

without upsetting another large number who don't want this. In secular matters this, no doubt, is a proper way of proceeding. But methods appropriate for arranging say the affairs of Ireland are thoroughly wrong in dealing with religious matters. Is this demand right? Is it based upon a true view of God and the redemption wrought by Christ Jesus? These are the questions a Church should ask in arranging its worship, and the answers given should be taken as settling the matter finally. Indeed, it may be added that surely it is quite hopeless to expect a real solution which God can bless except this method be adopted.

At any rate, we in Cheltenham are not likely to overlook the second necessity in revision. It must be carried out in the light of the reunion of Christendom. I will not weary you by attempting to deal with this question at length. I will only make two remarks:

(1) N.A. 84 is not likely to advance reunion with the non-Episcopal Churches. Not one of the five great concessions to which I have referred make the least appeal to them, and indeed they are probably all repugnant to them. These Churches are in the main definitely Protestant, although there are here and there to be seen a few abnormal persons of other ways of thinking.

(2) As I have remarked, the Anglo-Catholic desires have no larger purpose than approximating to Rome. Their suggested liturgy is deliberately Roman: the Reservation of the Sacrament for adoration is purely Roman and contrary to the practice of the Eastern Church. To accept their suggestion means the preference of Rome to the East, and the end of all hopes of home reunion.

My last word must be the expression of the earnest hope that by our united efforts we may achieve what is the most difficult task which has ever fallen to the lot of our Conference; to say something really helpful in this anxious and difficult hour, when our Church is definitely at the cross-roads, and to utter a prayer that the Holy Spirit of God will teach us in our deliberations what we ought to say.

ALTERNATIVE USES AND HOME REUNION.

BY THE REV. J. J. R. ARMITAGE, Public Preacher,
Cathedral and Diocese of Coventry.

OUR subject is divided into two main parts: Home Reunion and Alternative Uses, with sub-divisions: (A) Home—Reunion—I. With whom? II. With whom not practicable? III. Fundamental differences between Rome and England IV. Historical importance of these differences; (B) I. Alternative Uses: no valid objection. II. Nature of suggested alternative use. III. Would suggested alternative use be acceptable to Free Churches? IV. Would suggested alternative use satisfy Anglo-Catholics? V. What of the future?

(A) HOME REUNION.

I. The great body of Free Churchmen are the people with whom Home Reunion is practicable. The ideas of their fundamental doctrines are generally identical with those embodied in the present Prayer Book, as published by authority. When we regard the state of mutual feelings between loyal members of the Anglican Church on the one hand and the Nonconforming Churches on the other, we can, without hesitation, say that there are more important principles on which, without reservation, we all agree than there are matters on which we may differ.

II. With whom Reunion is not practicable.—Can we consider the possibility of reunion with the representatives of the Latin Mission in England? In clear and unmistakable terms the issue, so far as they are concerned, cannot be better defined than in the words of Dr. Salmon. "There can be no union with the Church of Rome except on terms of absolute submission—a submission, moreover, involving an acknowledgment that from our hearts we believe things to be true which we have reasons—good reasons—for knowing to be false." The position as between ourselves and Rome is also clearly set forth in the words of the Report to the Lambeth Conference of 1920 (quoting the Report of 1908): "We realize that any advance in this direction is at present barred by difficulties which we have not ourselves created and which we cannot ourselves remove." Churches of communions other than Rome have expressed themselves willing to discuss terms of difference between them and the Anglican Church. Rome has not done so; instead she is making great and ever-increasing efforts (openly and secretly) for the conversion of England to "Catholicism," her object being to present this nation as a dowry to Mary. To the terms of Rome the people whom we represent will never submit. Why? Because of—

III. The Fundamental Difference between the Roman and the English Conception of God; His attitude to Man; Man's approach to Him.—Rome stands for an interpretation of the Christian religion entirely different from that which we have in the Bible and in the Prayer Book. We insist upon the Bible as our standard of faith and worship. In doing so we do not necessarily imply that there cannot be a Church rite or rule without a Scripture text to authorize it. The New Testament was not intended as a code of ceremonial, but it is right to require that no ceremony should be sanctioned which is contrary to the letter and to the spirit of the New Testament, particularly, as being, with the Old Testament, the Word of God—the Revealed and Inspired Word of God, when compared with the traditions, sacred writings, and customs of the non-Christian religions. If we reject the Bible as being both the standard of faith and as in general terms defining a rational method of approach to God in praise, and in prayer, and in sacramental communion, then the way is immediately opened for the introduction of all sorts and every kind of superstitious fad and fancy—and

