

the practice of Reservation is either primitive or Catholic ; and we believe that the teaching associated with it is not conformable to Holy Scripture.

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It cannot be denied that Reservation is in practice largely associated with superstitious teaching as to the nature of Christ's presence in the Sacrament, and many very grave abuses are prevalent in connexion with it. It is clear that doctrinal motives influence the demand for its restoration, though purely practical considerations are those which are generally used in support of the claim for it.

It is this doctrinal bias of the Measure which makes concession or compromise impossible. Truth is ours to profit by, to defend, and to maintain, and not to barter or to sacrifice in the supposed interests of peace and unity. We must stand fast, that the Truth of the Gospel may continue with us, and that as "with freedom did Christ make us free," we be not "entangled again in a yoke of bondage."

## THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE USE OF N.A. 84.

BY THE REV. CANON GEORGE BUCHANAN, M.A., Vicar of  
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IT is not easy to fulfil the terms of the subject allotted to me, because it is largely hypothetical. If N.A. 84 be adopted, what will be the effect? but if it be largely amended, what further effect? Again, if it be not used by large sections of Evangelical Churchmen, what effect can there be, except to accentuate their divergence from their brethren? And further if, where it is used, it is regarded as being of a temporary and transitory nature, then what effect will its use in the meantime have on the permanent book to be adopted say twenty years hence?

In spite, however, of so much that is hypothetical, there are three points that are to be reckoned on as certainties:

I. *Very many Evangelical Churchmen will use it.* It is idle to suppose that the *odium theologicum* will prevent the large body of younger Evangelicals from making use of its provisions, and any thought of counting on that may, in my judgment, be dismissed. Even if it be amended by the E.C.U. Report, it will still largely be used, at least you cannot count on any innate antagonism that would automatically prevent this. The fact is that, for better or for worse, innate antagonisms have largely died among the better type of Churchmen; a wider view of the universe and a deeper study of

history have made the present generation know more and forgive more, have at any rate prevented a priori antagonisms. Therefore one can be almost certain that while a number of their elders will be disinclined to use the Alternative most of the younger Evangelical Clergy will use it freely, or so much of it as suits their needs.

II. *Its use will colour our Evangelical outlook.* It is idle again, to suppose that continual use, and presumably continual instruction in regard to it, will not leave a definite impression on the mentality of all concerned. It will, and that is what makes the present moment so critical: you are settling to-day formulæ of worship that will make a vast difference in the attitude of those who shall be called upon to establish the permanent forms later on. Impressionable Evangelical curates in 1923 will be dignitaries of first (or second) magnitude in 1943. They will (I hope) still be Evangelical, but they will no longer be merely impressionable; rather will they be already impressed deeply with the tone and tendency of the interim book they will have used for twenty years. Note this, above all, that what matters is not 1923 but 1943.

III. *It is useless to discuss N.A. 84 without reference to other suggested alternatives.* There is the E.C.U. Report, admirably drawn up and subtly efficient from the Anglo-Catholic standpoint. There is the excellent, if somewhat complicated, series of suggestions published under the authority of Dr. Temple, Bishop of Manchester. There is, of course, the 1549 Book already before us, but brought recently within the margin of our corporate consciousness by the suggestion of the Archbishop of York.

N.A. 84 has to run the gauntlet of all these and more, and it is obvious that every distinctive point in each of them will be brought forward by way of amendment. No one can tell what the result may be, but it is safe to count on a good deal of alteration if the proposed Measure is to get through at all. Any attempt then to estimate the effect of using the Alternative Prayer Book must reckon with a distinct coloration in some of its most vital clauses before it becomes law.

Supposing then it is eventually adopted with all due amendments, what effects are likely to occur? From many aspects, notably in regard to the less central services, it is reasonable to say that it will make for—

### I. REALITY IN PUBLIC PRAYER.

Let us be honest, there will be much of gain in it, and the Committee deserve our gratitude for their labours. Speaking generally—apart from the Communion Office—it will be a great gain in the direction of reality for us to have a book that makes our services more compact, and at the same time allows them to cover a more adequate range of thought and vision. The consequence of using N.A. 84 will be that we shall no longer imagine that definite Missionary work is covered by a prayer for “all sorts and conditions of men,” that social problems and the relationship of employer to

employed are altogether outside the scope of common prayer. It will be a gain, also, to rid our people of the idea that we talk crudely at a marriage service about matters on which the contracting parties are particularly sensitive at the moment, or that at a funeral we ignore the innocent simplicity of child-life, or the personal grief of the bereaved. In these and a dozen other ways the Committee have made a bold gesture of common sense, that must, one would think, make for reality in worship.

