

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_churchman\\_os.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php)

## BISHOP ANDREWES.

BY THE REV. C. SYDNEY CARTER, M.A., Litt.D.

**A**LTHOUGH nearly three centuries have elapsed since the death of Launcelot Andrewes, his memory is still greatly esteemed and venerated, while his *Devotions*, even if not so much used to-day, have guided and comforted succeeding generations of Church-people. Born in London when the "Fires of Smithfield" were at their height, he was the eldest of thirteen children, his father being a middle-class merchant.

He was early sent to the Coopers' Free School at Stepney, where he displayed such a passion for study that his parents yielded to the head master's persuasion not to make him a "Prentice." Soon after he went to the newly founded Merchant Taylors' School, where his early rising for the purpose of study soon earned for him a well-deserved reputation for exceptional ability. We are not, however, told whether his refusal to join in any school games rendered him as unpopular with his companions as it certainly would do to-day in a public school! In 1571 he went up to Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, with a Greek scholarship, and in 1576 he was elected to a Fellowship there, and thenceforth devoted all his studies to theology. He joined a society for the weekly study of the Scriptures, a member of which was the celebrated and learned Puritan divine, Dr. Laurence Chaderton, the future Master of Emmanuel College. In 1578 Andrewes was appointed "Catechist" of his college, and his lectures in the College Chapel were soon crowded. He was ordained in 1580, and appointed Chaplain to Archbishop Whitgift, and Vicar of St. Giles's, Cripplegate, in 1586, and Prebendary of St. Paul's in 1589. In the latter year he was elected Master of his old college, a post which he held till 1606, when he was chosen for the see of Chichester.

Andrewes was probably one of the most learned divines of the day. He was always a diligent student, and refused to see any visitors before noon. He was reputed to have a good knowledge of fifteen languages. He was a good classical scholar, and undoubtedly possessed a thorough knowledge of the writings of the Fathers and of the mediæval schoolmen. In the quaint but forceful language

of his contemporary, Thomas Fuller, "the world wanted learning to know how learned this man was, so skilled in all (especially Oriental) languages that some conceive he might, if then living, almost have served as an interpreter at the confusion of tongues" (*Ch. Hist.*, iii, p. 348).

In 1601 Andrewes was created Dean of Westminster, and took part in the famous Hampton Court Conference of 1604. He had early won the affectionate esteem of James I, and was in constant attendance at Court, and frequently preached in the Royal Chapel. He was translated to Ely in 1609, and to Winchester in 1618, when he was also appointed Dean of the Chapel Royal. He was a Privy Councillor, but took little interest in merely political matters, and disliked the prevalent custom of the clergy meddling in secular offices. He died in 1626. His last official act was performed at the coronation of Charles I, in which he took part.

We are wont to complain now of the growing neglect of public worship and the consequent desecration of the Lord's Day. It is well, therefore, to be reminded that in Andrewes' day things were no better in this respect, in spite of the stringent law which fined all who neglected attendance at their parish church on Sunday. But the method then employed of discovering offenders would scarcely commend itself to our modern judgment. It reminds us of the drastic methods of Grimshaw, of Hawarth, the zealous but somewhat eccentric evangelical leader of the next century. During the Sunday morning service Grimshaw is reported to have been in the habit of giving out a long hymn or psalm before the sermon, to enable him, whip in hand, to visit the neighbouring public-houses and drive the inmates to God's house! By a similar device Andrewes enjoins the clergy "about the midst of Divine service to walk out of church and see who are abroad in any ale-house or elsewhere absent or evil employed," and to present them to the Ordinary.

