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boiling water is above it, Professor Dewar has liquified the atmosphere, and no doubt it will soon be rendered solid. Oxygen and hydrogen are of a faint blue colour, oxygen being the darker. We can see the vital gas; keep it within a bulb in a heated room, and it will not suffer any rapid loss. Enough has been done to dissipate despair as to proof of the most astounding facts in connection with our faith. We are coming nearer and nearer to the mysteries of matter and energy. Transmutations of their forms are being applied to all the purposes of existence. The infinitely great and the infinitely little are in close physical relation. Experimental verification, which begins to require astronomers to revise their theories of heaven, is finding wonders in our common life, and in lowest strata of society, so that many of us are all aglow with hopeful expectation of a brilliant future. Mr. W. H. Preece¹ has devised a new form of cable that quadruples the rate of telegraph working. We in London may soon be able to converse with every capital in Europe, and speak even across the Atlantic. The electric light will make the streets of our towns brilliant by power gathered from the streams running past them. This beneficent and sanitary mode of illumination reminds us indeed of that other and spiritual light coming from above, which reveals how we may convert the now greatly wasted forces of heart and conscience into a power laying hold of the eternal. Our time is a wonderful time, and we are glad of it. We know that epochs in which faith and purity prevail are elevating and fruitful in all manner of good. No great deeds are done by falterers; no brilliant advantages are certain to them, but to the steadfast mind, the holy, faithful, unconquerable will, belongs all that is excellent.

JOSEPH W. REYNOLDS.



ART. IV.—THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE LAITY.

IN the Church of Christ all the members are priests. It is remarkable that the title itself is actually given to them by two only of the inspired writers of the New Testament; yet they all address them as admitted to all the privileges that the title implies, and instruct them as to the nature and duties of the sacred office they bear, as a holy priesthood.

The following are the passages in which they are called priests :

(1) 1 Peter ii. 4: "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

¹ Chief electrician to the General Post-Office.

(2) 1 Peter ii. 9, 10: "Ye are an elect race; a royal priesthood; a holy nation; a people for God's own possession; that ye may shew forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

(3) Rev. i. 5, 6: "Unto Him that loveth us and loosed us from our sins by His blood, and He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father. To Him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

(4) Rev. v. 9, 10: "Thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with Thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation; and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they shall reign upon the earth."

(5) Rev. xx. 6: "Blessed and holy is He that hath part in the first resurrection; over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

These are the passages which will at once claim our attention. That in them the title of priesthood is given to the whole body of Christ's Church is so obvious that no argument is needed to prove it. Would any venture to dispute it?

1 Peter ii. 4, 5: "Unto whom coming, a living stone, ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy Priesthood."

Here St. Peter declares plainly who they are that constitute "the Holy Priesthood": they are those who come to Christ, who believe in Him; to whom He is "the preciousness," as contrasted with those who disbelieve; "Living stones built up a spiritual house" (as St. Paul says) "for a habitation of God in the Spirit."

Living stones coming to Christ the Living Stone; in the Authorised Version we lose the re-echo of the word "living." Does it not point to the intimate, vital, and abiding union between Christ and His people? built up in Him; through Him it is that they become living stones. Look at the rock whence they were hewn, the hole of the pit whence they were digged—"dead through trespasses and sins"; but now, "quicken together with Christ, raised up together with Him;" their life is derived from His life. "He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." In this real and blessed union they are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood—the priesthood of those who are made one with the Great High Priest, who was anointed with the holy oil which flowed down to the skirts of His garments. Truly, a holy priesthood!

In 1 Peter ii. 9, 10 they are called the elect race; a people

for God's own possession ; who " have obtained mercy ;" who are " now the people of God."

In the three passages in Revelation they appear as the great family of the redeemed and saved ; it is the first of these that will now claim our special attention : " Unto Him that loveth us, and loosed " (margin, or washed) " us from our sins by His blood ; and He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father ; to Him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen." In these words the Church asserts her claim to the title and privileges of priesthood ; and reverently and gratefully offers her adoration to Him who conferred them upon her.

It was by a most solemn and impressive ceremonial that under the law, by a Divine command, Levi was set apart to be the priestly tribe ; and it was by another Divinely-appointed ceremonial that from the tribe of Levi, those called of God to the priesthood and high priesthood were consecrated ; and the description of these occupies several chapters in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers.

