

## Chapter IX

### THE SACRAMENTS

#### Article XXV

#### OF THE SACRAMENTS<sup>1</sup>

Sacraments<sup>2</sup> ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be certain sure witnesses and effectual signs of grace and God's good will towards us, by the which He doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our Faith in Him.

There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have grown partly of the corrupt following of the Apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures; but yet have not like nature of Sacraments with Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.

The Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about, but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation: but they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves damnation, as St. Paul saith.

THE Article illustrates the Anglican '*via media*' between the extreme Protestant view (characteristic among Continental Reformers at the time of the Reformation and still current amongst their spiritual descendants to-day) which depreciates the value of Sacraments, and the Roman Catholic view which

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<sup>1</sup>The first paragraph of the present Article is taken from Article IX of the Thirteen Articles of 1538, which in turn was based on Article XIII of the Augsburg Confession.

<sup>2</sup>The word '*sacramentum*' is the Latin equivalent of the Greek word *mysterion*, which originally meant a secret, e.g., State secrets. Hence it came to mean religious secrets known only to the initiated, and eventually to denote religious rites commended in the New Testament (Ephes. v.32). Cf. also A. W. Robinson, *The Church Catechism Explained* (1913), p. 137.

makes them independent of the spiritual attitude of the worshipper.

The description of a Sacrament rests on what is called the sacramental principle; that is, the truth that things in physical Nature can symbolize and communicate spiritual reality. More will be said on this point, and about the Sacraments as '*effectual signs of grace*' when we consider Articles XXVII and XXVIII, on Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The elements in the Sacraments, water in Holy Baptism, and bread and wine in Holy Communion, are not just '*badges or tokens*'<sup>1</sup> of the Christian profession, like circumcision in Judaism; they are '*effectual signs of grace*', whereby God's presence and power are conveyed to the soul.

What the Article says about the nature of a Sacrament has to be taken in connection with the general teaching of the Prayer Book on the subject, and especially of the Catechism, which defines a Sacrament as 'an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ Himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.' It is clear from the Latin version of the Catechism that 'given' refers to 'spiritual grace', and not to 'sign'; the sign is ordained by Christ, and the grace is imparted through it. The Article also describes them as the means through which God '*doth work invisibly in us*', to '*quicken*' (Latin, *excitat*, stir up) us, and to '*strengthen and confirm our faith in Him*.' The opening statement of the Article was aimed at the opinion of the Swiss Reformer, Zwingli, who taught that the Sacraments were but the marks of discipleship, and reminders of the method of our redemption; grace, he said, was not received through them.

The Council of Trent, like the Council of Florence<sup>2</sup>, recognized seven Sacraments. The Article distinguishes between the two Sacraments '*ordained*' by Christ, '*Baptism and the Supper of the Lord*', which it calls '*Sacraments of the Gospel*';

<sup>1</sup>Anabaptists and Zwinglians said Baptism was only a badge which distinguished Christians from non-Christians.

<sup>2</sup>1439. Peter Lombard (died 1164) was the first to mention the number as seven.

and '*those five commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction*'. The Catechism recognizes only the two Sacraments of the Gospel as '*generally necessary to salvation*'<sup>1</sup>.

Concerning '*those five*,' it would seem that '*commonly called*' does not in the Prayer Book mean '*wrongly called*,'<sup>2</sup> and therefore those five '*commonly called Sacraments*' may rightly be termed Sacraments. But they are not Sacraments of the same '*nature*' as the two Sacraments of the Gospel, mainly because (i) '*they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God*,' and partly because (ii) they are either only '*states of life allowed in the Scripture*,' or (iii) have developed out of '*the corrupt following of the Apostles*.' Each of the five may be considered under these three points of distinction:—

(1) *Confirmation* illustrates how loosely worded is the Article. It is certainly not a '*state of life*,' nor can it be said to have developed from '*the corrupt following of the Apostles*.' It is evident that the 'Laying on of Hands' was practised by the Apostles as the means of conferring spiritual gifts.<sup>3</sup> Our Lord also practised Laying on of Hands as a means of healing the sick<sup>4</sup> and blessing.<sup>5</sup> Much has been written in recent years on this subject, and 'the imposition of hands in Acts and Hebrews calls for further study<sup>6</sup>.' Recent attempts to explain away the traditional interpretation of Acts viii.4–19; xix.1–7; and Heb. vi.1f., which sees in these passages the apostolic precedents for confirmation are not entirely convincing, and 'the alternative interpretations advanced by modern writers leave

<sup>1</sup>'Generally' in the Bible and Prayer Book means 'universally' (Cp. A.V. and R.V. of II Sam. xvii.11; Jer. xlvi.38. The 'General' Confession is to be said by *everyone*. Holy Baptism and Holy Communion are necessary for everyone—Jn. iii.5; iv.1; vi.53. Cf. W. G. Wilson, *Church Teaching*, p. 63f.

<sup>2</sup>E.g., 'The Nativity of our Lord . . . commonly called Christmas Day'; 'The Fifth Sunday after Easter, commonly called Rogation Sunday'; 'The First Day of Lent, commonly called Ash Wednesday'; 'The Presentation of Christ in the Temple, commonly called The Purification of St. Mary the Virgin,' etc. If it means '*wrongly called*', it is hard to understand why the Prayer Book contains such alternative titles.

<sup>3</sup>Acts viii.17f.; xix.1–6; Heb. vi.2; cf. II Tim. i.6 (R.V.).

<sup>4</sup>Mark viii.23 (R.V.).

<sup>5</sup>Mk. x.16; cf. also Num. xxvii.18; Deut. xxxiv.9.

<sup>6</sup>G. W. H. Lampe, *Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. VI, Pt. i, April 1955, p. 115.

many anomalies and questions unanswered.<sup>1</sup> The vagueness of the Article on this subject may be contrasted with Jeremy Taylor's comment on Heb. vi. 1f—'Here are six fundamental points of St. Paul's catechism, which he laid as the foundations or the beginning of the institution of the Christian Church; and amongst these imposition of hands is reckoned as part of the foundation, and therefore they who deny it dig up foundations.' After showing that the passage refers to confirmation, he concludes by saying 'He calls it "the doctrine of baptisms and laying on of hands" . . . hence it appears to be of Divine institution. For if it were not, St. Paul had been guilty of that which our blessed Saviour reproves in the Scribes and Pharisees, and should have "taught for doctrines the commandments of men." Which, because it cannot be supposed, it must follow that this doctrine of confirmation or imposition of hands is apostolical and Divine.'<sup>2</sup> This argument is worthy of note, even though the status of Confirmation is still a matter of debate.

(2) *Penance*. In the Primitive Church, baptized members who committed grievous sins were required to make public confession before the Church,<sup>3</sup> and were not given absolution until the penalty assigned had been fulfilled.<sup>4</sup> Such confession followed by absolution is known as Penance, but it lacks a visible sign or ceremony ordained of God, and cannot therefore be classed as a Sacrament of the Gospel, as defined in the Article.

(3) *Orders*, the rite by which men are admitted to the Ministry, has an outward sign—the laying on of hands, and an inward grace—the gift of the Spirit.<sup>5</sup> But we have no explicit evidence that the visible sign was instituted by our Lord.

<sup>1</sup>W. G. Wilson, *The Church Quarterly Review*, Vol. GLVII, Jan.–Mar., 1957, p. 35. The Article is reprinted in Appendix B on p. 232 below.

<sup>2</sup>Jeremy Taylor, *Discourse on Confirmation*, in Heber's *Works*, Vol. XI, p. 249ff. The argument is not weakened by the fact that modern scholars may not agree that St. Paul is the author of Hebrews.

<sup>3</sup>Jas. v.16.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. F. E. Warren, *Liturgy of the Celtic Church*, p. 148f., and cp. Article XXXIII.

<sup>5</sup>Acts vi.6; xiii.3; I Tim. iv.14; II Tim. i.6. Cf. Chapter VIII above.

(4) *Matrimony* is a state of life allowed (i.e., approved) in the Scriptures,<sup>1</sup> but it also lacks a visible sign ordained by Christ.

(5) *Extreme Unction* is a rite that has developed out of 'the corrupt following of the Apostles'. They anointed with oil for healing and forgiveness of sins,<sup>2</sup> and this rite is still observed in the Eastern Church. In the Western Church, however, it ceased to be used for physical healing, and re-appeared in the twelfth century as a sacramental rite used only for spiritual healing of persons at the point of death (Latin *in extremis*, hence the name Extreme Unction). But there is no evidence that our Lord instituted it, or that oil was intended to be 'an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.'

The Article concludes by emphasizing the right use of the Sacrament of Holy Communion.<sup>3</sup> It condemns Corpus Christi processions and the like.<sup>4</sup> '*The Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon or to be carried about: but that we should duly use them.*' In accord with the teaching of other Articles, it also stresses the need for human co-operation with the grace of God.<sup>5</sup> Hence, '*in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation: but they that receive them unworthily purchase to themselves damnation, as St. Paul saith.*' The allusion is to I Cor. xi.29 which reads (R.V.): 'He that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgement unto himself, if he discern not the Lord's Body.' The Greek text shows that 'judgement' (Gk. *krima*) here means *temporal* punishment sent

<sup>1</sup>Cf. p. 63 above.

<sup>2</sup>Mark vi.13; St. James v.14, 15; cf. I Cor. xii.9.

<sup>3</sup>The plural 'Sacraments were not . . .' must refer to the two Elements in Holy Communion. Obviously the entire paragraph refers only to the one Sacrament, for Holy Baptism is never 'carried about,' and the reference to unworthy reception linked with I Cor. xi.29 also refers only to Holy Communion. (Cp. 'The holy Sacraments of His blessed Body and Blood,'—Second Exhortation in *Communion Service*, 1552 Prayer Book).

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Article XXVIII. The Festival of Corpus Christi originated in the thirteenth century, in honour of the transubstantiation of the Elements.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. pp. 85, 114, above, etc.

by God to recall the careless to a sense of sin; it does not mean 'eternal punishment.'<sup>1</sup>

#### Article XXVI

#### OF THE UNWORTHINESS OF THE MINISTERS, WHICH HINDERS NOT THE EFFECT OF THE SACRAMENT<sup>2</sup>

Although in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometimes the evil have chief authority in the ministration of the Word and Sacraments, yet for as much as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ's, and do minister by His commission and authority, we may use their Ministry, both in hearing the Word of God, and in receiving of the Sacraments. Neither is the effect of Christ's ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such as by faith and rightly do receive the Sacraments ministered unto them; which be effectual, because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men.

Nevertheless, it appertaineth to the discipline of the Church, that enquiry be made of evil Ministers, and that they be accused by those that have knowledge of their offences; and finally being found guilty, by just judgement be deposed.

