-progressive

popes equally with themselves. They thus find themselves frequently bound by fetters that cannot be broken to records of the past. Not that Leo XIII. cared to have the decision of this question different from what he found it. Considering how overwhelming the evidence in favor of that decision, and the further fact that its reaffirmation might result in bringing over five hundred clergyman from the Anglican Church, he was reconciled, to say the least, to leave it unreversed.

3. The answer of the Pope was not influenced in the slightest by the consideration that the Anglicans are schismatics. "The Holy See," says Cardinal Vaughn, "has never had difficulty in recognizing as valid the orders of the Greek and other eastern schismatics, because the evidence of their validity is sufficient. And now it has not condemned Anglican orders because they were Anglican, or given in heresy or schism. It has condemned them simply because the facts and the evidence admitted of no doubt." It seems as if the purpose of the large-minded and sympathetic Leo was to cut the Anglicans off from every way of escape. He forbids their attributing his decision to any other cause than the irresistible weight of evidence.

Some who were interested in the Pope's decision declared before it was announced that they were going to disregard it. They evidently had strong suspicion that papal judgment would go against them, and so they fortified their minds by assuring the public that no matter what the Pope said, they meant to rest satisfied with such orders as they had. "But with their mouth full of reproaches they must face this fact—that neither Jansenist, Russian, Greek, nor any of the eastern sects who possess valid orders, have ever been able or willing to recognize the validity of Anglican orders. These stand alone, shivering in their insular isolation, and worse, for they are disowned within their own communion, as well as by the immense majority of the English people." Thus speaks the distinguished Cardinal from whom we have had frequent occasion to quote. It appears that our Anglican friends have carried their orders around and exhibited them to experts far and near, and have found "none so poor as to do them reverence." They have had to witness the mutual recognition of those

who had valid orders, and feel themselves disowned by all. *Hinc illæ lacrimæ.* We might almost think the prophecy was addressed to them: "Many shall come from the east and the west and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness." Disowned by their old mother to whom they look with such pleading affection, disowned by all the brothers and sisters to whom they have gone humbly begging for recognition, they would be objects of pity were they not so peculiar in their bearing. One would think they would care very little for orders which have been pronounced spurious by all those whom they themselves have selected as the most competent judges. Most people set little store by money which has been declared counterfeit by experts. But they are nothing daunted. "Standing alone, shivering in their insular insolation," with every door shut in their face at which they had knocked for admittance, they yet assert the validity of their orders with a dogmatism as emphatic as if to them, and not to St. Peter, had been committed the gift of infallibility. The fact that nobody else believes in their orders apparently strengthens their own faith in them.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS.

1. How many persons in the Anglican communion, in this country and England, are directly and personally concerned in the Pope's answer for the reason that they are Romanists in all but name? How many believe that "the divine founder of Christianity established his religion as a sacramental and sacrificial system, absolutely dependent upon a sacerdotal order, instituted by Christ himself"? It is reasonable to suppose that the number is comparatively small, but it is amazing that it should be as large as it is, and that it should include so many persons of culture and wealth, and social influence. We have been able to account for the Romanism of Rome. It grew up gradually, appropriating a little here and a little there from the paganism with which it came in contact, as a means of rapid propagandism. It flourished more and more as ancient civilization decayed and intellectual light waned. Its rankest errors sprang up in the Dark Ages, and