But it was by a far more sacred and solemn ceremony that the Christian Priesthood is consecrated, though the description of it is contained in a few words : " He that loveth us washed us from our sins in His own blood, and He made us to be Priests unto His God and Father." Such, then, is the sacred calling of all true believers ; their exalted dignity ; made by the Lord Jesus Christ to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father : in precise and striking agreement with the title given them by St. Peter—" a royal priesthood."

Made a kingdom that they might be priests—members of that holy priesthood established by Him, who was " called of God a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek," the King of Righteousness and Priest of the Most High God ; of whom it is said, Zech. vi. 13, " He shall build the Temple of the Lord, and He shall bear the glory ; and shall sit and rule upon His throne ; and He shall be a priest upon His throne"—the Priest-King. It was meet, therefore, that those called into this holy fellowship with Him should be *kings and priests* ; anointed with the same holy oil wherewith He was " anointed above His fellows."

And how are they admitted to the office, with its sacred rites and privileges ? The answer is : Jesus in His love made them priests.

In Numbers viii. we have the consecration of the Levites described. And how did the solemn ceremonial begin ? Moses took the water of purifying to cleanse them. And so, in consecrating the priests (Lev. viii.) he was commanded to bring Aaron and his sons, and wash them with water. This

was the first essential requisite for priesthood—cleansing from defilement. And thus it was with those whom the Lord Jesus called to be His priests. Whether we follow the reading of the Revised Text, *λύσαντι*, He loosed them, through (*λύτρον*) a ransom; or the margin, *λούσαντι*, washed them in His blood; it signifies His act as the Divine Mediator in freeing them from sin, from all its guilt and defilement; thus cleansing, justifying, consecrating them to be priests unto His God and Father.

Then follows the ascription: To Him be the glory and the dominion. *To Him*, leading the mind back to the previous words, extolling Him as “the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, the Ruler of the kings of the earth”—anointed to be the Prophet, Priest and King of the Church of God; the Everlasting Prophet—the perpetual source of spiritual light and wisdom; the Great High Priest, who, having made atonement for sin by His death, rose again, the first-born of the dead; and the all-glorious King, the Ruler of the kings of the earth, asserting His supreme authority, His Divine and universal sovereignty: “Prince of the kings of the earth;” King of kings and Lord of lords; all power in heaven and earth given to Him, and Head over all things to His church. It is HE that redeemed them by His blood; it is He that has given them their priesthood; HE MADE THEM PRIESTS.

Ἐποίησεν ἡμᾶς . . . ἱερεῖς . . . on the construction here, Alford quotes from de Wette: “It belongs to the delicacy of the Hebrew diction to follow up the participle which gives the tone to the sentence by finite verbs; which, through the influence of the relative notion embodied in the participle, are themselves to be taken as conditioning clauses.” Everything is combined to exalt in our view the Author of this great act.

Here we may pause for a moment to think of these words as the utterance of the beloved Apostle: “To Him that loveth us!” Is it not the tender expression of his confiding trust in the unchangeableness of his Master’s love? he that was wont to call himself the disciple whom Jesus loved, who leaned on His bosom at the Last Supper, was still basking in the sunshine of the same love. In all His glory in heaven, He loveth us still. And He made us Priests; US—St. John takes his place among the whole company of believers in this glorious priesthood; he claims for himself no distinction in it; Christ Jesus made US to be priests unto His God and Father. Does not this absolutely exclude the idea of any other priesthood in Christ’s Church? What higher priesthood could there be? What place is there for any other?

We now proceed to the function of the Christian priesthood. It is clearly to offer sacrifice. “Ye as living stones are built

up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices."

As they are priests in a spiritual temple, the sacrifices that they offer must be spiritual. And what are these, as taught by the holy Apostles? They are:

1. The sacrifice of ourselves.
2. The sacrifice of praise and prayer.
3. The sacrifice of faith.
4. The sacrifice of good works.

1. OF OURSELVES.

Rom. xii. 1: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." This means the entire and unreserved surrender of the heart and life to God—the whole being, like the lamb for the burnt offering—nothing must be kept back; even the body shall be laid upon His altar, as a consecrated thing—spirit, soul, and body—the body with all its parts, and passions, and powers, for the Lord.

This was the Apostle's joy over the Macedonian Christians, that "first they gave their own selves to the Lord." The love of Christ constrained them "that they should live no longer to themselves, but to Him that died for them and rose again." The utterance of such from the heart must be: "I am not my own;" "I am bought with a price;" "To me to live is Christ;" "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" "Here am I, send me."