Nothing did more to prepare for the revolt of the Christian conscience against the ecclesiastical system on the eve of the

<sup>1</sup>J. K. Mozley expounds the text as meaning 'A man should examine himself to see if his attitude towards the Supper justifies his coming to it. For it is not a common meal; it is one in which the Lord's body is present to be discerned, that is, distinguished from ordinary food. If he does not so distinguish, then his eating and drinking involves the calling down of judgement upon himself . . . the judgements are disciplinary . . . they make for salvation, not for that condemnation to which the world, as alien from the Gospel, must at last be subjected.' (*A New Commentary on Holy Scripture*, S.P.C.K., p. 504.) Hence, 'unworthily' really refers to the worth of the Sacrament, as much as to the worthiness of the individual; to eat and drink 'unworthily' is to eat and drink without discerning the worth of the Lord's Body. Such participation is 'loss' (damnation).

<sup>2</sup>Derived from the Eighth Article of the Augsburg Confession, through the Thirteen Articles. The present title dates from 1571; in 1553 and 1563 it was 'The Wickedness of the Ministers doth not take away the Effectual Operation of God's Ordinances'.

Reformation than the reputation of the clergy, both regular and secular, for arrogance, avarice, immorality and worldliness. The people, who were entirely ignorant of the points discussed in scholastic philosophy, and had little interest in the theological issues of the Reformation controversy, knew about the widespread clerical degeneracy, and recognized its incompatibility with Christian conduct. This circumstance provides another example of how matters which led to heresy and schism in the early Church reappeared in the reaction against Romanism in the 16th century. The question at issue was: Does a Minister's character influence the validity and effectiveness of his spiritual ministrations? Can the grace of Word and Sacrament be communicated to the people by a wicked Priest?

In the 4th century a dispute occurred over the appointment of one Caecilianus to the See of Carthage; his character was suspect and his consecrator, Felix of Aptunga, was accused of being a traditor<sup>1</sup>. The chief objector to the appointment was Donatus who contended that if it was allowed, all the Church's ordinances, including the Sacraments, would be invalid. The powerful opponent of the Donatists was St. Augustine who argued that their criticism rested on the doctrine of perfection; unless ordination conferred sinlessness there was no difference in this respect between the clergy and the laity; all share in the common sinfulness; it is only a question of degree: 'It does not matter to the integrity of Baptism, how much worse he is who administers it. For there is not so much distinction between the bad and the worse, as between the good and the bad. And yet when a bad man baptizes, he gives nothing other than a good man does.' St. Chrysostom, a contemporary of St. Augustine, says much the same; he points out the injustice of thinking that those who receive in faith the symbols of our salvation should be injured on account of another's wickedness. The great precursor of the English Reformation, Wycliffe (1324-1384), belonged to the rigorist tradition, and the Council of Constance (1415) which condemned his teaching, alleged against him the belief that 'if a Bishop or Priest

<sup>1</sup>One who during the terrible Diocletian persecution had obeyed the Imperial Order to hand over the sacred Christian books for destruction.

live in mortal sin, he ordaineth not, he baptizeth not, he consecrateth not'. Had he lived in Reformation times, Wycliffe would, on this point, have been on the side of the fanatical sects whose view is rejected in our Article. Many of the modern sects go even further than the Donatists; unless a Minister follows the rigorist tradition and also holds their particular narrow doctrine of salvation, they would deny the validity and effectiveness of any of his ministration of Word or Sacraments—even to the extent of re-baptizing those who have been baptized by an ordained Minister of the Church.

The Article declares that since the Ministry is of Christ's institution, its members bear His Commission, act in His Name, and on His authority; so that the validity of their ministrations in Word and Sacraments rests on His appointment, and not on their character: *'Neither is the effect of Christ's ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such as by faith and rightly do receive the Sacraments ministered unto them; which be effectual, because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men.'* This is the normal relation between executive and administrative authority in civil affairs also. If sacramental grace depended on the moral perfection of the priesthood, the fact of man's universal sinfulness would make its ministration impossible. It is a typical mistake of religious extremists to concentrate on the ideal and adopt impracticable, unrealistic opinions; they are impatient with the present state of things and like the servants in the Parable of the Tares,<sup>1</sup> want to remove the evil element immediately; they cannot wait in hope till 'that which is perfect is come'. As we saw in Article XIX, the Apostolic writers of the New Testament cling to the paradox that the Church both is the Body of Christ and also consists of sinful and fallible members. Articles XII and XIV also emphasize that even man's best efforts to do good are tainted with imperfection.

All the important Protestant Confessions as well as the Roman Church are in substantial agreement with the teaching of the Article, which has also the support of Scripture. In

<sup>1</sup>Mtt. xiii.24-30, 47ff.; xxii.10.

spite of their hypocrisy, Jesus allows that the Scribes and Pharisees are the accredited interpreters of the Law and commands obedience to their teaching.<sup>1</sup> It is not the preacher or instructor that counts, according to St. Paul, but God's blessing on the word spoken<sup>2</sup>; whether Christ is proclaimed out of envy and strife or sincerely and of goodwill, the important thing is that in either case He is proclaimed<sup>3</sup>.

The need of discipline for offending Ministers, referred to in the concluding part of the Article, is obvious. Clearly it is appropriate that God's 'Priests should be clothed with righteousness'.<sup>4</sup> Christian living has always been the Church's strongest apologetic and appeal; the believer ought to be distinguishable by his conduct. Although the ordinances of Christ when administered by an unworthy Priest do not cease to be channels of grace to the faithful soul, still the Minister's personal influence for good and his Christlike example go together. The Article therefore stresses that though the grace of God is independent of an evil ministry, yet the Church must exercise discipline to exclude evil Ministers<sup>5</sup>. It was originally directed against the Anabaptists who refused to come to Holy Communion if they considered the Minister<sup>6</sup> was living in sin. Scholars differ as to whether the Article was directed also against the Roman Catholic doctrine of Intention<sup>7</sup>, but it does effectively repudiate that doctrine too.

<sup>1</sup>Mtt. xxiii.2f.

<sup>2</sup>I Cor. iii.5, 6.

<sup>3</sup>Phil. i.15-18.

<sup>4</sup>Ps. cxxxii.9.

<sup>5</sup>I Tim. v.20, 22 (R.V.).

<sup>6</sup>Throughout the Article, and in its title, 'Minister' is used as including the three Orders. A Deacon may minister Holy Baptism, and the Celebrant at Holy Communion may be either a Priest or a Bishop (or Archbishop).

<sup>7</sup>The Council of Trent declared that the validity of the Sacraments depends on the Celebrant having the intention 'of doing what the Church does'. But such a doctrine makes the Sacraments depend not only on the moral character of the Minister, but also on his caprice. We could never be sure whether he was ministering a true Sacrament or not.

## Article XXVII

OF BAPTISM<sup>1</sup>

Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is also a sign of Regeneration or New Birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly are grafted into the Church; the promises of the forgiveness of sins, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; Faith is confirmed, and Grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God. The Baptism of young Children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ.

Baptism is a subject which presents difficulties to many and has caused much controversy and discord amongst Christians. For the modern mind, where Baptism is not '*only a sign of profession, and mark of difference*', but an effective means of grace, the problem is principally that of relating the form of the Sacrament to its results; the use of water seems to some people an inadequate '*instrument*' of spiritual regeneration or New Birth. But in order to see Baptism in its true perspective, it must be considered in relation to the Church into which we are '*grafted*' by it. God has in Christ entered into a new relationship with mankind; He has inaugurated a New Covenant, and the Church is the people of this New Covenant, or the New Israel. By sharing in this new relationship believers are 'begotten again'<sup>2</sup>; they are a new creation.<sup>3</sup> As the '*instrument*' of initiation into this new kind of existence, Baptism is the means whereby God performs a divine creative act; it is the 'washing of regeneration'<sup>4</sup>; and precisely for this reason the bearing of the form of the Sacrament on its effects is likely to elude our understanding.

<sup>1</sup>Composed by the English Reformers in 1552 to contradict the Anabaptists, Zwinglians, and others who regarded Baptism as a mere badge or token of admission into the Church. The Anabaptists also opposed Infant Baptism.

<sup>2</sup>I Pet. i.3; Jn. i.13.

<sup>3</sup>II Cor. v.17.

<sup>4</sup>Titus iii.5.

There is an interesting analogy here between religion and science. We have already noticed that the distinctive Christian conception of God, the Trinity, is the interpretation of spiritual experience within the Church; similarly scientific theories and laws explain in mathematical terms man's experience of the physical world. Taking a given set of conditions in the course of Nature, the scientist's aim is to trace physical equivalence between it and the one which immediately follows. But when he is led to think of conditions outside the process itself, like the state of matter in space before the world-process began, he has reached a point beyond which scientific method cannot take him. If the question is put: how did this pre-cosmic existence come to be, and how did it give rise to the new condition of the world-process, the physicist is not in a position to affirm or deny anything; he can only assume these things, he cannot explain them. It is religious faith which penetrates behind phenomena, and declares its assurance of the dependence of all things on the divine will: 'God said, Let there be . . . and it was so'; 'He spake and it was done; he commanded and they were created'; 'by faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God'<sup>1</sup>.

It should not be deemed utterly improbable, therefore, that the manner of our entrance into God's new spiritual creation in Christ, the life of the Church, would equally baffle natural reason. Baptism has no rationale either of form or meaning; it is a pure origin, in face of which it can only be said: 'This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes'.<sup>2</sup> From the beginning Baptism had a universal observance, which only the Lord's command could have secured for it; it was the indispensable form of admission to the Church<sup>3</sup>.

The declaration in the Article that the Sacrament of Holy Baptism was 'ordained' by our Lord has sometimes been challenged on the ground that the words in St. Matthew xxviii.19 represent a later tradition rather than the *ipsissima*

<sup>1</sup>Gen. i.; Ps. xxxiii.9; Heb. xi.3.

<sup>2</sup>Ps. cxviii.23.

<sup>3</sup>Mtt. xxviii.19; Mk. xvi.16; Jn. iii.5; Acts ii.38; viii.12; xxii.16.