took such deep root, and attained such vigorous development, as to enable them to live on under the glowing sun of these modern centuries. It is strange, but not altogether unaccountable, that those reared in the dense shadow of these errors should never escape into the light. But how account for it that those who have once stood where the bright beams of a pure Christianity could fall on them should deliberately exchange the light for darkness, freedom of soul for bondage, and a rational faith for dogmas more incredible than the myths of ancient Greece and Rome? "Believe in the Pope!" exclaimed Dr. Arnold, "I would as soon believe in Jupiter." To believe in the Pope requires that reason give place to a credulity that says after the old formula: "I believe, because I do not understand." Bacon declared that he had rather be an atheist than to believe in a god who devours his children. Is it not even more monstrous to believe in a god whose children devour him? This is the feat performed by those who believe in the Pope. A witty nobleman balked the efforts of a Romish priest to convert him by suggesting that he had with great difficulty gotten the consent of his mind to accept the proposition that God made man, but he was sure he could never persuade himself to accept the proposition that man could make God. Not only does the Romish priest require you to believe that he can make God, but he demands, as a condition of salvation, that you shall eat the god whom he makes. To one who can assent to such demands on his faith, the narratives of Munchausen must seem in the highest degree credible. Can one look at the perverts from Protestantism to Rome and then wonder that Joseph Smith succeeded in building up the glaring fraud that goes under the name of "The Church of the Latter Day Saints"? To us it seems a far lighter tax on credulity to believe the book of Mormon, and the book of Doctrines and Covenants, than to believe the dogmas which the papacy imposes as essential elements of her system. England has been called the "chosen recruiting ground of the Mormon Apostles." Is it any wonder, when once it becomes known that the English lords and ladies, and English men of letters, like Manning and Newman, reared in the light of Christian truth, can turn away to a superstition compared with

which the "Revelations" granted to Joseph Smith through his Urim and Thummim are crystalline in their beauty and simplicity?

2. The serious aspect of the situation is not in the numbers who at present are in heart Romanists, but in the fact that there is a current setting Romeward, a current ever deepening and widening, and increasing in momentum. One after another, bishop, priest, diocese, is loosened from a position of safe conservatism and floated out from shore. Low churchmen are drifting to high churchism, and high churchmen are drifting from sacramentarianism to full-developed Romanism. Evangelicals have become discouraged, and have almost ceased to bear testimony against the drift. The *Outlook* (New York), October 10, 1896, says: "There has been during the past fifteen years a notable reaction in the English Church toward what are known as high-church views. The bishops, owing to the fact that both Mr. Gladstone and Lord Salisbury sympathize with the high-church party, are now advanced churchmen in an overwhelming majority. The elaboration of service has gone on in all parts of England, and in many places ritualistic practices have succeeded the ancient simplicity." We must antedate this reaction by twice fifteen years. Nearly thirty years ago Froude wrote: "The sacramental system means something, or it means nothing. It is true, or it is false. The English evangelicals used to answer in clear ringing tones for the second alternative. There was no playing with words, no sentiment, no mystification. They insisted sternly and firmly that material forms were not and could not be a connecting link between God and the human soul. The English high churchman was less decided in his words, but scarcely less so in practice. He was contented to use the ambiguous formulas which the Reformation left in the liturgy, but he confined his "celebrations" to four times a year. He regarded the Anglican ceremonial generally rather as something established by law, which it was his business to carry out, than as a set of rites to which he attached a meaning. High churchmen have discovered now that the mystic body in the eucharist is in the hands as well as in the heart of the believer. They pine for more frequent communions as the food of their spiritual existence. They are gliding rapidly into the

positive affirmation of the doctrine which Latimer and Ridley were executed for denying. The evangelicals shrink from being behindhand. They have lost confidence in themselves; they play with mysticism, and admit that things untrue in one sense may be true in another. They are patching their garments from the rags which their fathers threw away, anxious to maintain their party rather than their principles."

The drift is as discernible in this country as in England. Only a few years ago it was an easy thing to take the census of all Episcopal churches that were using distinctively Romish rites in their worship. It is only about a half-dozen years since *The Independent* summed up the situation as follows: "Daily mass is celebrated in eight Protestant Episcopal churches in New York City, seven in Philadelphia, six in Newark, New Jersey, four in Chicago, three in Baltimore, and in thirty-three other churches mentioned by a ritualistic journal of New York City. These celebrations are generally early in the morning, and worshippers, even if present, are not expected to partake, as these are not communion services, but sacrifices, which have a certain value which Catholics understand better than Protestants. But sixty-one parishes in all are not a very large number out of nearly five thousand. For example, there are only four in all New England, and not one south of Washington." We have no recent data that would enable us to make an exact comparison of the present status with the foregoing statement, but it is a matter of common observation and general remark that the elaboration of ceremonies and the development of high-church views are going on at a rapid rate.