Andrewes certainly gained his chief reputation at the time as a preacher. His sermons were full of quaint poetic imagery, as well as of a forceful and attractive vivacity, which fascinated his congregations, while he had a sweetness and simplicity of style which enabled him to administer sharp reproofs without offending his hearers. He was never sleepy or dull, and his sincere spirituality was always most impressive. Above all, he spoke from a heartfelt experience, which always wings a way for the message. Andrewes

went up to Cambridge when the controversy with the Puritans concerning the Calvinistic system of Church discipline was at its height. Cartwright, the very able, although the most bitter and intolerant, advocate of the exclusive necessity of a presbyterian polity, had so virulently attacked episcopacy that he had just been deprived of his professorship. He was Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, and rivalled a Spanish Inquisitor in his persecuting zeal. Calvinistic doctrine was, however, still almost universally accepted as orthodox, so that Archbishop Whitgift could cordially approve of the famous "Lambeth Articles" of 1595 as "sound doctrine, and uniformly professed in this Church of England, and agreeable to the Articles of Religion established by authority." We need carefully to bear in mind the great distinction which was maintained at this time between Calvinistic discipline and Calvinistic doctrine. The former was the ardent belief of the Puritan, and his one consistent endeavour was to secure its adoption by the Anglican Church. The latter was the practically universal belief of all Churchmen. For there was no quarrel between the Puritan and the Churchman on purely doctrinal questions. All were followers of Calvin's theology. Hooker tells us that daily men were accused of heresy for holding that which the Fathers held, and that they could not clear themselves from the charge if they were unable to find something from Calvin to justify their views. Andrewes, although certainly inclining to what was then styled the new Arminian "heresy," advocated a moderating policy of silence on these abstruse speculative points of theology, and although he strongly opposed the aim of the extreme Puritan party for a presbyterian *discipline*, he vindicated their *doctrinal* orthodoxy, telling Cardinal Bellarmine that "they had no religion peculiar to themselves," and that, "apart from matters of discipline, they are right-minded enough."

Andrewes was a whole-hearted admirer of the English Reformation. "Look at our religion in Britain—primitive, pure and purified, such as Zion would acknowledge. What! Must we take the field to teach that nowhere does there exist a religion more in accord with the true Zion, that is, with the institution of the Gospel and of the Apostles, than ours? Look at our Confession contained in the Thirty-nine Articles. Look at our Catechism; it is short, but, in spite of its shortness, there is nothing wanting in it.

Look at the Apology of our Church—truly a ‘Jewel,’ whose will may find our doctrines there.” His great reputation for scholarship naturally marked him out to succeed Jewel as the champion of the Anglican religious settlement against the attacks of Rome, and his first book, *Tortura Torti*, defending the oath of allegiance against the denunciation of Cardinal Bellarmine, appeared in 1609. In the following year, in his *Responsio*, he followed the early Reformers in asserting the positive principles which guided them in their Reformation. Bellarmine had denied the catholicity of the English Church because of its rejection of the medieval dogmas of transubstantiation, the invocation of saints, and the temporal claims of the papacy. Andrewes, in the spirit of Jewel’s famous *Apology*, declared that Anglican catholicity was proved by the fact that the Reformers had adhered to the teaching of the Primitive Church. “Our appeal is to the Scriptures alone,” he declared. “Our savour is of the Scripture alone, but everything with you is full of the fabricated opinions of men out of which your faith is founded.” “Our faith is the ancient Catholic Faith comprehended in the two Testaments, three Creeds, and four Councils, only restored to its pristine splendour. On this account we call it a Reformed religion, and not new formed. We are not innovators, but renovators.” “We declare aloud that we are Catholic, but not Roman, the last of which words destroys the meaning of the first.” “Circumstances gave us the name of Protestants. For we protested that we would not any longer endure errors and abuses, but would remove them.” It is sometimes affirmed that although Andrewes repudiated transubstantiation, he asserted a belief in the Real Objective Presence of Our Lord in the elements, but it would seem, from a more careful study of his language, that he was enunciating the prevalent Anglican view of a Real Presence, as being, in the language of Bishop Jeremy Taylor, one “to our spirits only” in the whole celebration, and not in the elements. “The Presence,” he declares, “we believe to be real, as you do. As to the mode, we define nothing rashly, nor anxiously investigate, any more than in Baptism we inquire how Christ’s blood washes us.” It is at least difficult to understand how anyone who believed that Christ was present in the elements under the form of bread and wine could declare: “Let them worship the Deity, hiding there under the species, made in a baker’s oven.

Sion would shudder at this and utterly repudiate it." With regard to the Sacrifice of the Mass, Andrewes declared: "We are willing enough to grant that there is a Memory of the Sacrifice in it, but we will never grant that your Christ made of bread is sacrificed in it. . . . Private masses were unknown to the Fathers, ay, and masses not private, in which you worship transubstantiated bread."