*verba* of Jesus.<sup>1</sup> But at least the passage indicates that when the First Gospel was written (c. 85 A.D.), Christian Baptism was believed to have the full authority of Jesus behind it. That conviction is supported by several other considerations of importance: (i) If Jesus did not institute this Sacrament, the very early practice of Baptism by the Apostles after the Day of Pentecost is inexplicable.<sup>2</sup> It cannot be a mere continuation of John's Baptism, for he did not baptize 'in the name of John', or associate the Spirit with Baptism. Furthermore, would the disciples continue a custom peculiar to John, without express instructions from our Lord? Nor were they merely continuing the Jewish practice of baptizing Gentile converts (called proselyte-baptism). A Jew would have been insulted if he had been asked to submit to proselyte-baptism. Obviously the Jewish converts to Christianity did not equate Christian Baptism with proselyte-baptism, or they would not have accepted it so readily.<sup>3</sup> (ii) In I Corinthians x.1-4 St. Paul, referring to the Old Testament types of the two Sacraments, shows that he bracketed Holy Baptism and Holy Communion together as of equal status. He then proceeds to show that the significance of the latter is derived from its close connection with our Lord.<sup>4</sup> Would he have linked it so closely with Baptism if it was not also of our Lord? (iii) The significance of Baptism occupies an important place in the teaching of the Apostles, and they show a unity of thought on the subject,<sup>5</sup> which suggests a common authoritative source in the teaching of Jesus himself. The cumulative effect of all these considerations, supported by the references to Christian Baptism in the Gospels<sup>6</sup>, can only adequately be explained by accepting

<sup>1</sup>Some of the main arguments are (i) If St. Matt. xxviii.19 represents Christ's words, why did the early Christians baptize 'in the Name of the Lord Jesus' (Acts viii.16); and (ii) the words do not occur in the parallel passages in Mk. xvi.15-18; Lk. xxiv.44-49; Jn. xx.21-23. But the argument from silence is always precarious. Is the Parable of the Prodigal Son to be rejected because it is only mentioned by St. Luke? For arguments against St. Matt. xx.iii.19, cf. W. F. Flemington, *The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism*, pp. 105-109.

<sup>2</sup>Acts ii.38.

<sup>3</sup>Acts ii.41.

<sup>4</sup>I Cor. x.16ff.

<sup>5</sup>W. F. Flemington, *Op. cit.*, p. 129.

<sup>6</sup>Jn. iii.5; iv.1f.; Mtt. xxviii.19.

the tradition that the Sacrament has, in fact, the authority of our Lord behind it.

Each of the two Sacraments of the Gospel has 'an outward and visible sign . . . ordained by Christ' as a means whereby we receive an inward and spiritual grace, and in each the outward and visible sign is a pledge to assure us of the spiritual grace given in the Sacrament<sup>1</sup>. In Holy Baptism, the outward visible sign or form is 'Water: wherein the person is baptized *In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*'.<sup>2</sup> The words used are as much a part of the sign as is the water. It is an 'effectual sign'<sup>3</sup> which not only distinguishes Christians from those who have not been christened, but is 'also a sign of *Regeneration or new Birth*<sup>4</sup>, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly (i.e., correctly, in the prescribed manner<sup>5</sup>) are grafted into the Church'. The Church being the Body of Christ<sup>6</sup>, it follows that in Baptism we become 'members of Christ'<sup>7</sup>. The Sacrament also visibly 'signs and seals' the 'promises of forgiveness of sin<sup>8</sup>, and of our adoption to be the sons of God'<sup>9</sup>. Originally having been 'born in sin', and therefore deserving of God's wrath<sup>10</sup>, by Baptism we become 'children of grace'. Hence the Church declares that 'children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved'<sup>11</sup>. The Catechism and Articles thus assert that Baptism both signifies and effects a cleansing from sin and a new birth or regeneration to spiritual life through incorporation into Christ.

<sup>1</sup>Catechism, questions on Sacraments.

<sup>2</sup>Catechism, in loc.

<sup>3</sup>Article XXV.

<sup>4</sup>Tit. iii.5; Jn. iii.3, 5; Catechism: 'a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness'.

<sup>5</sup>The Latin text is *recte*, which refers to the necessity of the right form being used—water in the name of the Trinity, the universally acknowledged requirements for a valid Sacrament of Holy Baptism. In Article XXV the word *dignum* (worthily) is used to describe the inward disposition required in the recipient of Holy Communion.

<sup>6</sup>Ephes. iv.15f.; i.22f.; Rom. xii.4f.; I Cor. xii.27, cf. Article XIX, p. 121.

<sup>7</sup>Catechism (Answer 2), I Cor. xii.27, Latin *membrum*, a limb.

<sup>8</sup>Acts ii.38; xxii.16; Nicene Creed; First Prayer in Baptismal Office.

<sup>9</sup>Gal. iv.5f.; Rom. viii.15.

<sup>10</sup>Catechism (Ans. 5 on Sacraments), Cf. Article IX above, p. 65.

<sup>11</sup>Rubric following *Public Baptism of Infants*.

Since the Church is the visible, social organ of the regenerating action of Christ, those 'grafted' into it by Baptism are reborn into a new order of existence; they have died to their sinful past<sup>1</sup>, have 'put away . . . the old man'<sup>2</sup>, and 'put on Christ'<sup>3</sup>, so that now they belong to the heavenly commonwealth<sup>4</sup>. Corresponding to their participation in a new life, believers have conferred upon them a new status; they are no longer bondservants under law, but sons of God by the grace of adoption<sup>5</sup>. The break with former conditions and the fresh start imply the realization of the divine promise of forgiveness of sins, which has always been closely connected with Baptism<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, the faith by which the promises of God are believed is confirmed when their fulfilment is experienced: 'The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the sons of God'<sup>7</sup>. And the grace also, whereby men accept the Gospel, is increased when they come to know the presence and power of 'the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus<sup>8</sup>, that began at Baptism.

On the question of Infant Baptism the real issue is whether infants are capable of receiving spiritual blessing, and the decisive consideration is the words and example of Jesus<sup>9</sup>. In welcoming the children<sup>10</sup> and laying His hands upon them, Jesus' action was either an effective communication of His goodwill to them or an empty gesture. The Church's interpretation of the incident is the natural one; infants are proper recipients of grace; He blessed them, and they received a blessing.

<sup>1</sup>The N.E.B. translation of Rom. vi. makes this very clear: 'We died to sin: how can we live in it any longer? Have you forgotten that when we were baptized into union with Christ Jesus we were baptized into His death? By baptism we were buried with Him, and lay dead, in order that, as Christ was raised from the dead in the splendour of the Father, so also we might set our feet upon the new path of life.'

<sup>2</sup>Eph. iv.22.

<sup>3</sup>Gal. iii.27.

<sup>4</sup>Phil. iii.20.

<sup>5</sup>Gal. iv.5f.; iii.26f.; Rom. viii.15; Eph. i.5.

<sup>6</sup>Acts ii.38.

<sup>7</sup>Rom. viii.16.

<sup>8</sup>Rom. viii.2.

<sup>9</sup>Mk. x.13-16.

<sup>10</sup>Gk. *brephoi* (babes) in St. Luke. xviii.15.

By admitting them to membership, the Church imparted to them the greatest blessing it had to bestow. Circumcision, the rite of initiation under the Old Covenant was administered when children were eight days old, and the custom could hardly have failed to influence the first Jewish Christians in their treatment of children under the New Covenant. Had infant Baptism not been practised from the beginning because it was contrary to Christian teaching, then surely its introduction at a later date must have occasioned controversy; the silence of Church history on any such debate can only mean that children had always been baptized.

The Article declares that '*The Baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ*'. Despite strong Scriptural evidence in support of Infant Baptism<sup>1</sup>, however, the practice has been opposed by those who confuse 'regeneration' with 'conversion'. Regeneration means being 'born again' and is an act of God is Baptism<sup>2</sup>. Conversion is an act of man's own will; every time we repent of a sin a fresh 'turning' or act of the will should follow, by which we determine, by God's grace, to amend our ways. Bishop Jeremy Taylor well expressed the necessity of baptizing Infants: 'Besides the natural birth of infants, there must be something added, by which they must be reckoned in a new account; they must be born again, they must be reckoned in Christ, they must be adopted to the inheritance, and admitted to the promise, and entitled to the Spirit. Now that this is done ordinarily in baptism, is not to be denied: for therefore it is called 'the font or laver of regeneration'; it is the gate of the Church, it is the solemnity of our admission to the covenant evangelical; and if infants cannot go to heaven by the first or natural birth, then they must go by a second and supernatural: and since there is no other solemnity or sacrament, no way of being born again, that we know of, but by the way of God's appointing, and He hath appointed baptism, and all that are born again are born this way, even men of

<sup>1</sup>A full statement of the evidence is given by W. G. Wilson in *Church Teaching* p. 70f.

<sup>2</sup>Jn. i.13; iii.3, 5; Jas. i.18; Tit. iii.5; I Pet. i.3, 23.



reason who have or can receive the Spirit, being to enter at the door of baptism—it follows that infants must also enter here, or we cannot say that they are entered at all<sup>1</sup>.

### Article XXVIII

#### OF THE LORD'S SUPPER<sup>2</sup>

The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another; but rather it is a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's death: insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith, receive the same, the Bread which we break is a partaking of the Body of Christ; and likewise the Cup of Blessing is a partaking of the Blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of Bread and Wine) in the Supper of The Lord cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.

The aspect of the Lord's Supper referred to in the opening words of the Article, by which it is a symbol of the mutual love among Christians, was most evident when the Sacrament was celebrated as part of the proceedings of the Agape or love-Feasts held in the Primitive Church. At those meetings the poor received of the bounty of the rich; indeed their very purpose was to express the one-ness and common fellowship of

<sup>1</sup>The Liberty of Prophesying, in Heber's Works, XVIII, Ad. 5., p. 400.

<sup>2</sup>Drawn up by the English Reformers in 1552, but significantly revised in 1562 by adding 'perverteth the nature of a Sacrament', and by omitting the reference to the "real Presence" (see footnote 2, page 197). In 1571 'perverteth' was changed to 'overthroweth'.

believers in Christ. But primarily the Lord's Supper is a Sacrament by which our Lord's words in St. John vi.52-57 about feeding upon Him are realized. The earliest record of the Words of Institution is in I Corinthians xi.24, 25, and St. Paul claims the authority of Christ's revelation to him for his version. According to this, Jesus at the Last Supper 'took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you . . . In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This is the new Covenant in my blood'. The accounts in the Synoptic Gospels<sup>1</sup> are in substantial agreement with St. Paul's; Jesus describes the Bread and Wine which He gives to His disciples as His Body and Blood. In what sense are the Lord's words to be understood? How are the elements in the Eucharist related to the Body and Blood of Christ? It is an ironical reflection that at the Reformation this supreme act of the Church's worship, which should have been the highest expression of Christian unity, was the centre of conflict; on no question was there wider divergence of opinion than on the presence of Christ in the Sacrament.

The Zwinglian view, which stressed the injunction: 'This do in remembrance of Me', and regarded the bread and wine as mere figures, and the Lord's Supper as nothing more than a commemoration, or a reminder of the Lord's Cross and Passion, is rejected in the first part of the Article. Those who communicate '*rightly, worthily, and with faith*', truly participate in Christ's Body and Blood.

