

over the world and to which we have always held. It is evident that in any scheme of reconstruction, due weight must be allowed to both these facts. But the further history of this subject and its bearing on the question of Reunion must fall within the province of the papers on Episcopacy.



Baptism.

By the Rev. A. E. BARNES-LAWRENCE, M.A., *Vicar of St. John's, Boscombe, and Hon. Canon of Southwark.*

“**A**N age which has its face to the future, and in which men are full of plans for the welfare of the world, is not an age that has lost its faith. Its temper of mind is constructive, it is eager for new institutions, keen for new ideas, and has already a half belief in a future in which all things will be new.” With these ringing words of Matthew Arnold in our ears we face to-day one of the most insistent problems of the time—the reunion of the National Church with the orthodox non-episcopal churches of our land. Such a reunion would mark a long step taken towards the ultimate reunion of Christendom, and the realization of the Saviour’s prayer that all His people might be one. For such a consummation we need clarified vision, a heart of love, and withal the courage which refuses to accept an immediate gain at the sacrifice of essential principle.

English Churchmen have a great responsibility and opportunity in so stimulating an endeavour. The position of our Church, let us remind ourselves, is unique among the historic Churches of Christendom, a fact of which we have been growingly conscious since the days of Hooker. She alone has been able to combine loyalty to Holy Scripture with deference to the practice of the Early Church. A Bible-loving Church is of necessity a freedom-loving Church, while the historical instinct guards that liberty from degenerating into licence. If our reformed Church continues faithful to her historical position, she may yet reunite Christendom in one. That is a vision that lies in the still distant future, for there is no hope of reunion with Rome until the reunion of the rest of Christendom leaves her an outcast among the Churches, just as there is no hope for the moral regeneration of Germany until she realizes that

she is outside the pale of civilized nations. Our immediate and most hopeful concern is reunion with the orthodox Evangelical Churches of our own land. It is clear from the careful wording of the Lambeth Conference that it is in that direction that we at present look, and never was the prospect more full of hope.

It is with the third great principle laid down for us that we are now concerned. The Conference demands as an essential to reunion "the two Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself—Baptism and the Supper of the Lord—ministered with unfailling use of Christ's words of institution, and of the elements ordained by Him."

In dealing with Baptism, I shall ask you to consider first the points left open as non-essential, and then those regarded as essential. Both are instructive:—

1. We observe then with much interest that the Lambeth Conference is prepared to consider proposals for reunion without specifying the question at what age Baptism should be administered. In a word, it is silent upon the question of Infant Baptism. That is, I submit, a very important matter. Upon the question which divides multitudes of our fellow Christians the world over, and separates the Baptist Churches from our own, the Conference says nothing, and its silence is in complete accord with the temper of the Prayer Book and the history of the Early Church. The separation that unfortunately exists is based, let us remember, not upon divergence as to a particular use of Baptism, but upon a fundamental difference of outlook. It would not, I think, be difficult to show that Infant Baptism found some acceptance from the first, though the evidence to which we can appeal is not demonstrative; but that would not affect the Baptist contention. It would be perfectly easy to show that with the beginning of the fourth century the practice of Infant Baptism became general, but that would not persuade the Baptist; he would reply that in the third century a mystic power was ascribed to Baptism, and that is quite sufficient to account for its application to Infants. He would go on to point out that even so the practice was by no means universal. Many of the most eminent Christians of the fourth century did not baptize their infants. Gregory of Nazianzen in Cappadocia, the son of a bishop, and his mother the saintly Nonna, was not baptized until his conversion in mature life. Basil the Great, whose mother was the pious Emmelia, was not baptized before he was thirty when his conversion took place.

Chrysostom of Antioch, born A.D. 347, whose mother Anthusa was an outstanding Christian, was not baptized until his conversion at thirty-two. And Augustine, the holy Monica's son, did not receive baptism until he too was brought to the knowledge of Christ. Here were four of the most eminent Christian women of the fourth century, who prayed for their children before and after birth, who did not have them baptized. It is clear that the Baptist has something to say for himself.

Now this divergence of practice rests, I repeat, upon a fundamental difference of outlook, which needs to be stated if we would appreciate aright the silence of the Lambeth pronouncement upon the question of age.