And this is the daily sacrifice of the Christian priesthood. That it is not to be regarded as merely a single and final act of the believer is evident from the fact that it is to living members of the Church that St. Paul makes this appeal; he pleads with them by the mercies of God to make this surrender—by those mercies which had been displayed in the previous chapters of the epistle, and which they had themselves appropriated, and of which they had a blessed experience.

Therefore, again they are to present themselves a living sacrifice, and yet again, and that continually, even as our Church teaches in the Communion Service, "Here we offer and present ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee."

It is the sacrifice of Christ's priests, of those whom He has made priests unto his God and Father; it is offered by His own appointment, and therefore it is holy, and acceptable to God, and a reasonable service, or, as in the margin, "a spiritual worship."

2. OF PRAISE AND PRAYER.

Of Praise (Heb. xiii. 15).—Let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually: that is, the fruit of the lips giving thanks to His Name.

The royal priesthood is charged “to show forth the excellences of Him that called them out of darkness into His marvellous light.”

Of Prayer.—St. Paul says: “I desire that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands;”¹ “Be instant in prayer;” “Pray without ceasing;” “Continue in prayer;” “In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.” And, again, more fully and comprehensively (Ephes. vi. 18): “Praying with all prayer and supplication at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints, and on my behalf.”

“And for me.” There is no feature in St. Paul’s addresses to Christians more striking than his fervent desire for their intercession on his behalf. That he prayed for them, night and day, we know; but we never find a trace of any claim to a higher title to the privilege, or any thought of a nearer access to God, than that which is enjoyed by all believers. He said to them, “Brethren, pray for us,” as to those who were admitted to the same privilege as himself. All alike have “boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.”

Under the old covenant, the High Priest alone might enter the holy of holies, and that only once in the year; but, says the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, we, who belong to the Christian priesthood, have boldness to enter into the holiest at all times, whatever our condition in life may be, “by the blood of Jesus,” by the way which He hath dedicated for us—“a new and living way.” When the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, was slain, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, the way into the holy of holies was opened, and the same liberty of access was granted to all the faithful without the slightest distinction or difference.

3. OF FAITH.

Phil. ii. 17: “Yea, and if I am offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith”—*ἐπὶ τῇ θυσίᾳ καὶ λειτουργίᾳ*—the expression of the Apostle’s devotion to God, and of his confiding love to the Philippians.

We observe that while St. Paul never once speaks of himself as officially offering a sacrifice in behalf of the laity, he here

¹ See Ps. cxli. 2, compared with Rev. v. 8; viii. 3.

acknowledges how thankfully he looks for blessing from the sacrifice that the laity offer for him.

Bishop Lightfoot observes that *λειτουργία* is to be taken as supplementing the idea of *θυσία*, and giving additional force to it. And he adds: "Thus, St. Paul's language expresses the fundamental idea of the Christian Church, in which a universal priesthood has supplanted the exclusive ministrations of a select tribe or class (see I Pet. ii. 5). The Philippians are the priests; their faith (or their good works springing from their faith) is the sacrifice; St. Paul's life-blood the accompanying libation."

4. OF GOOD WORKS.

Believers are called to be "rich in good works;" they were created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them; they are to be "thoroughly furnished unto all good works;" showing a pattern of good works; to be careful to maintain good works; a people for God's own possession, zealous of good works. And these are said to be sacrifices acceptable to God. Heb. xiii. 16: "To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." This comprises the whole range of Christian charity, and practice, and service (*cf.* Phil. iv. 18). We need say no more than that it is the practical outcome of the priestly consecrated life.

Such being the Christian priesthood as taught in the New Testament, it becomes the distinguished duty and privilege of those who are ministers of Christ's Word and Sacraments faithfully to instruct all Christians as to the sacred office they hold, to do their utmost to make them realize its high dignity and the wide and solemn responsibilities attached to it.

But there are some whose aim is to suppress or obscure the dignity of the layman's priesthood, in order that they may advance their pretensions to another priesthood of a superior order, and which is of purely human invention, totally different from that which we find in the New Testament.

It may be well to notice that there are five priesthoods mentioned in the Apostolic writings:

1. The Jewish priesthood and high-priesthood.
2. The priesthood of the heathen idolaters.
3. The priesthood of Melchizedek.
4. The priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ.
5. The priesthood of believers; AND NO OTHER.