The *rationale* of the drift is of easy explanation. Once let it be accepted that grace is tied to particular forms, and the multiplication of forms becomes inevitable. Their virtue will be more and more magnified, until exclusive virtue is ascribed to them. "Wherever," says Froude, "external ceremonial observances are supposed to be in themselves efficacious, the weight of the matter is, sooner or later, cast upon them." The soul seeks rest in unity. It will not long give its assent to two opposing systems of justification. If justification is by faith in Christ, then forms, except

the simplest, become a hindrance; but if justification is by forms, then the preaching of faith becomes a weariness. As the ritual is elaborated, the sermon is dwarfed. The worshippers are instructed in the merits of ceremonial rather than in the merits of Christ. But the efficacy of rites is not inherent. If it were, then anybody might exercise the office of ministrant. It is imparted, and only the duly authorized can impart it. This raises the question, What constitutes due authority? to a place of first importance. Of course, the primal source of authority is Christ; and what more natural than to make the authority of the administrator of rites depend upon direct connection with Christ through unbroken succession in office? Thus the magnifying of the virtue of forms results in magnifying the validity of orders. One step more, and Rome is reached. If the validity of Anglican orders depends upon unbroken succession from the apostles, then this validity is derived from Rome. If derived from Rome, it more certainly belongs to Rome; and, therefore, those who are taught to regard validity of orders as the prime requisite in religion cannot logically stop short of Rome. Bishops and priests in the Anglican communion who teach that the sacraments are channels of grace when administered by lineal successors of the apostles, and only when administered by such, are leading their obedient disciples to the borders of papal territory, and inspiring them with an unrest which will certainly carry many of them across the line.

3. There is no sense in basing the validity of orders on unbroken succession from the apostles unless it is contended that those in the line of such succession can impart virtue to ceremonies. Let us suppose that the Anglican orders are valid in the sense denied by the Pope, of what practical value are they?

(a), They do not secure soundness of doctrine. If Anglicans possess valid orders, much more the Greek and Romish churches. Are these sound in the faith? If so, the Bible is the falsest book ever written. Its only value can be to show us what is not true by regarding its teachings as the standard of falsehood. If validity of orders has not kept those bodies from enshrining all lies and sanctioning all iniquities, it cannot be a possession to boast of on this ground. It has not preserved soundness of faith in the

Anglican body unless directly contradictory doctrines can be alike sound. It permits the highest Calvinism and the lowest Arminianism, the broadest churchism and the narrowest sectarianism, the most earnest evangelical doctrines and the most pronounced sacramentarianism. No greater medley of doctrinal views can be found out of Bedlam than are to be found in the pale of the Anglican Church. Validity of orders has not even secured uniformity of belief touching the basis on which it rests. Many of the greatest lights in that church have scouted the idea that validity of orders rested on ordination by bishops in a line of succession from the apostles. Archbishop Usher expressed his judgment on the subject in the following language: "I have ever declared my opinion to be that *episcopus et presbyter gradu tantum differunt non ordine*, and consequently that in places where bishops cannot be had, the ordination by presbyters standeth valid." Bishop Hall, in speaking of the difference between the Church of England and the non-Episcopal churches abroad, writes thus: "Blessed be God, there is no difference in any essential matter betwixt the Church of England and her sisters of the Reformation. We accord in every point of Christian doctrine without the least variation; their public confessions and ours are sufficient convictions to the world of our full and absolute agreement. The only difference is in the form of our outward administration, wherein we also are so far agreed as that we all profess this form not to be essential to the being of a church." The "Judicious Hooker," whose opinion was standard authority for the Church of England in his day, spoke to the same purport, that episcopacy was merely an accident and not an essential of the church, a matter of human appointment and not of divine ordination.

(b), Validity of orders does not impart any special force to the truth as preached by those who possess it. The names of some preachers of very great power adorn the annals of the Anglican pulpit, as, for example, the names of Canon Liddon and Phillips Brooks, the memories of whose effective ministries are still fresh in our minds. But it is easy to match them with names equally illustrious from the pulpits of dissenting bodies. As for the rank and file of Anglican preachers, the public has never been im-

pressed with their superior effectiveness. Seldom do we find, even in our large cities, crowds drawn to an Episcopal church by the fame of its preacher. The preaching is usually not relied on to attract, but the music and the ritual are held forth as the attraction. Nor does the growth of the church as compared with other bodies indicate that its preachers are endowed with unusual power. They have rather fewer conversions under their ministry than dissenting preachers. Nor does the type of piety exhibited by the constituency of the Anglican communion demonstrate that validity of orders gives its possessors any advantage in the matter of building up Christian character. So far as effects enable us to judge, those without valid orders can preach sermons equally as edifying to God's children as the sermons preached by those who have valid orders.