It was not until the fourth century that the Church awoke to the world-wide character of her divine mission. It was then that, delivered from the persecution of the State, she took the whole of mankind unto her ken. One interesting proof of this was the publishing of her own Ecclesiastical Kalendar, in which she claimed both Time and Space for the Kingdom of God; another was the adoption of infant Baptism, by which she claimed the whole of human life for that Kingdom. The age, let us not forget, was still fierce and cruel; infanticide was fearfully common, and there was no moral power in the State to stop it, or to improve the general tone of society. The Church thereupon stepped in and claimed the whole of man's life, from his earliest years, for God. Infant Baptism was the confession of the Church's faith that an infant is capable of regeneration, that the child of Christian parents has a distinct place of privilege under the New Covenant, and that the Church is a great educational institution, securing a Christian atmosphere and Christian training for the baptized child. Our own Prayer Book takes the same view. It does not attempt to found an argument for Baptism upon obscure or doubtful inferences from New Testament language, but basing itself upon the broad fact that our Lord said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," it bids all parents who profess and avow themselves Christians to give their children to Him in Baptism, "nothing doubting but that He favourably alloweth this charitable work" of so bringing them. We baptize such infants "*propter spem, non propter rem,*" on grounds of hope rather than of performance. Of any theory of an *opus operatum* in this

Sacrament there is not the slightest trace in the Prayer Book; all is reasonable, scriptural and in harmony with Catholic truth. The Church's outlook then is clear, her action logical. If the Baptist contention that the Church of Christ is to be composed exclusively of mature instructed and zealous Christians is right, then the position of the Church is wrong. The Baptist stands for the principle of individualism, demanding intelligence, repentance and faith as the condition of Baptism. The Church—and with it concur the great majority of the non-episcopal churches—stands for the principle of collectivism, the solidarity of the kingdom of God, and that all life within its boundaries is sacred from the moment of its appearance. Which is right? Are the two views mutually exclusive? May not both be true? Certainly the Lambeth pronouncement leaves the question open, and we may thankfully acknowledge its breadth of view. It excludes no Baptist from reunion on this question of age, and we notice with equal satisfaction that it leaves the method of administration equally open. That too is in keeping with the practice of our own Church; the question of whether administration shall be by immersion or affusion is insignificant, it sanctions either use for its own members.

Such then are the points which Lambeth regards as non-essential. It is well to note that two points insisted on by the Baptist Churches as essential are not so regarded by us, and in themselves offer no obstacle to reunion.

2. We come then to those matters on which the Lambeth Fathers insist as essential to any plans of reunion: first, that the element of Water be unfailingly used; and second, that Baptism shall always be in the Threefold Name.

There is no difficulty as to the use of water, "sanctified to the mystical washing away of sin by the Baptism of Jesus Christ in the river Jordan." The Churches, with the exception of the Society of Friends, are all of one mind. I do not forget that in a more superstitious age when Baptism was deemed to be absolutely essential to salvation, even the sands of the desert might be used if water could not be had, and the baptism of blood in a martyr's death was held to suffice in case of a catechumen, but these variations merely illustrated the universal use. Unfortunately the Society of Friends is excluded from reunion by this rule. That cannot be helped; the Society has to pay the price once more of

its spiritualization of the two Sacraments, whose outward and visible signs were given to us in mercy, God thus stepping as it were from the invisible into the visible for the strengthening of man's faith. None the less the continued existence of this little Society of 20,000 members all told, a community rich in good works, exemplary in Christian virtues, and contributing £25,000 a year to its missionary work in heathen lands, is at least an effective protest for the sovereignty of the Spirit of God, who, while He would fain accompany the formal rite of Baptism with His blessing, can and sometimes does act independently of even a divinely appointed ordinance.