Next, the Roman conception of Transubstantiation, which goes to the other extreme by identifying the elements with the Body and Blood of our Lord's incarnate organism is equally denied, because (a) it is contrary to Scripture—the consecrated bread is still called 'bread', and the consecrated wine is still 'this cup' in I Corinthians xi.26-28; (b) it overthrows the nature of a Sacrament which, on our definition, consists of two parts, the sign and the grace: it belongs to the idea of a Sacrament that they should be distinct and not equated. And their distinction depends on the ultimate

<sup>1</sup>Mk. xiv.22-24; Matt. xxvi.26-28; Lk. xxii.19, 20.

relation between God and creation. Nature is not God, but it expresses and mediates His presence and attributes: 'the heavens declare the glory of God'<sup>1</sup>, and 'the invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity'<sup>2</sup>. By changing the *substance* of the elements, so that they become the actual Body and Blood of Christ, Transubstantiation annuls their symbolic function; the bread and wine are no longer signs, but the thing itself, and thus the nature of a Sacrament is overthrown; Further (c), the doctrine has '*given occasion to many superstitions*'; for instance, in the 9th century Paschasius Radbert recounted miracles in which drops of blood flowed from the consecrated Host as the form of the infant Christ appeared!

The teaching of the Article is in agreement with the sacramental principle; natural things can and do convey the divine Presence to receptive hearts and minds. Hence it rejects, on the one hand, the belief that the bread and wine in the Eucharist are mere forms, without grace, and on the other, that by consecration their own substance is replaced by that of the things they denote, and so they cease to be signs; a sign cannot signify what it is. The Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Communion is affirmed in the first section of our Article, and in the third the nature of that Presence, and how it is made available to us, is stated.

The teaching of the Article should be compared with the very clear and concise statement of Eucharistic doctrine in the Catechism, which affirms:

(1) That the Sacrament was ordained 'for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby';

(2) That the 'outward part or sign' is 'Bread and Wine which the Lord hath commanded to be received';

(3) That the 'inward part or thing signified' is 'the Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful';

<sup>1</sup>Ps. xix. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Rom. i. 20, cf. Acts xiv. 17.

(4) That 'the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby are the strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the Bread and Wine';

(5) That intending communicants should 'examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of His death; and be in charity with all men.'<sup>1</sup>

In 1878 the Church of Ireland, to satisfy some objectors, added another question to the Catechism with an answer taken from paragraph three of the Article,<sup>2</sup> declaring that the Body and Blood of Christ are only taken and received in the Lord's Supper '*after a heavenly and spiritual manner*', and that 'the mean whereby they are taken and received is faith'. This clause is by some asserted to be a repudiation of the doctrine of the Real Presence in the Eucharist; but others declare that it is merely a denial of Christ's corporal presence in the Elements.

Much controversy has arisen around the question as to whether Christ is objectively present in the Sacrament, or merely subjectively present in the faithful recipient. Those who hold the former view assert that Christ, Who is present in the Sacrament, 'imparts to the communicant His Body and Blood, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful'. Here is an objective gift which is not made by our faith because it is 'given before we receive it'. Our Lord offers in the Sacrament the gift of Himself; He gives, we take

<sup>1</sup>Cf. the Article, which requires us to receive the Sacrament 'rightly, worthily, and with faith' (*rite, digne, et cum fide*), where *rite* means 'right matter and form' and *digne* means 'right inward disposition'.

<sup>2</sup>The present paragraph was substituted for the original one, which denied the 'real' Presence of Christ in the Sacrament: 'Forasmuch as . . . the body of one and the selfsame man can not be at one time in diverse places . . . therefore the body of Christ can not be present at one time in many and diverse places And because (as Holy Scripture doth teach) Christ was taken up into heaven, and there shall continue unto the end of the world, a faithful man ought not either to believe, or openly confess the *real* and bodily presence (as they term it) of Christ's flesh and blood, in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.' The significance of the change is still a matter of debate. Some argue that no change of doctrine was intended (Dimcock, *Papers on the Eucharistic Presence*, p. 732); other regard the present form as accepting the Real Presence, and denying only 'the corporal presence of Christ's natural flesh and blood' (E. J. Bicknell, *Op. cit.* p. 383).

and receive by faith. He has taken the Elements into mystical union with Himself, and made them the vehicle of imparting His life to His members. Thus He is in a real sense present not only in the devout communicant but in the consecrated Elements. The presence, however, is 'spiritual' not 'corporal' or 'bodily', but it is none the less real on that account. Hence to receive the Body and Blood of Christ does not mean to receive physical and spatial objects, but to receive His life into ourselves 'that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us'. In substance, the Elements remain bread and wine. But they are no longer ordinary bread and wine, for by them God '*doth work invisibly in us*'. The language of the Prayer Book and Articles certainly lends considerable support to this interpretation.

The history of Christian doctrine shows how realistically the Words of Institution were interpreted in the Primitive Church. The emphasis on the Eucharistic Presence is so strong among early Church writers that their language might sometimes be mistakenly thought to support the belief in Transubstantiation. Because they bring about the believers' union with Christ, Ignatius calls the Elements in the Holy Communion 'the medicine of immortality'<sup>1</sup>, and Irenaeus tells us how they have their effect: 'Just as the bread, which comes from the earth, when it receives the invocation of God, being composed of two elements, a terrestrial and a celestial one, so our bodies are no longer commonplace when they receive the Eucharist, since they have the hope of resurrection to eternity'<sup>2</sup>. Augustine explained that the Lord's Supper is a proper Sacrament, since in the bread and the cup 'one thing is seen, another understood'<sup>3</sup>. 'The Body and Blood of Christ will then be life to each, if what is visibly taken in the Sacrament be in very truth spiritually eaten, spiritually drunk.'<sup>4</sup>

Those who dislike the objective view of the Sacrament, generally hold the Receptionist view. They believe that 'though the Body and Blood of the Lord are really received

<sup>1</sup>*Epistle to the Ephesians, xx.2.*

<sup>2</sup>*Adv. Haer. iv.34.*

<sup>3</sup>*Sermons 272. 2, Ad Infantes.*

<sup>4</sup>*Sermon 2 De Verbis Apostoli.*

by the faithful in the Lord's Supper, yet their presence is real in the hearts of the recipients only, and not in the Elements prior to reception. According to this doctrine the consecrated bread and wine are said to be the Lord's Body and Blood only in a figure'<sup>1</sup>. Dr. Bicknell asserts that there is nothing in the Prayer Book to prevent an Anglican from holding the Receptionist theory. Bishop McAdoo, on the other hand, declares that 'it certainly seems that the Church in her liturgy stresses beyond cavil the objectivity of the gift'<sup>2</sup>. In the absence of any authoritative statement by the Anglican Church on the subject, we may conclude that both the objective and subjective theories of the Real Presence may be held and taught in our Communion. On this subject, the Faith and Order Theological Commission declared, 'It is necessary to guard against language which is occasionally used, which suggests that the only requisite for a valid Sacrament is the faith of the recipient, and ignores completely the divine action. We experience the benefits of a Sacrament, they are not made efficacious by our experience'<sup>3</sup>. The Commission accepted the doctrine of the Real Presence, though they held different views as to how the Presence is realized and manifested in the Sacraments.

#### Article XXIX

#### OF THE WICKED WHICH DO NOT EAT THE BODY OF CHRIST IN THE USE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The wicked, and such as be void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth (as St. Augustine saith) the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ, yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ; but rather, to their condemnation do eat and drink the sign or Sacrament of so great a thing.

<sup>1</sup>Commission's Report on *Doctrine in the Church of England* (1938), p. 169.

<sup>2</sup>H. R. McAdoo, *No New Church*, 1945, p. 26

<sup>3</sup>*The Ministry and the Sacraments* (1937), p. 27.

The teaching of this Article follows from paragraph three of the previous one. If the Body and Blood of Christ, symbolized by the bread and wine, are spiritually discerned and received by faith, then *'the wicked, and such as be void of a lively faith'* cannot be partakers of Christ. Only where His presence is regarded physically by being identified with the Elements, as in Transubstantiation, is the reception of Him independent of the communicant's spiritual state. 'The Wicked' is a strong term; its Latin equivalent, *impii*, does not refer to earnest, though morally faulty, persons; it means rather those who are indifferent and irreligious, and without a consciousness of God have become flagrant evil-doers.

The Catechism describes the right approach to the Lord's Supper; those who come are required 'to examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life . . .' In the same spirit St. Paul admonishes the Corinthians to make their attendance at the Lord's Table an occasion for sober reflection<sup>1</sup>.

Belief in the Son is the great formula in St. John for gaining eternal life; but this includes the eating of His Flesh and the drinking of His Blood<sup>2</sup>. If the feeding on Him spoken of by our Lord in St. John vi has a special reference to the Sacrament, then partaking of Him in this way depends on faith in Him.

St. Paul's statement that the unworthy communicant is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord<sup>3</sup>, may be interpreted in two ways, according to the view taken of Christ's presence in the Eucharist. Where it is understood to be spiritual, he does not partake of Christ at all; but by profaning so sacred a mystery, he incurs judgement against himself; while on the doctrine of Transubstantiation, although he eats and drinks the Body and Blood, it is to condemnation, and not to salvation.

For the sake of simplicity, the Eucharist has been considered as having three parts, viz.: the *signum*, or bread and wine, received by the faithful and unfaithful alike; the *Res* or Body

and Blood of Christ, offered to all alike; and the *Virtus Sacramenti* or the 'benefits' of the Sacrament, of which only the faithful are partakers.<sup>1</sup> St. Augustine in his Twenty-sixth Homily on St. John says: 'He who does not abide in Christ and in whom Christ does not abide, undoubtedly does not (spiritually) eat His flesh nor drink His Blood (though he may visibly and carnally press with his teeth the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ), but rather eateth and drinketh the Sacrament of so great a thing to his own condemnation.'<sup>2</sup> In general, the traditional Christian view about the effective use of the Lord's Supper presupposes that the communicant is already 'in Christ', and thinks and lives as a true member of His mystical Body, the Church. This is the point in I Corinthians xi.29; through conduct contrary to the spirit of the Christian fellowship, i.e. 'if he discern not the body', a man 'eateth and drinketh judgement unto himself'. St. Hilary (360 A.D.) says: 'The bread that came down from heaven is not taken except by him who has the Lord, and is a member of Christ'.<sup>3</sup> 'We consume bread', writes Origen, 'which by virtue of the prayer has become a body, a holy thing which sanctifies those who use it with a sound purpose'<sup>4</sup>. And St. Augustine makes this comment on St. John vi.56: 'Here our Lord shows what it is, not only sacramentally, but really, to eat Christ's Body and to drink His Blood, even to dwell in Christ, and Christ in him. And He said this, as much as to say, Let not him who abides not in Me and I in him say or think that he eats my flesh or drinks my blood'<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Heb. iii.14.