the more grotesque and irrational they may be, the more will they appeal to some persons. Rome puts tradition on an equality with the Bible; the Anglican Church, as defined in her Prayer Book, does not. Further, it must be emphasized that the Anglican Church, with the great Nonconformist Churches, insists upon the soul's capacity and right to approach the throne of God direct through the one—and only one—mediator between God and man—Himself man—Christ Jesus. Rome rejects such an assumption. Her system is essentially built upon the soul's incompetency to deal directly with God. Her many sacraments, celibate priesthood, and ecclesiastical authority are barriers avowedly put between the individual and God. The eternal destiny of the individual is, by Rome, committed to a chain of human beings—a procedure pagan in origin and in complete contradiction of the New Testament teaching. Between Rome and England there would seem to be irreconcilable differences.

IV. The Historical Importance of these differences.—In our discussion of Prayer Book Revision and of Alternative Uses we are not influenced merely by what a minister wears in the house of God as such, or by what he does in the performance of his ministerial duties, estimated simply as actions. We can understand many "Catholics" who have said, "We are not much concerned with theology. We like the music, the pageantry, and the pictorial beauty of a ritualistic service." We can admit that there is nothing inherently wrong in such a declaration. But we would point out that the æsthetic sensibility can be, and ought to be, satisfied without any necessity for the introduction of baseless, reasonless, and pagan superstitions and practices into the twentieth-century worship of the living God and of His Christ. Our concern in this controversy is primarily with what are the ideas the minister's vestments symbolize, and what are the motives for his actions, and what may be their effect on the community when let loose into the stream of life—the market-place and not the sanctuary is the final testing-place among men of the reality and practical value of a religion. For what does "Catholicism," as conceived by Rome and by the "Anglos" of that ilk, stand in history? The men of England clearly understood at the time of the Reformation the meaning of the blight of Roman Catholicism. Has history proved they were wrong in their diagnosis? Shall the errors discarded in the sixteenth century be revived? Herein, we suggest, lies the crux of all our discussions: What effect will the practical interpretation of the idea of God as presented in any new Prayer Book have upon individual and national character? We have need to ponder the suggestions of Benjamin Kidd, and of other minds like unto his, when they imply that "the resulting difference in character between Romanism and Protestantism, which may mean much or little in theological discussion according to the standpoint of the observer, assumes, however, profound importance in the eyes of a student of our social evolution." The Protestant religion has produced in history a deepening, a strengthening, an independence, and

at the same time a refining of character which, prior to the sixteenth century, had been generally unknown. The sociological significance of the Reformation and of the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival is as of great consequence as the theological. The driving force behind the whole onward movement with which our age is identified has its source in the Protestant character. The multitude of philanthropic and humanitarian undertakings which are a feature of all English-speaking communities are the direct product of Protestantism. "Catholicism" spells social stagnation; Protestantism means ordered liberty and reform. Has England to continue to lead the nations?

(B) ALTERNATIVE USES.

I. If reunion with the Free Churches is to become an accomplished fact, to alternative uses as such there can be no valid objection. There are different "uses" among the Nonconformists. There can, however, be unity in diversity, without the sacrifice of any of the following fundamental principles: (a) the profession of faith in God as revealed and incarnate in Jesus the Christ; (b) the observance of the two sacraments ordained by Christ himself; (c) a ministry representative of the Church, for the preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, and the maintenance of the unity and continuity of the Church's witness and work; (d) the assurance that there will be no return either to the mediæval doctrines rejected at the Reformation or to the forms of worship in which those notions were embodied and expressed.

II. What is the nature of the Alternative Use the Anglican Church is asked to sanction?—It is essentially a reversion to that false interpretation of the Christian religion from which England deliberately and intelligently shook itself free four hundred years ago—action which the history of progress has demonstrated to have been correct. The whole doctrinal position of the Church of England is now threatened under the camouflage of Prayer Book Revision. To accept Mass Vestments, the Reservation of the Sacrament, the Canon of the Mass in the Communion Service, the Commemoration of All Souls, and Prayers for the Dead will be to deliberately flout the authority of God's Word written, and will involve the scrapping of the Thirty-nine Articles. It will mean the establishment of two kinds of religion, one of which will be Christian and the other an alloy of Christianity and Paganism—and this in an age of enlightenment. What a spectacle for the ubiquitous "man in the street." How comic if it were not so tragic.