It has been contended that, as Israel was called "a kingdom of priests, a holy nation," and yet they had a priestly tribe set apart, and an order of priesthood selected from them, so a priestly order may be gathered out from the Christian priesthood. But the argument will not stand. If such an order

were appointed it would, according to New Testament teaching, have nothing to do. How can a man be a priest, except he has somewhat to offer? As regards propitiatory sacrifice, "there remains no more offering for sin"; and as regards spiritual sacrifices, they are to be offered by all saints.

There is, however, no parallel between the two cases. The tribe of Levi was separated by a special appointment of God according to a Divine plan; and the account of the consecration of the priests and Levites is given very fully, occupying several chapters in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. And afterwards we find the priestly order mixed up with all the subsequent history of Israel, even to the time of our Lord and His Apostles. There they are, a great reality, for good or for evil.¹

There is, of course, no question as to the Divine commission of a Christian ministry. The teaching of the New Testament is on this point distinct and emphatic. Take, for instance, the Apostle's words (1 Cor. ix. 13, 14): "Know ye not that they which minister about sacred things eat the things of the temple, and they which wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar? Even so did the Lord ordain that they which proclaim the Gospel should live of the Gospel."

In this comparison between the ministers of the two dispensations, St. Paul asserts that the Christian ministry is as truly a Divine ordinance as the Aaronic priesthood; that its functions were as clearly and authoritatively defined; and its claims upon the laity for their support as real and binding. But, on the other hand, as regards the consecration of a sacerdotal priesthood, we must ask, Do we find it in the New Testament? Where is the record of a ceremony of such vast and far-reaching importance?

¹ The words of Bishop Lightfoot on this point are most forcible and important: "The sacerdotal system of the Old Testament possessed one important characteristic which separated it from heathen priesthoods, and which deserves especial notice. The priestly tribe held this peculiar relation to God only as the representatives of the whole nation. As *delegates* of the people, they offered sacrifice and made atonement. The whole community is regarded as 'a kingdom of priests,' 'a holy nation.' When the sons of Levi were set apart their consecration is distinctly stated to be due, under the Divine guidance, not to any inherent sanctity or to any caste privilege, but to an act of delegation on the part of the entire people. The Levites are, so to speak, ordained by the whole congregation. 'The children of Israel,' it is said, 'shall put their hands upon the Levites.' The nation thus deposes to a single tribe the priestly functions which belong properly to itself as a whole.

"The Christian idea, therefore, was the restitution of this immediate and direct relation with God, which was partly suspended, but not abolished, by the appointment of a sacerdotal tribe. The Levitical priesthood, like the Mosaic law, had served its temporary purpose. The period of childhood had passed, and the Church of God was now arrived at mature age. The covenant people resumed their sacerdotal functions."—Bishop Lightfoot's "Dissertation on the Christian Ministry," pp. 180, 181.

Throughout the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles the title of priest is not given to any member of the Church otherwise than in reference to the whole Christian community. Those who had been ordained to Christ's ministry were known in Scriptural language by ten different names, but never as priests. Five of these names occur in Eph. iv. 11.: "Christ gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the Body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Where are the priests? What need of them, when the Church can attain to such Divine perfection without their ministrations?

In another passage (1 Cor. iii. 5): "What, then, is Apollos? and what is Paul?"—not priests—but "ministers by whom ye believed."

There are three Epistles specially addressed to those who were ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God, but they are there never styled priests: the word *ιερεός*, or "sacerdos," does not once occur in those Epistles. In the instruction given them by St. Paul as to their sacred duties there is not the most distant allusion to any sacerdotal functions, excepting those which are common to all saints.

Do we consider what this imports? A holy Apostle, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost in critical times, writes a letter to a bishop of the Church, in which he gives earnest, thoughtful, and explicit teaching and admonition for the benefit of those called to the sacred office of the ministry; a letter which, we are expressly told, is for the guidance and instruction of the Church till the second coming of our Lord; and throughout three such Epistles, written at three different times, by the great Apostle who had the care of all the churches—that wise master builder—there is not a trace of the title, which many now assume as that which is the highest and most significant connected with their sacred office; nor is there a single word to direct, admonish, and instruct them in the discharge of the functions belonging to it. As to those which they hold to be the holiest, the most important, the most essential, they find in each one of the pastoral Epistles nothing but a most significant silence—a mysterious and awful blank. Contrast the ordinal of the Church of England with that of the Church of Rome, and say whether those striking omissions of our reformers were not warranted by this absolute silence of Holy Scripture.