<sup>2</sup>The Benedictine editors regarded the words bracketed as interpolations.

<sup>3</sup>*On the Trinity*, viii.

<sup>4</sup>*Against Celsus*, viii.33.

<sup>5</sup>*On the City of God*, xxi.25. Article XXIX was drafted in 1563 to emphasize the necessity of a lively faith and to guard against unworthy participation of the Sacrament. It was not published immediately, however. The delay was partly due to a desire to conciliate Roman Catholics who were still in communion with the Church of England. When the Pope excommunicated Elizabeth I and the English people in 1570, and urged her subjects to help to dethrone her, it would have been futile to hope for further conciliation. The Article was published in 1571.

<sup>1</sup>Cor. xi.28.

<sup>2</sup>Jn. vi.54.

<sup>3</sup>I Cor. xi.27.

## Article XXX

OF BOTH KINDS<sup>1</sup>

The Cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the Lay-people: for both the parts of the Lord's Sacrament, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be ministered to all Christian men alike.

The error repudiated by this Article, the depriving of the congregation of the Cup in the Holy Communion, is one peculiar to the Roman Church. The Orthodox Greek and other Eastern Churches, as well as the Protestant and Reformed Churches, all administer the Sacrament in both bread and wine. The root of the Roman custom lies in the doctrine of Transubstantiation. It is, of course, very proper that the mediating signs of the Lord's Body and Blood should be highly esteemed and reverently treated, as a rubric at the end of the Communion Office provides; but if it is believed that the Elements are converted into the very Body and Blood of Christ, a special dread will attach to their misuse, either deliberately or by accident.

The initial step in withholding the cup from the laity was taken in the practice of dipping the bread in the wine that began in the 7th century, and was condemned by the Third Council of Bracara (675 A.D.). But for centuries there was no uniform rule on the question.

In 1095 the Council of Clermont decreed that all should communicate in both kinds, unless for some reason it should be otherwise. It was first laid down by the Council of Constance in 1415 that communion in the bread only by lay-people was sufficient, on the ground that the substance of each Element was included in the other. At the same time it was conceded that the practice was an innovation, and without authority in Scripture or Primitive practice: 'Although Christ instituted this Sacrament in both kinds, and the faithful in the primitive Church received in both kinds; yet the contrary practice being

<sup>1</sup>One of the 1563 Articles, due to Archbishop Parker, and drawn up in reply to the decisions of the Council of Trent confirming the mediaeval practice of Communion in one kind.

reasonably brought in to avoid some danger and scandal, they appoint the custom to continue of consecrating in both kinds, and of giving to the laity only in one kind, since Christ was entire and truly contained under each kind' (Session xiii). In 1562 the Council of Trent confirmed this doctrine of concomitance—'that Christ, whole and entire. the fountain and author of all graces, is received under the one species of bread', and followed the Council of Constance in withholding the Chalice from the laity. This Article was composed in reply by Archbishop Parker in 1563. The reasons given by the Council were: 'The risk of spilling the precious Blood; the difficulties of reserving Communion under the species of wine; the dread of drinking from a chalice touched by infected lips; the cost of obtaining wine for thousands of communicants'. But such reasons of expediency hardly justify the abandonment of a principle established from Apostolic times. Roman apologists defend their denial of the Chalice to anyone save the Celebrant<sup>1</sup> by citing the Revised Version of I Corinthians xi.27: 'Whosoever shall eat the bread *or* drink the cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body *and* blood of the Lord'. But the context makes it clear that no special significance is to be attached to the word 'or' for each recipient is expected to 'eat this bread *and* drink this cup'<sup>2</sup>. This was clearly the intention of our Lord when He said 'Drink ye all of it,'<sup>3</sup> and according to St. Mark 'they all drank of it'<sup>4</sup>. Even if only the Apostles were present, and they are all regarded as being Priests, the Roman practice is still without support because in the Mass the Celebrant alone partakes of both kinds; the other clergy present are ranked with the laity and only receive the consecrated Bread. St. Paul's words in I Corinthians xi.27-29 refer to the members of the Corinthian Church in general, as do those of x.16, 21: 'ye cannot drink

<sup>1</sup>Laymen, and clerics when not celebrating, are not obliged by any divine precept to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist under both Kinds'. (Council of Trent, Session XXI, Ch.1).

<sup>2</sup>In addition to vv.24 and 25, note the statement in v.26, and the words of v.28: 'so let him eat of the bread, *and* drink of the cup,' and in v.29: 'he that eateth *and* drinketh', which make the intention quite clear.

<sup>3</sup>Mt. xxvi.27.

<sup>4</sup>Mk. xiv.23.

the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils'. The testimony of early Church authors is to the same effect. St. Ignatius writes to the Christians in Philadelphia: 'Be ye careful to observe one Eucharist (for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ and one cup into union in His blood)'.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Justin Martyr relates that 'the deacons gave to each one present to receive of the bread, over which thanks had been offered, and of wine mixed with water'.<sup>2</sup>

While we acknowledge that the Church has '*power to decree Rites and Ceremonies*'<sup>3</sup>, she has no right to authorize anything that is '*contrary to God's Word written*', and therefore no right to deny the Chalice to the laity. Our Lord at the institution of the Sacrament linked the Cup with the shedding of His blood<sup>4</sup>, and this reference is preserved in the Anglican Words of Administration, but is lost if the Chalice is denied to the laity. Earlier, in the 5th century, Pope Leo ordered that certain Manichaeans should be excommunicated for refusing to drink the Cup; at that period its non-reception was regarded as heretical! Pope Paschall II in 1118 also condemned the practice of communicating in one Kind. For the first six centuries the Bread and the Chalice were administered separately to all the Faithful, and it is a serious charge against the Church of Rome that by a precaution inspired by the erroneous doctrine of Transubstantiation she had mutilated the ordinance of Christ and contravened early Church practice.

<sup>1</sup>*Ep. to the Philadelphians*, C.4. The words bracketed are a later insertion, and therefore evidence for communion in both Kinds after Ignatius' day.

<sup>2</sup>*Apol.* i.65.

<sup>3</sup>Article XX.

<sup>4</sup>Lk. xxii.20.

Article XXXI<sup>1</sup>

## OF THE ONE OBLATION OF CHRIST FINISHED UPON THE CROSS

The Offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction, for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin, but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of Masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the Priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits.

It will have been noticed on reading the Articles that sometimes authority for the doctrine contained in them is given in a phrase like, 'As St. Paul saith', 'as the Apostle confesseth', or 'as St. Augustine saith'. For this Article it might be claimed with even greater force: 'as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews saith'. Both in language and idea the positive teaching of the first part of the Article is all there, and from it the concluding condemnation of 'the sacrifices of Masses' follows. Again it is a corruption of the Roman Church, based on the belief in Transubstantiation, which is rejected.

Under Article XV we saw that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews tries to present the Christian Faith from the standpoint of one of the great schools of Greek philosophy, that of Plato. Central in Plato's thought is the theory of two worlds, one of which is the invisible, eternal, unchanging order of perfect things, and the other the movement and striving of all that is incomplete and imperfect in our world of sense and time. 'The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal'<sup>2</sup>; this statement of St. Paul's conveniently expresses the dual view of existence in Platonism. But the two worlds are not entirely unrelated; on the contrary, the present scene depends upon the higher world for whatever

<sup>1</sup>One of the Forty-two Articles of 1553. The word *blasphema* was inserted in the Latin version of 1563, but 'blasphemous' did not appear in the English version until 1571; 'forged fables' was used in 1563 English version.

<sup>2</sup>II Cor. iv.18.

order and meaning it has: the eternal realm is ever seeking to penetrate and embody itself in the things of time. Yet it never altogether succeeds; if it did, then that which is perfect would have come, with its emotional accompaniment of utter satisfaction, and the reason for change and effort would be removed. So everything in experience and history is imperfect; only in a measure does it contain the full Reality to which it is a pointer.

It is, therefore, on the strength of his faith in the Person of Christ, and not on his Platonism, that the writer of the Epistle affirms that perfection has appeared. As the Son of God, Jesus is the Mediator of the eternal order; being who He is, He is the perfect office-bearer, and all the functions of His office are completely performed and achieve their ends.

The aspect of Christ's work most fully discussed in the Epistle is our redemption. He is everything *par excellence* relating to salvation, the perfect High Priest, the perfect Mediator, and the perfect Sacrifice; in a word, Christ is the faultless expression of the principle of sacrifice which runs through religion.

This superiority of Christ's Person and Work is brought out in a series of comparisons. The mysterious royal and priestly figure of Melchizedec, who is 'without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life', —and remains for ever a priest, is the highest type of Christ in the Old Testament. Whereas the Law authorized the Levitical priests to take tithes from the people, Abraham, to whom God's promises to His people were first made, and the ancestor of the old priesthood, gave tithes to Melchizedec and received his blessing, and truly 'the less is blessed of the better'.<sup>1</sup>

A parallel is drawn between the Aaronic priesthood and that of Christ. The former was changing and passing; but God's oath to Israel's ruler and High Priest in Psalm cx.4 is transferred to Christ; it is He who is 'named of God a High Priest after the order of Melchizedec', and 'because He abideth for ever, he hath a priesthood that doth not pass to another'.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Heb. vii.1-7; Gen. xiv. 18-20.

<sup>2</sup>Heb. v.10; vii.24 (R.V. Margin).

And further, the Jewish high priest went once every year on the Day of Atonement into the Holy of Holies, and there offered sacrifices with animal blood for his sins and those of the people; but Jesus, 'undefiled, separated from sinners', has passed through the heavens having obtained eternal redemption for us by the offering of Himself<sup>3</sup>. The heart of the argument of the Epistle is put in Platonic terms: the Law and its sacrificial system, being a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of them, 'can never with the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect them that draw nigh'<sup>4</sup>. By their unreality and ineffectiveness the Jewish sacrifices suggested another and true Sacrifice sufficient for the need they could not meet.

In the Article the offering of Christ is described as 'that perfect redemption<sup>5</sup>, propitiation<sup>6</sup>, and satisfaction', which means its sufficiency to meet every aspect of God's requirement concerning sinful humanity.