When we come, however, to the Trinitarian formula, it seems to me little short of miraculous that the Churches should be practically of one mind, for divergence at this precise point is what we might not unreasonably have expected. When we reflect that with the single exception of the verse in Matthew xxviii. 19, "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost," this formula is never once found in the whole of the rest of the New Testament, and that as a fact Baptism is always spoken of as "in" or "into" "the name of Jesus Christ," or "of the Lord Jesus," it is a natural inference that His Name alone was used in Baptism. If this inference is accepted as probable, then at once it will be questioned whether the exact words attributed to Him in St. Matthew could actually have been spoken. Is it likely that He would give such a formula? May not the familiar words be an interpolation of later date, the reflection of a subsequent piety? It is at any rate suggestive that in the age of Cyprian, no less a person than Stephen, Pope of Rome, defended the validity of Baptism when given in the Name of Jesus only. The dispute between the Bishop and the Pope is highly instructive. Cyprian with an even more than customary vehemence insisted that persons so baptized must be rebaptized in the Name of the Holy Trinity. The Pope replied that there was a potency in the name of Jesus to which all things in heaven and earth and under the earth must bow, and that to account Baptism in that Name invalid would not merely do Him infinite dishonour, but would actually imperil the very existence of the Church. That the Pope was right and the Bishop wrong we can now see, and in the event all such baptisms were legitimated by the invocation of the Holy Spirit, together with the laying on of hands, in short, by Confirmation. But so late as the ninth century

we find Popes and Councils deciding that Baptism "in the Name of Jesus Christ" was valid, a clear proof of the continued prevalence of that formula.

At the back then of those quiet words of the Lambeth Conference demanding the unfailling use of the Threefold Name, there lies a stormy history. For a thousand years that controversy has now ceased, but considering the natural "dissidence of dissent," and our inborn love of faction, it seems to me little short of miraculous that on this question of all others connected with Baptism the Churches are at peace.

But a word more is needed in closing. That the Lambeth Conference is entirely justified in its insistence, I do not for one moment doubt. There is ample ground for maintaining that our Lord did actually use the words in question, or at the very least their equivalent. There is much Trinitarian doctrine in the New Testament which cannot be explained except upon the supposition that it was part of our Lord's systematic teaching. I refer to language such as in 1 Peter i. 2, "According to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," or that of St. Paul in 2 Cor. xiii. 14, which for nineteen centuries has conveyed the Church's blessing: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." Dr. Hort writes: "In no passage is there any indication that the writer was independently working out a doctrinal scheme, a recognized belief or idea seems to be everywhere pre-supposed. How such an idea could arise in the mind of any Apostle without sanction from a Word of the Lord it is difficult to imagine, and this is a sufficient answer to the doubts which have been raised whether Matthew xxviii. 19 may not have been added or recast by a later generation" (Quoted, Plummer *in loc*).

I will merely note that about the year 160, Justin Martyr is at pains to explain to the heathen why Christians baptize in the Threefold Name, and in the *Didachè* we find the Trinitarian formula and "baptizing in the name of the Lord" both spoken of as if the latter were in effect the equivalent of the former—and there I must leave an interesting subject.

To ourselves gathered here to-day, in earnest hope that it may please God soon to open up the way to a lasting and sound reunion

with the separated Churches of our own land, it is a matter for profound thankfulness that on the question of Baptism our Church, clear and definite as to her own position, opens the door as wide as possible.

[Mr. G. A. King then gave an address on The Holy Communion.]



The Historic Episcopate.

By the Rev. C. SYDNEY CARTER, M.A.,

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THE subject which I have been asked to speak on—The Historic Episcopate in its relation to Home Reunion—naturally suggests two initial questions: (1) What, precisely, is connoted by the term Home Reunion? and (2) What is involved in the description Historic Episcopate?

One of the "Findings" of this Conference last year stated that "the goal to be aimed at is some form of federation rather than anything like organic reunion." With all respect for this decision I would venture to qualify it by the addition of the word "immediate," so as to read "the immediate goal to be aimed at is some form of federation rather than organic reunion." For recognition, fraternal intercourse, and even federation, important as they are to attain as soon as possible, will not, I am persuaded, at least in the Homeland, secure for us a visible realization of our Master's high-priestly prayer "That they all may be one." Nothing but corporate reunion, that is the witness in each country of one and only one organically united Christian Church will effect this, and for our ultimate goal we should be wrong to be satisfied with anything less. Intercommunion and federation may very probably prove the most desirable and practicable form in different countries, testifying to the virtual unity and solidarity of the Catholic Church, but it will never in the same country be a sufficient witness to the unity of Christians. Perhaps I may illustrate this point by the present Anglican Communion. Its various branches in different lands are not joined together by any visible central or supreme executive authority. They resemble rather our self-governing colonies in being mainly independent and autonomous Churches,