In asserting the absence of any Scriptural authority for an order of priesthood in the Christian Church, we have not overlooked the second canon of the Council of Trent, *de Sacrificio*

Missæ: "If any man shall say that in those words, 'Do this in remembrance of Me,' Christ did not constitute the Apostles priests, and did not ordain that they and other priests should offer the sacrifice of His body and blood, *Anathema sit*"—on which foundation the Church of Rome builds her whole Sacramental system. To such extremities is she driven to find in Holy Scripture the shadow of an argument in its favour.

We have a magnificent assertion of the principles of our Church in Bishop Lightfoot's "Dissertation on the Christian Ministry."¹ Speaking of the Kingdom of Christ, he says: "Above all, it has no sacerdotal system. It interposes no sacrificial tribe or class between God and man, by whose intervention God is reconciled and man forgiven. Each individual member holds personal communion with the Divine Head. To Him immediately he is responsible, and from Him directly he obtains pardon and draws strength."

Or, as the Bishop adds afterwards:² "So it was also with the Christian priesthood. For communicating instruction and for preserving public order, for conducting religious worship and for dispensing social charities, it became necessary to appoint special officers. But the priestly functions and privileges are never regarded as transferred, or even delegated, to these officers. They are called stewards or messengers of God, servants or ministers of the Church, and the like; but the sacerdotal title is never once given to them. The only priests under the Gospel, designated as such in the New Testament, are the saints, the members of the Christian brotherhood."

And the Church of England is a faithful witness to this truth. She knows nothing of sacerdotalism; her clergy are never spoken of as sacerdotes. In her ordinal they are exhorted in these words: "That you have in remembrance into how high a dignity and to how weighty an office and charge ye are called," "to be (not sacerdotes, but) messengers, watchmen, stewards of the Lord, to teach and to premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's family."

We observe that, in view of the "high dignity" and the "weighty office and charge," there is a complete and most impressive silence as to a priesthood offering sacrifice;³ the idea is as entirely excluded from our Prayer-Book as it is from the New Testament.

¹ See p. 179.

² Pp. 182, 183.

³ Archdeacon Wilberforce, after seceding to the Church of Rome, writes of our Communion Service: "The service, consequently, was divested of its sacrificial character, and no longer bore witness, as in early times, to the great event which is transacted at the altar."

Hear Dr. Lightfoot again: "If the sacerdotal office be understood to imply the offering of sacrifices, then the Epistle to the Hebrews leaves no place for a Christian priesthood."

In the use of the word "priest" in the Prayer-Book, it may be as well to mention, though it can scarcely be needful to do so, that when the word is applied to the clergy it signifies "Presbyter." In his "Church Dictionary," Dr. Hook so explains it: "Priest is another form of Prester; and Prester the contraction of Presbyter, or 'elder,' by which name they are known in the New Testament.¹ In this and in no other sense is the name priest applied to the Christian ministry between the two covers of our Book of Common Prayer.

In conclusion, we thankfully return to our starting-point, leaving human inventions and speculations for the sure and infallible teaching of God's own word, and fixing our mind on the Great High Priest and on that holy priesthood which He Himself instituted and ordained. "To whom coming as to a Living Stone, ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood; to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

So as believers in Jesus, we claim our privilege to join in that hymn of joyful praise and reverent adoration—"To Him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by His blood; and He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father: to Him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

R. L. ALLNUTT.

ART. V.—APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION.

Miserum est aliorum incubere famæ
Ne collapsa ruant subductis tecta columnis.

JUVENAL: *Sat.*

'Tis poor relying on another's fame,
For, take the pillars but away, and all
The superstructure must in ruin fall.

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION in a ministry is made by some the crucial test of a true or false Church, and the possessor alone capable of conferring a saving grace in the administration of the Sacraments.

Were we to ask any ordinary person what is meant by, and

¹ "Before proceeding further, some definition of terms is necessary. On no subject has more serious error arisen from the confusion of language. The word 'priest' has two different senses. In the one it is a synonym for presbyter, or elder, and designates the minister who presides over and instructs a Christian congregation: in the other it is equivalent to the Latin sacerdos, the Greek *ιερεὺς*, or the Hebrew *קֹהֵן*, the offerer of sacrifices, who also performs other mediatorial offices between God and man. How the confusion between these two meanings has affected the history and theology of the Church it will be instructive to consider in the sequel."—Bishop Lightfoot, "Dissertation on the Christian Ministry," p. 184.