III. Will the suggested Alternative be acceptable to the Churches with whom Reunion is sought?—It will not lead to an official reunion with Rome; her position is unchanged. It will bring not peace but a sword into the Anglican Church: of this let there be no mistake—it is no use hiding our heads in the sand. It will not be accepted by the Free Churchmen—of this there is not the slightest shadow of doubt. What Free Churchmen are asking is: "Is the

Church of England going to move towards us or farther away from us?" If the Anglo-Catholics succeed the prospect of any sort of reunion with the Free Churches will pass out of view. Reunion with them might as well be dismissed as out of the question. Will this be in accord with the Will of God?

IV. Will the suggested Alternative Use satisfy the Anglo-Catholics?—No one can be associated with them in private or in public, or read through the report of the English Church Union Committee on Prayer Book Revision without coming to but one conclusion: the suggested revision will not be agreeable to what is called the "Catholic mind"—whatever this may be. As casuists and opportunists, they might accept an alternative use for the time being. They say: "In our opinion there is no other course open to 'Catholic-minded' members of the Church of England than frankly to resign themselves to an era of liturgical experimentation and 'alternative rites,' to endure the resulting confusion and discomfort as best they may, and to concentrate their efforts upon securing permission to build up a really august and majestic English Catholic rite." This is their object. They obviously wish to make confusion more confounded—themselves the authors of the lawless chaos in the Anglican Church to-day, chaos which is reflected in the social and economic life of the country, and of which the Anglo-Catholics are supporters. Have you ever given a thought to the psychological affinity between Anglo-Catholicism and Socialism—as a philosophy and system of economics? Have you given a thought to the inner meaning of the memorial recently signed by five hundred ministers of religion and presented to the leader of the Socialist party in the House of Commons? What are the signs of the times? If the Anglo-Catholics were honest in motive, they would leave the Anglican Church, and at once find their true home—the Church of Rome. Every idea of their Catholicism is Roman in origin. They have given the world nothing that is new. Their eyes have a backward cast to the Middle Ages: we need the forward look to the New Age and the coming of the Kingdom of God, new out of heaven.

V. What of the future?—The time has come to definitely state our principles; to sound "No more unavailing compromise," "No retreat," "No surrender," and to abide by the consequences. The Church of England, as defined at the Reformation Settlement, is either right or wrong. The Church of Rome is either right or wrong. If Rome is right—and to accept the principles involved in such a revision as is suggested means that Rome is right—then have done with apeing her, and let us go over whole-heartedly to her, confessing that, after all our four hundred years of marvellous and undoubtedly God-guided history, our forbears were wrong, and that we ourselves have been the enemies of Truth. If, however, Rome is wrong, then let the Church of England to herself be true.

The Church of England has always been comprehensive, but there is a limit to comprehension. Anglicanism does historically stand for a definite position, "and its claims cannot be allowed to go by default in favour of a nebulous thing called 'Catholicism,'

spurned by Rome and anathema " to the overwhelming majority of the thinking virile men of England, to whom sacerdotalism is an abomination. As the *British Weekly* has recently said: " If Evangelicals in the English Church had a fraction of the courage and consistency of Anglo-Catholics, they would be brave enough to carry their convictions on this matter into practice. They would refuse to go on any longer treating Free Churchmen like strangers and foreigners outside the household of God. They would dare, if need be, to create precedents, and to show their faith in Christian unity by their works."

We conclude by quoting two sentences from the writings of the late Professor Gwatkin: " Evangelicals and Nonconformists are still the backbone of serious religion in England, and its future chiefly depends on their willingness to receive new truth from the world around them; and of such willingness there are many hopeful signs. If they will only thank God and take courage, they have it in them to represent religion more worthily than any who have gone before them."

Gentlemen, shall we thank God and take courage?

THE DOCTRINAL BASIS OF THE HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE OF OUR PRESENT PRAYER BOOK.

BY THE REV. T. W. GILBERT, B.D., Rector of Bradfield,
Berks.

MOST of the great movements which have influenced the history of the world have been complex both in their origin and in their results. The world movement, known as the Reformation, was no exception to this rule, but whatever combination of circumstances contributed to bring about the Reformation, and however manifold the results of the Reformation have been on the subsequent history of the world, it can be said with truth that the Reformation is crystallized in our present Holy Communion service. Pre-Reformation England is the England of the Roman Mass; post-Reformation England is the England of the Holy Communion service.

At the outset of the consideration of the subject we are faced with an apparent paradox, for Dean Field, of Gloucester, declares that " the canon of the Mass, rightly understood, is found to contain nothing in it contrary to the rule of faith, and the profession of the Protestant Churches. . . ." ¹

The statement is important in emphasizing the difficulty of interpreting theological phrases at their face value—a fact of peculiar significance to the English Church of the sixteenth century as of the

¹ Field, *Of the Church*, vol. ii. p. 96.