It is interesting, especially in view of our present Reunion problems, to notice the position which Andrewes adopted concerning Church polity. "It had been enough," as Keble accurately states it, for the Elizabethan Reformers "to show that the government by archbishops and bishops was ancient and allowable," but although Andrewes, as the forerunner of the Caroline divines, went a step further than this in his assertion of the "divine institution of episcopacy," there is little doubt that he would have been very far from endorsing Bishop Gore's recent statement, that if the Anglican Church once recognized the validity of non-episcopal orders, "it would lose its status in the Catholic Church." For such a view would have prevented him concurring in Archbishop Bancroft's ruling in 1610, that the Scottish presbyters, about to be consecrated bishops, needed no ordination to the Anglican "priesthood," since "where bishops could not be had, the ordination given by the presbyters must be esteemed lawful, that unless that were granted the calling and character of the ministry in most of the Reformed Churches might be questioned." Such a view would also have prevented him from complying, as Bishop of Winchester, with the current custom of officially admitting presbyterially ordained French ministers into benefices in the Channel Islands, which were under his jurisdiction.

We get a good illustration from the life of Andrewes that the cordial relationship which existed between the early Elizabethan divines and their benefactors, the foreign Reformers, was fully maintained by the next generation of English Churchmen. For Andrewes lived on the most intimate terms of friendship with several eminent foreign Reformed divines, like Du Moulin and Grotius. He also vindicated the orthodoxy of the foreign Reformed Churches by appealing to the *Harmony of Protestant Confessions*, published in 1581 (which included Jewel's *Apology* as representing the Church of England). He told Cardinal Bellarmine that "we hold one Faith, as the *Harmony* of our Confessions sufficiently

testifies." Similarly, the celebrated French divine, Peter du Moulin, had refuted the accusation of the Romanists that the religion of the French Reformed Church was "diverse" from that of the English, because it had "another form of discipline." "We assemble," he declared, "with the English in their Churches, we participate together in the Holy Supper of Our Lord, the doctrine of their Confession is wholly agreeable to ours." But in his correspondence with Du Moulin, Andrewes, by enunciating the general Caroline view of episcopal ministries, showed that he certainly did not regard this question of "another form of discipline" as an immaterial point of divergence. "We maintain," he declares, "that our regimen approximates most nearly to the custom of the primitive, or, as you allow, of the sub-Apostolic Church. Yet it follows not, if our regimen be of divine right, that there is no salvation without it. . . . It is not utter condemnation of a thing to prefer a better . . . We do not condemn your Church because we would recall it to another form of governance which we have adopted—one which the whole of antiquity preferred." The learned French Calvinist, Isaac Casaubon, who was, without any episcopal ordination, appointed by Archbishop Bancroft a prebendary of Canterbury, was also a special friend of Andrewes, and advised him in the writing of his *Responsio*. He received the sacrament from him on his death-bed, and Andrewes confirmed his son.

Rightly to appreciate the real humility and sanctity so conspicuous in Andrewes' life and character, we have carefully to bear in mind the difficult circumstances in which he was placed. When he first appeared at Court, he found himself surrounded by a compliant, servile, and sychophantic set of statesmen and ecclesiastics who had deliberately adopted the disastrous policy of bolstering up the crude Stuart notions of divine hereditary right and arbitrary government as a protection and safeguard for Church order and discipline. Thus while they pandered to the king's natural conceit and inordinate vanity, they were in a weak position to witness against the idle and wanton luxury and dissoluteness which was so rampant in Court circles, especially since the beginning of the Stuart rule. Andrewes, with his studious, gentle, and retiring disposition, was peculiarly ill-fitted to stem this tide, and although at times he may have been guilty of a weak compliance, or even a culpable neglect, of duty, notably when he concurred with other