The idea of decisiveness, of finality, associated with perfection in the Epistle is also mentioned in our Article *The Offering of Christ once made*; their repetition was proof of the deficiency of the old sacrifices, signifying that they could never take away sins<sup>7</sup>. Similarly it belongs to the perfection of Christ's sacrifice that it accomplishes its redeeming purpose by providing an eternal ground of salvation, and need never be repeated: hence the emphasis laid by the author on the 'once-for-allness' of the death on the Cross<sup>8</sup>. In Romans vi.10 and in I Peter iii.18 we have the same thought; but the instructive thing about its place in the Epistle to the Hebrews is that there it is part of a reasoned argument, the only one in the New Testament on the significance of the Death of Christ. The description of that event in the Communion Office as 'a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction', except for the last term (which is not a Scriptural one) might be directly traced to that book.

<sup>3</sup>Heb. viii.1,2; ix.14, 24.

<sup>4</sup>Heb. x.1.

<sup>5</sup>Matt. xx.28; Tit. ii.4; Heb. ix.12.

<sup>6</sup>Rom. iii.25; I Jn. ii.2; iv.10; Heb. ii.17.

<sup>7</sup>Heb. x.11.

<sup>8</sup>Heb. ix.28; x.10.

In the teaching of the New Testament, then, the Death of the Cross is a Self-offering of Christ, and as the sacrifice of the Son of God it is infinite in its scope and depth; it is entirely adequate for its purpose of redemption, and therefore perfect, unique (*unicus*),<sup>1</sup> and 'once made'<sup>2</sup> for in the nature of the case it need not be repeated. For these reasons the Roman sacrifices of Masses, which claim to continue it, are an encroachment on the divine prerogative and dignity, and so are by definition 'blasphemous'.

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that 'The Mass is a propitiatory Sacrifice for the living and the dead, and the souls in Purgatory are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, but chiefly by the acceptable Sacrifice of the Altar'<sup>3</sup>. The Article condemns 'the sacrifices of Masses<sup>4</sup> . . . for the quick and the dead' as 'blasphemous' (because they implied that the Sacrifice on the Cross was imperfect, since they are regarded as supplementary to Christ's sacrifice), 'fables' or fictions, and 'dangerous deceits' (Latin *perniciosae imposturae*, 'pernicious impostures', because they led people to trust in false hopes).

<sup>1</sup>This is more evident in the Latin title of the Article '*De unica Christi Oblatione in Cruce perfecta*,' where *unica* means 'one and no more, the only one of its kind' (it is used also in the body of the Article—'there is none other satisfaction for sins, but that alone, *illam unican*'); the words 'upon the Cross' exclude any repetition of the sacrifice as a fresh propitiation.

<sup>2</sup>The Latin for 'once' (*semel*) corresponds to the Greek *ephapax* meaning 'once for all' as in Rom. vi.10; Heb. vii.27; ix.12; x.10; or as *hapax* in Heb. vi.4; ix.28; x.2; I Pet. iii.18; Jude 3. Whereas the sacrifice of Christ can never be repeated, because it is perfect and complete; yet in every celebration of the Eucharist the death of Christ is proclaimed and shown forth in all its saving efficacy and power.

<sup>3</sup>Council of Trent, Session XXV; Sess. VI. Canon 30; Sess. XII. Ch. 2, Can.3; cf. Col. 1.14; Rom. iii.24f.; II Cor. v.19.

<sup>4</sup>Hence it is sometimes argued that the Article is not explicitly directed against the official Roman doctrine promulgated at Trent, which speaks of 'the sacrifice of the Mass', whereas the Article refers to 'sacrifices of Masses'. But the latter phrase was in common use, and is found in the decree of Union signed at Florence (1438) by Eastern and Western (Roman) Bishops, which says of those who die in venial sin: 'their souls are cleansed after death by purgatorial pains; and in order that they may be relieved of these pains the suffrages of the faithful living profit them, namely, the sacrifices of Masses, prayers, alms, and other works of piety.' The Article seems to have these words in mind.

## Chapter X

### CHURCH AND STATE

#### Article XXXVII

#### OF THE CIVIL MAGISTRATES<sup>1</sup>

The Queen's Majesty hath the chief power in this Realm of England, and other her Dominions, unto whom the chief Government of all Estates of this Realm, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil, in all causes doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign Jurisdiction.

Where we attribute to the Queen's Majesty the chief government, by which Titles we understand the minds of some slanderous folks to be offended; we give not to our Princes the ministering either of God's Word, or of the Sacraments, the which thing the Injunctions also lately set forth by Elizabeth our Queen do most plainly testify; but that only prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all godly Princes in holy Scriptures by God himself; that is, that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil-doers.

The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this Realm of England.

The Laws of the Realm may punish Christian men with death, for heinous and grievous offences.

It is lawful for Christian men, at the commandment of the Magistrate, to wear weapons, and serve in the wars.

<sup>1</sup>This Article is derived from a similar one composed as one of the Forty-two Articles (1553) which, however, ran as follows:

'The King of England is supreme head on earth, next under Christ, of the Church of England and Ireland.

'The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm of England.

'The civil magistrate is ordained and allowed (*probatus*) of God: wherefore we must obey him, not only for fear of punishment, but also for conscience' sake.

'The civil laws may punish Christian men with death for heinous and grievous offences.

'It is lawful for Christians, at the commandment of the magistrate to wear weapons, and to serve in lawful wars.'

The first paragraph was re-cast in 1563, when the present second paragraph was also added.



THIS Article deals summarily with a number of most contentious matters, on each of which volumes could be written—Papal Supremacy, the relations between Church and State, the merits of Capital Punishment, and Pacifism. Within the limits of our space it is possible to make only a brief reference to them.

The Roman Catholic Church declares that, 'St. Peter was the chief Apostle, exercising by Christ's appointment the supreme power of governing His Church,'<sup>1</sup> and this claim is supported by appealing to St. Matt. xvi.18f:—"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." At first sight this appears to be conclusive evidence of the validity of the claim, but it must be viewed in the light of the following facts:

The same authority in Church discipline was given to the other Apostles;<sup>2</sup> St. Peter did not have a monopoly of 'binding' and 'loosing.' He was 'sent' by the other Apostles to Samaria,<sup>3</sup> required to explain his action concerning Cornelius,<sup>4</sup> and was rebuked by St. Paul.<sup>5</sup> It was St. James, not St. Peter, who was leader of the Church in Jerusalem,<sup>6</sup> and was apparently acknowledged as such by St. Peter.<sup>7</sup> At the Council of Jerusalem St. James presided, and at the conclusion gave his personal judgement.<sup>8</sup> St. Paul also names him before Cephas,

<sup>1</sup>B. L. Conway, *The Question Box*, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup>Matt. xviii.18; John xx.23; Acts viii.14.

<sup>3</sup>Acts viii.14.

<sup>4</sup>Acts xi.1f.

<sup>5</sup>Gal. ii.11f. It is the business of a leader to lead, but St. Peter gave no lead on this question of eating with Gentiles. The Jesuit Harduin in 1709, realizing that the incident is fatal to the claims for the primacy of Peter, argued that the Cephas of Gal. ii. was not Peter. Lightfoot justly remarked that the context excluded this view, and a Roman Catholic writer agrees "There was a real dissension, and a real rebuke." B. L. Conway, *Op. cit.* p. 153.

<sup>6</sup>Acts xii.17; xxi.18.

<sup>7</sup>St. Peter said, 'tell these things "unto James and to the brethren"' Acts. xii.17.

<sup>8</sup>Acts xv.19.

(Peter) and John in referring to the 'pillars' of the Church.<sup>1</sup> Such evidence against the primacy of St. Peter cannot be dismissed by regarding it merely as evidence of his personal humility; if he in fact occupied an official position of primacy (as Roman theologians claim) he would have insisted on his rights, and the other Apostles would have acknowledged his supremacy. True, miraculous powers were associated with St. Peter<sup>2</sup>, but also with St. Paul.<sup>3</sup> Though St. Peter was often spokesman for the Apostles and sometimes took the initiative, it was because of his personal qualities. Important decisions were made by the Apostles corporately.<sup>4</sup> St. Peter is not even mentioned in the most important matter of the appointment of the seven Deacons.<sup>5</sup> There is no evidence in the New Testament that he was ever Bishop of Rome, or that any authority belonging exclusively to him passed to any successor of his in a particular office. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, writing c. 180 A.D., says the Church in Rome was 'founded by two most glorious Apostles, Paul and Peter' and that 'The blessed Apostles after founding and building up the Church entrusted the office of Bishop to Linus. Paul speaks of this Linus in his Epistles to Timothy.'<sup>6</sup> St. Paul, writing (c. 57 A.D.) to the Christians in Rome, was concerned that they should be 'established' by a visit from him<sup>7</sup>, and also declared that his aim was to preach in unevangelized areas 'lest I should build upon another man's foundation<sup>8</sup>'. How could he write in such terms if, as alleged, St. Peter had been Bishop there since 42 A.D.<sup>9</sup>? Whatever prominence is accorded to St. Peter in the Gospels can be satisfactorily explained on his seniority among the Apostles. St. Paul says that he is 'not a whit

<sup>1</sup>Gal. ii.9.

<sup>2</sup>Acts v.15.

<sup>3</sup>Acts xix.11, 12.

<sup>4</sup>For instance, in the election of Matthias: 'they appointed two . . . , they prayed, . . . they gave forth their lots' Acts ii.23, 24, 26.

<sup>5</sup>Acts vi.2, 4, 6. Note it was a corporate decision.

<sup>6</sup>*Adv. Haereses*, III.3. 1, 2. cf. II Tim. iv.21.

<sup>7</sup>Rom. i.11.

<sup>8</sup>Rom. xv.20.

<sup>9</sup>Bishop Lightfoot concluded that Peter did not arrive in Rome before A.D. 63 *Apostolic Fathers*, Part I, Vol. II (1890), p. 497.

behind the very chiefest Apostles<sup>1</sup>; his converts are his very own children in Christ<sup>2</sup>; the welfare of all the churches is his practical concern and constant source of anxiety<sup>3</sup>. As Bishop Lightfoot said, if there is any apostolic primacy in these first days, it belongs to St. Paul.

Spheres of special work<sup>4</sup>, but authoritative interest in the churches everywhere, such is the pattern of apostolic jurisdiction in the New Testament, and it was continued in the early Church. All Bishops had equal status and authority as Bishops of the one Catholic Church: 'There is one episcopate in the Church' wrote St. Cyprian (250 A.D.), 'and every Bishop has an undivided portion in it'. Gregory of Nazianzus (370 A.D.) styles Cyprian and Athanasius Bishops of the whole world.