(c), Hence, if there be any efficacy in validity of orders, it must be in enabling those who possess it to impart some kind of magical virtue to the sacraments. But when we apply all available tests we fail to find what this magical virtue is. So far as appearances go, and so far as conscious experience goes, the sacraments accomplish just as much when administered by those who do not, as by those who do, possess valid orders. Many persons have received the sacred emblems at the hands of both kinds of ministers, and they have been utterly unable to discern the slightest difference. Is it not strange that so much importance should be attached to a possession which we have no means of discerning? which we may have and not know it, or may not have and think we possess it? Macaulay's reflections are not less just than witty: "We can imagine," he says, "the perplexity of a presbyter thus cast in doubt as to whether or not he has ever had the invaluable gift of apostolic succession conferred on him. As that gift is neither tangible nor visible, the subject neither of experience nor consciousness, as it cannot be known by any effects produced by it, he may imagine—unhappy man—that he has been regenerating infants by baptism, when he has been simply sprinkling them with water. 'What is the matter?' the spectator of his distractions might ask. 'What have you lost?' 'Lost!' would be the reply, 'I fear I have lost my apostolic succession; or

rather my misery is that I do not know and cannot tell whether I ever had it to lose.' It is no use here to suggest the usual questions, 'When did you see it last? When were you last conscious of possessing it?' What a peculiar property is that of which, though so invaluable, nay, on which the whole efficacy of the Christian ministry depends, a man has no positive evidence whether he ever had it or not! which, if ever conferred, was conferred without his knowledge; and which, if it could be taken away, would still leave him ignorant, not only when, where and how the theft was committed, but whether it had ever been committed or not! The sympathizing friend might probably remind him that as he was not sure he had ever had it, so *perhaps* he still had it without knowing it. '*Perhaps!*' he would reply, 'but it is certainty I want.' 'Well,' it might be said, 'Mr. Gladstone assures you that on the most moderate computation your chances are as 8,000 to 1 that you have it.' 'Pish!' the distracted man would exclaim, 'what does Mr. Gladstone know about the matter?' And truly to *that* query we know not well what answer the friend could make."

We have not been able to exercise much faith in the electro-poise, because there is a difference of opinion among those who use it as to whether it produces any sensation. It is difficult to believe there is much efficacy in a remedy which has not sufficient potency to declare its presence. In like manner we must be permitted to entertain a measure of skepticism as to the value of apostolic succession, seeing that it produces no effects by which it is possible to discern its presence. Can it be wise in the Anglican communion to suspend the existence of the church on the possession of such an undemonstrable gift? The Romanists, from whom they profess to have received it, solemnly assert that they did not give it to them. The Greeks and other chosen witnesses, to whom they have submitted their claims, say that their claims are baseless. All dissenters regard their pretensions to any such gift as utterly preposterous. What then? They have no way of making good their claims. Moses could not convince the Egyptians that his orders were valid until he did something which Pharaoh's magicians could not do. Unfortunately for our Anglican friends

they cannot do anything that others cannot do. They present, therefore, a very peculiar spectacle as they "stand shivering in their insular isolation," and look with a kind of supercilious pity on those whom they, in their delirious fancy, imagine to be less favored than themselves. We heartily agree with a writer in the *Outlook*, of New York, when he says: "It will be well if some members of the English Church are able to learn a lesson which lies written very clearly on this action of the Pope. That action is characterized by English churchmen, justly, as a great piece of assumption, a cool claim to the position of infallibility, and the consequent authority to deprive a great historic church of its spiritual order and significance. Those English churchmen who are in the habit of putting forth the claims of their own church in arbitrary and exclusive terms will do well to remember that in the thought and to the conscience of non-conformists in all churches, they but reassert pretensions kindred to those of the Pope. They claim for themselves the same kind of authority which they resent when it is claimed by the Pope." Non-conformists can look on with no little complacency and see the wry face which these churchmen make when forced to take medicine out of their own spoon.

R. C. REED.

Nashville, Tenn.