time-serving bishops in sacrificing principle to expediency by voting for the divorce of Lady Frances Howard, yet there is no doubt that his humility and sincere piety and asceticism acted as some check on the levity and profanity of the Court. He was at least not afraid to reproach the self-seeking policy of too many worldly Churchmen, or to refrain from joining in their fulsome adulation of royalty. When appealed to by James I, whether the king could not take his subjects' money when he needed it without the formality of a Parliament, Bishop Neale at once assented, declaring to James, "You are the breath of our nostrils." Andrewes, on being pressed, quietly replied: "Sir, I think it is lawful for you to take my brother Neale's money, because he offers it." "Going in and out as he did," says Professor Gardiner, "among the frivolous and grasping courtiers who gathered around the king, he seemed to live in a peculiar atmosphere of holiness" (*Hist. of Eng.*, ii, p. 120). He made no enemies, and was almost universally esteemed and revered, for, as Bishop Hacket declared, "who could come near the shrine of such a saint and not offer up a few grains of glory upon it?"

Andrewes' reputation for sanctity was almost as great as that which he had earned for his scholarship and preaching ability, so that it was said of him at the time that he was "Doctor Andrewes in the schools, Bishop Andrewes in the pulpit, and Saint Andrewes in the chamber." His well-known *Devotions* furnish us with the true secret of his eminently saintly life. His intercessions are most beautifully expressed and most comprehensive. His faith and calm serenity in most difficult, distracting, and ominous times were due to the fact that his life was a life of prayer. In these strenuous days, with our modern conditions of rush and high-pressure work, we are perhaps apt to overstrain the truth that *laborare est orare*. Certainly there are few Christians to-day who cultivate the contemplative life of prayer and spiritual communion to anything like the extent of the saintly Caroline Churchmen. We may safely say that asceticism was then often carried to excess, as in the well-known instance of Nicholas Ferrar, who shortened his beautiful and exemplary life by his severe austerities. But it is not surprising that a man like Andrewes was ready fearlessly to face the world and its problems when nearly five hours of each day had been spent in sacred prayer and meditation! Andrewes'

*Private Devotions* show us his inner soul, which, as Dean Church well said, was one of "the keenest self-knowledge and the strongest sympathies." It reveals to us one who "wholly spent himself and his studies and estate in prayer and the praise of God and compassion and works of charity." His hospitality and generosity were on a munificent scale, and besides his public benefactions, it is estimated that he gave away £1,300 a year in private charity. It is not surprising that Dr. Ottley declares that, "in an age of noisy controversy, his quiet, unobtrusive goodness and devout temper won him the confidence and reverence of earnest inquirers and of those troubled in mind and conscience" (*Life of Andrewes*, p. 15).

---

## TWO MISSIONARY QUARTERLIES.

The March number of the *Church Missionary Review* (C.M.S. House, 1s. net) has several important articles, and it is interesting to note that in at least three instances the writers are not of our communion. The paper by the Rev. E. W. Thompson (a Secretary of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society) on Christian Education in British West Africa is singularly timely. He refers to the awakening of the Colonial Governments to the obligation resting upon them to educate the masses as a new feature of the situation. He advises missionaries not to fear or deplore this new interest of the State in education. The Rev. Edwin W. Smith (Literary Superintendent of the British and Foreign Bible Society) writes most happily on "An Unbroken Fellowship," and tells the story of 120 years' close co-operation between the C.M.S. and the Bible Society. The Rev. Nelson Bitton (Home Secretary of the London Missionary Society) has a useful article on "Christian Unity and the Experiences of the Mission Field," which should be carefully studied. Other articles are by the Revs. J. C. Winslow, H. D. Hooper, W. S. Hunt and G. T. Manley. The Eastern Notes are good and the Quarterly Survey of the Missions encouraging.

The *East and the West* (S.P.G., 1s. net) for January has a stirring article by Bishop Gwynne on "An Effort towards Unity in Egypt." He shows what has been done—no inconsiderable amount—and outlines a programme for the future. The task may be unattainable in our day, but in pursuing it they are following the will of the Master. The Rev. K. C. Macpherson writes on "Reconciliation in India." He points out that Nationalism is a passion which may be used for noble ends or which may be used as a disintegrating force, and his conclusion is that religion is the only power which can build a nation and save it from itself. The Rev. F. S. Drake describes a new religious movement in China; and interesting information is given about the Japan earthquake.