But even if our Lord thought of Peter as 'Primate' of the Apostolic Church, there is no evidence that he was given authority to transmit his office to others. Furthermore, it is a fact of history that the Bishops of Rome neither claimed nor received in the earliest centuries any recognition as Head of the Church. The first Bishops of Rome to claim supremacy over other Bishops were Innocent I (d. 417 A.D.) and Leo I (440-461). Nor did papal claims stop with the Church; they were gradually extended to the sphere of political power also. The issue of the relation between Church and State originated with the conversion of the Roman Emperor to the Faith, for then two powers, both Christian, governed the people; the question was to decide the sphere of jurisdiction belonging to each. By the time of the first Christian Emperor, Constantine, early in the 4th century, the tendency of the Bishops to Rome to assert their superiority among other Bishops was developing, and their pretensions steadily increased until they encroached on the rights of the heads of states by seeking a ruling influence in national policy. On the eve of the Reformation the Bishop of Patraca, in a sermon before the Lateran Council (1512), made our Lord's claim in St. Matthew xxviii.18 for the Pope: 'In the

<sup>1</sup>II Cor. xi.5; cf. xii.11.

<sup>2</sup>I Cor. iv.14f.; Gal. iv.19.

<sup>3</sup>I Cor. xi.34; Tit. i.5.

<sup>4</sup>Gal. ii.9.

Pope is all power above all powers, whether of heaven or of earth'. The reasons behind the development of papal supremacy are not difficult to trace. Something of the greatness and dignity of the capital of the world naturally attached to its Bishop; the prominence of the Roman Church, as appears from the Epistles of Ignatius, rests largely on the prestige of the Imperial city. It is important to bear in mind that a view of the Bishop of Rome's pre-eminence, based on these considerations, preceded the extravagant interpretation by supporters of the papacy of the well-known words of our Lord to St. Peter, which we must now consider.

The crucial text (St. Matthew xvi.18f.) on which so much depends has been variously interpreted. The ancient Fathers<sup>1</sup> gave five interpretations of the word 'rock': (1) 44 Fathers said the 'rock' was the faith professed by St. Peter, (2) 17 Fathers said the Church was built on St. Peter, who was himself the 'rock', (3) 16 Fathers said Christ was the 'rock', the Church being built on Him, (4) 8 Fathers thought the word referred to all the Apostles, and (5) a few Fathers thought that the 'rock' referred to the Faithful. From this evidence the Roman Catholic Archbishop Kenrick of St. Louis, U.S.A., concluded: 'If we are bound to follow the majority of the Fathers in this thing<sup>2</sup>, then we are bound to hold for certain that by the 'rock' should be understood the faith professed by Peter, not Peter professing the faith'<sup>3</sup>.

Papal supremacy is without support either in the New Testament or in Christian Antiquity; it rests on a forgery, the notorious False Decretals, attributed to Isidore of Seville (d.636), but probably compiled two centuries later. They claim to contain the correspondence of some ante-Nicene Popes, and their purpose was to secure clerical exemption from secular courts by instituting ecclesiastical tribunals, and to effect papal rule over the entire Church. There is ample evidence that the Church in the British Isles, even when it

<sup>1</sup>The name by which the scholars of the early Church are known.

<sup>2</sup>Every Roman Catholic Priest is bound by a solemn oath to accept the Creed of Pope Pius IV (1564), which declares concerning the Scriptures: 'Neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers'.

<sup>3</sup>Cited in W. H. Griffith Thomas, *The Principles of Theology*, p. 471.

came under Papal obedience, was critical and adopted an independent attitude towards the Pope. The Irish Church resisted papal authority until Henry II completed the Anglo-Norman conquest of Ireland in 1171. William I (1066) refused to do homage to the Pope for the land of England. The Constitutions of Clarendon (1164), re-affirmed by Magna Charta (1215), greatly limited the Pope's power of intervening in the affairs of the English Church. Lambeth was chosen (c. 1200) as the residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, despite the Pope's prohibition. In Edward III's reign, two Acts of Parliament forbade the surrender of the incomes of English benefices to the Pope, and prevented English lawsuits from being referred to the Pope. Hence Henry VIII's action in repudiating Papal Supremacy was only the end of a process. Roman Catholics do not argue that the whole Christian Church, except the diocese of Rome, was for the first four centuries not part of the true Catholic Church. If the Church of that period can be acknowledged as Catholic without accepting Papal Supremacy, why is acceptance of such supremacy now deemed necessary to membership of the Catholic Church?

Rejecting the Papal Supremacy, the Article asserts the Royal Supremacy, allowing to the Monarch 'the chief government of all Estates of this Realm, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil.' Our Lord emphasized that we have a duty to Caesar (the State) as well as to God<sup>1</sup>. St. Paul urged that 'Every subject must obey the government authorities, for no authority exists apart from God'<sup>2</sup>. Loyalty and obedience to the civil power is a Christian duty<sup>3</sup>. In 1534 King Henry, in order to secure the submission of the clergy, claimed the title 'Supreme Head of the English Church and Clergy'. The title was used by Edward and by Mary until she married Philip in 1554. Queen Elizabeth claimed only to be 'Supreme Governor' and made it clear that she only claimed the authority 'of ancient time due to the Imperial Crown of this Realm, that is, under God to have the sovereignty and rule over all manner of persons

<sup>1</sup>Mk. xii.13-17.

<sup>2</sup>Rom. xiii.1 (Moffatt), cf. John xix.11, power is 'from above'.

<sup>3</sup>Tit. iii.1; I Pet. ii.13-17.

born within these her realms, dominions and countries, of what estate, either ecclesiastical or temporal they be, so as no other foreign power shall or ought to have any superiority over them'. The Article makes it clear that the Ministry of Word and Sacrament is no part of the Monarch's function.

Since the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America is entirely independent of the English Monarch, this Article has been replaced in that part of the Anglican Communion by one entitled 'Of the Power of the Civil Magistrates'. It affirms thus:

'The Power of the Civil Magistrate extendeth to all men, as well Clergy as Laity, in all things temporal; but hath no authority in things purely spiritual. And we hold it to be the duty of all men who are professors of the Gospel, to pay respectful obedience to the Civil Authority, regularly and legitimately constituted'.

In view of recent and impending political changes in other parts of the Anglican Communion, it may be deemed desirable (if legally possible) to replace the present Article with 'a statement of principles applicable under any government'. If so, Dr. C. B. Moss's suggested alternative has certain merits which warrant consideration and justify its inclusion in our treatment of the relationship between Church and State. The text of his proposal is as follows:

#### Of Church and State

'The Church and the State are two distinct societies, and we are members of both: of the State by birth or legal admission; of the Church by Baptism and by Confirmation, which is the completion of Baptism.

The authority of the State is enforced on all who live in its territory: the authority of the Church is voluntary, for no adult person can be compelled by civil law to accept the authority of the Church. The State has to obey the will of the people: the Church is bound to obey the revealed will of God, and the rules which it has made in agreement therewith. The purpose of the State is the welfare of mankind, especially its own

members, in this world: the purpose of the Church is the eternal salvation of the souls of all men. The authority of both Church and State is from God, for there is no power but of God (Rom. 13. 1): and we are bound to obey the laws of both, by Divine command and by natural justice. The Church ought not to impose on its members any particular political or economic system: and the State ought not to enforce any direction contrary to the faith, worship, or morals of the Church, nor ought it to be obeyed if it does (Dan. 3.18, 6.10; St. Mark 12.17; Acts 5.28).

The law of the land may punish any man with death, if he is justly found guilty of grievous offences.

Christian men may wear weapons and serve in lawful wars, if they are required to do so by the law of the land. But war is a grave sin against God, both in itself and for its consequences, and no state ought to undertake it, except in extreme necessity, and to avoid worse evils.<sup>1</sup>

The two examples of the exercise of Civil authority mentioned in the concluding clauses of the original Article (and repeated in substance by Dr. Moss) are much debated to-day, namely, capital punishment and the Christian attitude to war. With regard to the former, our Lord's words recorded in St. Matthew v.38, 39 against resisting evil refer to private revenge, and are inapplicable to the law of the State; He in fact employed force in expelling the traffickers from the Temple courts.<sup>2</sup> St. Paul regarded the Civil power, when administering punishment for evil-doing, as the minister of God for good<sup>3</sup>. It will be noted that the Article goes no further than to say that capital punishment is permissible ('may');<sup>4</sup> it does not say that it 'should' be imposed.

John the Baptist's advice to the soldiers, recorded in St. Luke iii.14, influenced later Christian thought on the Church member's attitude to military service; it was noted that while he

<sup>1</sup>C. B. Moss, *The Thirty-nine Articles Revised* (1961), p. 35f. Dr. Moss deals with Papal claims in an earlier Article, in which he rejects the Bishop of Rome's right to have 'any authority or jurisdiction, either temporal or spiritual, over any Anglican province or diocese', *Op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>Jn. ii.15.

<sup>3</sup>Rom. xiii.3, 4.

<sup>4</sup>Gen. ix.6; Acts xxv. 11; Rom. xii.4.

told them to do their duty honourably, he did not invite or urge them to change their profession.<sup>1</sup> Different opinions were expressed among the Church Fathers; some, like Tertullian, considered a military career unbefitting for a Christian, but it was not something held against a man in the official view of the Church. There were certainly many Christians in the Imperial forces (as in our Forces to-day), and it has been suggested that the Gospel was introduced into Britain by the witness of unknown legionaries. A valid distinction may be drawn between acts of aggression, and the use of force to preserve human rights and liberties; the latter would be 'just wars' within the meaning of the Article.

#### Article XXXVIII

#### OF CHRISTIAN MEN'S GOODS WHICH ARE NOT COMMON<sup>2</sup>

The Riches and Goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same, as certain Anabaptists do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

Two leading Anabaptists, Thomas Munzer and John Bockhold taught that with "true baptism" went a renunciation of all worldly possessions; genuine acceptance of the Gospel dissolved every claim and right to hold property of any kind. But such 'communism' was very different from the modern atheistic communism of Marxist theory, which gives to the individual a right to a share in material things by virtue of his contribution to the general economy; in Anabaptist

<sup>1</sup>Cf. also Acts x.22, 47.

<sup>2</sup>The Article dates from 1553, and was written to dissociate the Anglican Reformers from fanatical sects who advocated a policy of 'communism'.

'communism' a person's needs made him dependent on brotherly charity.

Two New Testament passages were adduced in support of this idea, Jesus' advice to the rich young ruler to sell his possessions<sup>1</sup>, and the example of the Church in Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> As regards the first, it is most improbable that our Lord was stating a general rule which He wished to see applied to society at large; it would be contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures He esteemed so highly to think so. A more likely interpretation is that in His interview with the young man, our Lord sensed the radical weakness of His questioner; He perceived that his interest in life was centred on his possessions. Although keeping the commandments did not necessarily entail dispensing with his riches, because of his particular attitude to his possessions they became for him the one thing that stood between him and eternal life; in his case readiness to dispose of material wealth for charity's sake was the acid test of the sincerity of his desire for the supreme spiritual goal.