Alas, that in other directions, the same cannot be said. Recognizing that the position of the Committee was one of "give and take," which means that members had often to "give" away what they wanted to keep, and "take" what they did not want to receive—recognizing the necessity of compromise in the Book, the resulting consequences of its use are likely to be not a little disturbing. In some ways, for instance, the use of the book will make for—

## II. UNCERTAINTY IN DOCTRINAL TRUTH.

What the *Ecclesia Anglicana* stands for was never easy to say, but now it will be impossible. To begin with, what will the Declaration of Assent really mean? The clause in the preamble of the proposed Measure infers that while assent will still be given to the present book as containing the doctrinal basis of the Church's teaching legally enacted, this assent will also cover variations in it "so far as is permitted in the Alternative Book." But if, as many think, the two books are fundamentally antagonistic in doctrine, each built on a basis that is, in the last analysis, contradictory, how can assent be given simultaneously to both? Surely here we shall have a strange and not very edifying spectacle. If the clergyman thinks he is assenting to both he is guilty of a contradiction; if he means only to assent to one, then he may be guilty of a paradox, for he may be officially "assenting" to a book he is not going to use, and officially using a book to which he has not "assented."

Further uncertainty will arise out of this, and we may ask, will the clergyman believe the Thirty-nine Articles or will he not? Indeed, will the Church expect him so to do? Not a word has been mentioned about altering the Thirty-nine Articles, yet it would surely be difficult to reconcile the tendency and even some of the actual proposals of N.A. 84 with these Articles. If it be strictly understood that the Alternative is merely an expedient to cover say twenty years of a transition period, we might well put up with the anomaly. But that only postpones the inevitable clearing up of the difficulty: it gives us an uncertainty now, and leaves us not at all certain that the uncertainty will be rectified later.

In quite another direction uncertainty (due to compromise) seems to rule. Take prayers for the dead, and the cognate doctrines: apart from a somewhat definite collect for All Souls' Day, we may ask, Does the Committee believe in prayers for the dead or does it not? Does it want the Church to believe in them or does it not?

If it does not, why does it insert what purports to be such? and if it does, why does it not insert prayers on more definite lines? Can a Church that purports to believe in *real* prayer for those who are departed be content with this?—"Shed forth upon Thy whole Church in Paradise and on earth the bright beams of Thy Light and Comfort." What is the spiritual personal prayer-value of that? Is it worth dividing the Church over? Again, after the mention of the B.V.M. and patriarchs, etc., we are to beseech God that, "encouraged by their examples" (not their prayers) and "strengthened by their fellowship (not their intercessions), we also, etc." If this were intended to emphasize the Communion of Saints one could understand it, but if it be meant to acclimatize us to prayers for the dead, it is of little use. Even in the Burial Service, the historic petition about "eternal rest" and "perpetual light" is nullified, or at least made uncertain, by the rubric which only says "*may be said:*" The similar use of "God's mercy" in the committal at the grave is merely an alternative, and that in a book itself already only an alternative. What does the proposal in the Measure intend us to stand for? There is no doubt about the proposed prayers in the E.C.U. Report. There you know where you are, even if you do not like where they take you. But this leads nowhere definitely except by default, and one cannot help thinking that the Committee drew it up with one eye on those who wanted the whole thing and the other on those who would stir up trouble if anything definite were granted. We have used the word compromise; dare we suggest the further word "camouflage"? Read that prayer over again, *read it aloud*—"Blessed Virgin Mary, the holy Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs . . ." Can it be that the Committee imagined that (like the blessed word Mesopotamia) the very resonance of its vocal utterance would hide from our minds the paucity of its spiritual prayer-value? The E.C.U. proposes definitely to ask that "strengthened by their *intercessions*" we may be found meet, etc. If we believe in the intercession of the saints let us say so, but if we do not, then let us avoid phrases that are historically linked up with the idea. In this connexion it is pathetic to remember that the original purpose of the King's Letters of Business was to put an end to that uncertainty that produced charges and counter-charges of "lawlessness." If this be all we are to get, one fears that the mental confusion will be worse confounded. And the average layman hates such doctrinal uncertainty: it makes him feel that he is not sure of himself, and what is worse, not sure where his vicar is going. The net result is disastrous; it produces within him the feeling that somehow "those parsons are doing him," coupled with the humiliating reflection that he himself is not just competent to say where. Unity is about the last thing that is likely to arise out of such a situation.

A further consequence of the use of N.A. 84 goes beyond a mere negative element like uncertainty; it will, in a positive manner, pave the way for a new—

## III. OBJECTIVITY IN SACRAMENTAL WORSHIP.

As to the actual proposals of the measure, it is perhaps unfair to say that this is a necessary consequence of their use, for the Committee have manifestly tried to avoid any such action directly. But, as we all know, effects are cumulative, and the tendency of a number of comparatively four items must be taken into account.