In assessing the significance of the 'communistic' experiment described in the Acts of the Apostles, we must remember that it originated at a time when the first Christians lived under the conviction that the Return of Christ and the close of the present Age was imminent; they believed that they were at the last hour<sup>3</sup>, the world was passing away<sup>4</sup>, and the end was at hand<sup>5</sup>. Against the background of this expectation earthly possessions belonged to a perishing system and signified little; the best use of them was to turn them into a common fund for the benefit of all in the meantime. The dominant motive behind the experiment may, however, have been a purely altruistic one, unconnected with their belief in the Return of Christ. It may have been simply because they shared a common religious experience, and acknowledged a common Lord, they were prepared to share even their material possessions. We read that the members of the Church at Jerusalem 'had all

<sup>1</sup>Mark x.17-22.

<sup>2</sup>Acts ii.44f.; iv.32ff.

<sup>3</sup>I John ii.18; I Pet. i.5.

<sup>4</sup>I John ii.17.

<sup>5</sup>I Pet. iv.7.

things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.'<sup>1</sup> This might appear to be the logical outcome of the teaching of Jesus. but it is remarkable that there is no evidence of the practice in the New Testament Epistles. It has been suggested, therefore, that no more than a system of organized charity was practised.<sup>2</sup> The Jews had a *Kuppah* or 'basket' fund, whereby each Friday collections and distributions to the poor were made. In addition, a daily collection of food was made from door to door, called the *Tamhui* or 'tray', for those in need of food for the coming day. The reference in Acts (vi.1) to 'the daily ministration' is reminiscent of this Jewish practice, and may indicate that the Church merely followed the Jewish system. The practice described in Acts was obviously voluntary, not compulsory<sup>3</sup>, and there is no other evidence that community of goods was practised in the early Church. The fact that before long the Church of Jerusalem required financial assistance<sup>4</sup> is significant as suggesting the failure of the early experiment.

The right to possess private wealth is everywhere affirmed in the Bible: 'Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own'<sup>5</sup>? But the method of acquiring wealth is often associated with avarice, dishonesty and oppression, and comes under frequent attack, particularly from the prophets<sup>6</sup>. There is nothing inherently wrong with the increase of riches; it is the setting of the heart upon them which is to be avoided<sup>7</sup>. Timothy is not told to charge the rich with having possessions, but that 'they be ready to give away and to share'<sup>8</sup>. Stress on the responsibility attaching to affluence is an important element in Biblical social ethics, and it should be remembered that the history of socialism, including the modern Welfare State, has

<sup>1</sup>Acts ii.45f.,cf. iv.34-37, v.1ff.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. 'The Communism of Acts' by K. Lake in *The Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. V, p. 148f.

<sup>3</sup>Acts v.4.

<sup>4</sup>Rom. xv.25-28; I Cor. xvi.1f.; II Cor. viii.4; ix.1, 12.

<sup>5</sup>Matt. xx.15.

<sup>6</sup>Isa. iii.14f.; Ezek. xviii.12; Amos ii.6; iv.1; v.11.

<sup>7</sup>Ps. lxxii.10; I Tim. vi.10.

<sup>8</sup>I Tim. vi.18 (N. E. Bible).

its roots in the social consciousness enshrined in the Jewish-Christian tradition.

The Article asserts the right to hold private property, and the duty of almsgiving according to one's ability<sup>1</sup>. Our giving must be proportionate to our incomes and possessions. In Judaism, almsgiving was one of the most prominent of religious duties,<sup>2</sup> and was even regarded as efficacious in atoning for sins<sup>3</sup>. Our Lord rebuked the ostentatious charity of His day<sup>4</sup>, but emphasized the blessedness of giving<sup>5</sup>, the many opportunities of helping others<sup>6</sup>, and the reward of giving with the highest motive—"in My Name"<sup>7</sup>. St. Paul also emphasized the necessity of giving with the right motive<sup>8</sup>. Christians must work that they 'may have to give to him that needeth'<sup>9</sup>. St. Paul's emphasis on work presupposes that Christians may have private property<sup>10</sup>, and the frequent exhortations to almsgiving are meaningless if the early Christians did not have private possessions<sup>11</sup>.

### Article XXXIX

#### OF A CHRISTIAN MAN'S OATH<sup>12</sup>

As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ, and James his Apostle, so we judge, that Christian Religion doth not prohibit but that a man may swear when the Magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the Prophet's teaching, in justice, judgement, and truth.

<sup>1</sup>Acts xi.29.

<sup>2</sup>Psalms xli.1; cxii.9; Prov.xiv.21; xxxi.20; Job. xxix.11f.

<sup>3</sup>Dan. iv.27. Cp. Sirach iii.30—"almsgiving maketh an atonement for sins," and cf. I Pet. iv.8.

<sup>4</sup>Matt. vi.1-4.

<sup>5</sup>Acts xx.35.

<sup>6</sup>Matt. xxv.35ff.

<sup>7</sup>Mark ix.41.

<sup>8</sup>I Cor. xiii.3.

<sup>9</sup>Ephes. iv.28.

<sup>10</sup>I Thess. iv.10ff.; II Thess. iii.8ff.

<sup>11</sup>Matt. vi.1; Rom. xii.13; I Cor. xvi.2; II Cor. viii. ix.7.

<sup>12</sup>This Article was also composed 1553 against Anabaptist views.

Two meanings of swearing are noted in the Article: there is 'that vain and rash swearing', in which the divine Name is lightly spoken in ordinary affirmation or as an expletive and is condemned by all Christians; and also the witnessing on oath in a law-court, which the Article approves. Swearing even in this sense was rejected by the Anabaptists, and here again there was precedence for their attitude in the teaching of some Church Fathers and among the Waldensians, pioneer reformers of the twelfth century. The Quakers, too, have always refused to take oaths, not simply because they hold it to be forbidden in the New Testament, but also on the ground of personal morality. As Christians they invariably speak the truth; in all circumstances their word is their bond, taking an oath could only serve to cast doubt on their customary veracity.

The idea and practice of oaths permeated the structure of civilization in the Old Testament, socially and commercially, to a degree quite unfamiliar to the western way of life; hence the warnings against hasty vows and the invoking of strange gods in business transactions with the heathen<sup>1</sup>. But oaths taken under proper conditions and for a right purpose are permitted. Jeremiah iv.2, alluded to in the Article, is a good example. To swear by the name of the Lord was considered by the Jews to be a sign of loyalty to Him<sup>2</sup>, and they conceived of God Himself taking oaths<sup>3</sup>. 'As the Lord liveth' was a common form of Jewish oath<sup>4</sup>, and the usual gesture was to raise the right arm towards heaven<sup>5</sup>, the motive being to point to the dwelling place of God. Hence, 'to raise the hand' became an expression for 'to swear'<sup>6</sup>.

The Article follows our Lord and St. James in condemning vain and rash swearing<sup>7</sup>, which is condemned also by the third commandment. In the Sermon on the Mount our Lord

<sup>1</sup>Eccles. v.3f.; Jer. v.7; Deut. xxiii.21-23.

<sup>2</sup>Isa. xlvi.1; Jer. xii.16.

<sup>3</sup>Gen. xxii.16.

<sup>4</sup>Judges viii.19; I Sam. xx.3; II Sam. xv.21.

<sup>5</sup>Deut. xxxii.10; Dan. xii.7.

<sup>6</sup>Exod. vi.8 (R.V.): 'the land concerning which I lifted up my hand', but A.V.: 'the land concerning the which I did swear'.

<sup>7</sup>Mtt. v.34-37; Jas. v.12.

quoted from the Law against profaning the Name of God by swearing falsely and on the honouring of promises made on oath<sup>1</sup>. But do the words, 'Swear not at all', disallow swearing of every kind, or do they apply only to this manner of confirming assertions made in common conversation? The considerations to be taken into account for answering this question favour the view that Jesus was thinking only of the careless, trivial use of God's Name. Every religious Jew held the divine Name in the highest esteem; even when reading his Scriptures he refrained from saying the divine personal Name, Yahweh, and substituted the Hebrew word *Adonai*, 'the Lord'. With such reverence for the Name of God in mind its flippant utterance filled a faithful Jew with horror. The forms of swearing mentioned in St. Matthew v.34, 35, 'by heaven', 'by earth', or 'by Jerusalem', may relate to attempts by the rabbis to devise permissible oaths. But Jesus insisted that the issue could not be evaded in such a manner; God was still included in such oaths, for heaven is His throne, earth His footstool, and Jerusalem His city<sup>2</sup>. And since any oath worth making must be by the greatest<sup>3</sup>, there is no point in swearing by a creature, by one's life or body<sup>4</sup>.

A study of the occasions in the Gospels where the Name of God occurs in the sayings of Jesus will reveal a model of moderation and fitness; His use of the term is always justified by the importance of the context. The peculiar formula of emphasis which He employed, 'Amen, amen, I say unto you', is significant in this connection. When He was put on oath by the High Priest regarding His Messiahship, He answered with a simple affirmation<sup>5</sup>. The solemn affirmations of St. Paul are a form of oath too, when he calls on God or Christ as witnesses to the truth of his declarations about matters which were very close to his heart—his affection for his converts and his ancestral People, Israel; the sincerity of his evangelism,

<sup>1</sup>Lev. xix.12; etc.

<sup>2</sup>Isa. lxvi.1; Ps. xlvi.2.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Heb. vi.13, 16.

<sup>4</sup>Mtt. v.36; Rev. x.6.

<sup>5</sup>Mtt. xxvi.64.

and his anxiety to refute any misrepresentation of him that would hinder the success of his work.<sup>1</sup> The taking of an oath is also associated with God and commended as 'a guarantee that ends any dispute' in the Epistle to the Hebrews<sup>2</sup>. The Bible, therefore, fully justifies the taking of oaths in support of statements made, provided it is done according to Jeremiah's principle 'in justice, judgment and truth'<sup>3</sup>.

Since attestation by oath is allowed in Scripture, Christians may help in the administration of the law by testifying in civil courts. In early times, while the Roman Empire was still pagan, it could not be done, as it would have meant acknowledgement of heathen deities or the genius of the Emperor; believers' disputes were to be settled among themselves<sup>4</sup>. But under Christian government they '*may swear as the Magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity.*'

<sup>1</sup>Rom. i.9; ix.1; Phil. i.8; Gal. i.20; I Thess. ii.5, 10.

<sup>2</sup>Heb. vi.16 (Moffatt).

<sup>3</sup>Jer. iv. 2.

<sup>4</sup>Matt. xviii.15-17; I Cor. vi.1.