The suggestion of four different variations of Vestments is one of these. It is not in my province to discuss the significance of Vestments as such, but only the consequence of using them. Undoubtedly and confessedly it will help to focus attention not only on the sacramental nature of the service, but on the relation and status of the priest in regard to it. If anyone doubts this, then the words of Lord Halifax will make it plain, to the effect that Vestments are desired not for their æsthetic beauty, but because they "witness to the fact that what we are celebrating is nothing more or less than the Mass in English." Again, another comparatively small detail is to be noted—the use of half the words of administration if and when the whole sentence has been used once at the outset.

On the grounds of utility, as shortening a service, the emotional strain of which we cannot overlook, this curtailment is admirable, and will be largely availed of. But the fact that between the two halves of the sentence there is historically a gulf should make us pause. The present Prayer Book bridged this over by combining them, but the Alternative Book looks like breaking down the unity which the bridge provided and allowing each bank to declare itself as separate from the other.

There is little doubt that the effect of using continually and solely the words referring to the Body and Blood of Christ, will tend to assist the general sense of an objectively real presence in the Sacrament, a presence apart from the "taking and eating," even though one is doing both at the time. All this will pave the way for the Reserved Sacrament, which will *par excellence* meet the needs of those who want to have the objectivity complete. Frankly, Reservation for the sick as such is, I think, harmless and even beautiful. In so far as it is merely an extended administration, a celebration extended in its most practical form to the sick parishioner across the street—in this respect it is much to be desired as a particularly touching symbol of the unity of the Body Corporate. But it is not wanted for that purpose alone; indeed, I doubt if it would ever be wanted if that were the only reason for it. Quite candidly, it is wanted by those who demand it primarily, it may be, for the sick, but ultimately for *the faithful*. That means that it will be used in a manner that emphasizes the objective reality of the Presence more than anything else. N.A. 84 is permitting a custom that will inevitably lead to a Cult; it has done so before and it will do so again, and nothing on earth can stop it. Honestly, if I believed the premises nothing would stop me from the conclusion. If I had the mental ability (or should I say agility) to believe what some people believe as to the Elements after Consecration, then

I should go the whole way, for the psychological effect of such a Presence used in such a way is one of the most powerful on earth. With so alluring a possibility as this—alluring already to many Anglicans—common sense would surely urge the ancient maxim: "*Obsta principis.*"

One final consequence of the use of N.A. 84 will be—

#### IV. INSECURITY IN LITURGICAL SAFEGUARDS.

Apart from Ecclesiastical Courts, which the Archbishop of Canterbury warns us not to count on, the main safeguards are the interpretation of rubrics and the interposition of bishops, and it is hard to say which is the more insecure. The growing habit of solving all difficulties by throwing the onus on the Bishop is coming to be a menace both to Episcopacy as such and also to the Church of England. No bishop on the bench could solve all the parochial and liturgical problems now thrust on him, and at the same time attend to his business. Yet "by permission of the Ordinary" is the throbbing refrain of all legislation to-day. First, the Committee in bringing in the book say that all questions that may arise between the clergy and people "stand referred to the Bishop," who is told that he must consult each party and thereupon make "orders which shall be final." Then appended to the Order for Holy Communion there is a definite safeguard against supplementing or interrupting the course of the service by additional prayers. But this is entirely weakened by the clause, "Save so far as may be ordered or permitted by the Ordinary." Of course, in any Episcopal system, the Bishop must exercise proper jurisdiction and supervision, but in a system so unique, not to say anomalous, as the Anglican Church, the Bishop is not an institution appointed from one central, and almost impersonal, source, say in Rome. He is very much of an individual, and often—too often—a "party" individual at that, appointed it is true by the King, who acts on the nomination of the Prime Minister, who acts on the nomination of—well, shall we say, the keeper of his conscience! What safeguard have you here as to "ordering" or "permitting" extra liturgical rites and ceremonies? There are many items that circumstances might compel the Bishop of Chelmsford to "permit," items which, at the same time, the Bishop of London would only be too delighted to "order." Where is the safeguard between them? Is it "the custom or rule of the Catholic Church"? but where, pray, is that?

Rubrics are the other safeguard, but they need something like an Ecclesiastical Court to interpret, not to say enforce, them. Take that in relation to the Reservation of the Sacrament. The words "same day" and "with as little delay as possible" are as well-meaning as they are futile, for the same day may mean a very long day, and as little delay as possible may mean many hours on end, and *where are the elements in the meantime?* Then, "if not used the same day," they are to be kept in such place and after such manner as the Ordinary shall direct—as the Bishop of Liverpool and the Bishop of St. Albans, for instance, may direct. What

similarity will you expect? But to be fair to the rubric it concludes with words that mark a brave gesture of authority "so that they be not used for any other purpose whatever." Quite so, and will the bishops, on the day the book becomes law, order all receptacles where at present the Reserved Sacrament is used for "other purpose" to be instantly and permanently removed? Will they? After this daring show of Episcopal authority, it is somewhat of an anti-climax to read that where this is not sufficient, "the curate," i.e. the clergyman, may make "further provision to meet the needs of the sick and dying," with due permission, of course, from his superiors. With that loophole, surely safeguards are at a discount.

And if rubrics or bishops cannot safeguard manual acts, how will either safeguard mental intentions? For instance, take the removing of the Prayer of Oblation from its present position to a place in close relation to the consecration of the elements. Personally, I like the Anamnesis and prayer with the Lord's Prayer in this position as giving due testimony both to the glory of the Ascended Lord and to the consecration of the worshipper. But then, I would not read anything more into it. What is to prevent much more being read into the "sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving," and into the words, "Here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord"? Who can prevent any priest reading into it a meaning relating to the Presence alleged to be in the consecrated elements at that moment on the "altar"? It did not need Einstein to teach us the doctrine of relativity in language; we all know that a phrase is as sensitive as a chameleon to every change in its environment. For instance, "O Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" means one thing as said at a revival meeting in a Mission Hall; it means something quite different as said or sung at the Eucharist. The *Nunc Dimittis* is the same. After the "Gospel" Lesson it is very beautiful and spiritual to say "Mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation," but every child can see the additional significance that is attached to it as sung after the celebration. So with the Prayer of Oblation; it seems to me impossible to safeguard the use of the words "Here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord" from a relation to the Lord sacramentally rather than spiritually present. The only safeguard here is to leave the prayer where it is; anything else will be futile to prevent an evil that is mental, or indeed temperamental, and will always be able to evade direction. If Daniel O'Connell could drive a coach and four through any Act of Parliament that was ever enacted, it seems to me the average Anglo-Catholic could drive the doctrine of intention through any safeguard that was ever imposed.

To sum up: the consequences of the use of N.A. 84 may be summarized in four words relating to four different entities who will be faced with the Alternative Book—Antipathy, Affinity, Opportunity, and Gravity.

(a) *For the older type of Evangelical* the consequence of its being authorized will certainly be *Antipathy*—much greater divergence in thought from his brethren than before.

(b) *For the younger type of Evangelical*, one may venture to say *Affinity*—much immediate gain from its use, with a gradual and subtle development of an attitude acclimatized and attuned to the atmosphere of the mediæval.

(c) *For the Anglo-Catholic*, *Opportunity*—no immediate satisfaction, but the chance of his life for the propagation of ideas that will one day lead to a “frank and complete legal recognition of Catholic faith and practice.”

And *for the Church of England*—which, after all, is the thing that counts—GRAVITY is the only word—a grave period of uncertainty as to whether at this solemn crisis she took the wisest course, and later on, a still more grave period of decision, when she must ultimately decide what her position is in relation to the Catholic Church, and must embody what she stands for in one permanent Prayer Book which will bring to all her sorely-tried members that unity which is vital to religious life and essential to spiritual efficiency.

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## THE REVISION THAT IS NEEDED:

ILLUSTRATED BY N.A. 84.

BY THE REV. C. L. THORNTON-DUESBERRY, M.A., Rector of Holy Trinity, Marylebone.

A FEW weeks ago I came face to face in Switzerland with a chalet dated A.D. 1552. The date recalled Prayer Book Revision—even in the Swiss mountains one could not get away from it! (By the way, I did not find a 1549 chalet!) Before and behind the chalet was a well-cultivated Alp, and on one side a rushing stream of spring water, the food and water supply of the inhabitants of the chalet, through storm and sunshine, for four centuries and more. Yet even that chalet had come under revision: electric light had been introduced; telegraph and telephone wires ran near it; the peasants, at the time I saw it, were preparing the Alp for a potato crop with a plough and patent digger; the water was regulated by a system of pipes and irrigation.

Our Prayer Book is substantially that of A.D. 1552. Life in England has greatly changed since the sixteenth century; consequently there are many needs which the present book does not meet. All schools of thought within our Church demand a revision. Evangelicals will accept a revision willingly, provided it follows sound lines, nor will they expect it, when its final shape is determined, to be exactly what they wish. None of us can expect to get exactly what we like. They recognize that there must be a certain measure of give and take. We cannot pray as in A.D. 1661 (or even as before the War). In many ways our forms are anti-