

and Decorator' as ordinarily understood approaches the problem more naturally and directly than the 'artist' as ordinarily understood.

As so understood, the artist is essentially individualist, engaged in purely personal expression. The gallery is pre-eminently a programme of soloists. On the other hand, the church is a choir, singing in unison. The church and the gallery are as far apart as the cloister and the hearth. Confronted with the liturgy, the artist is likely to meet it very much as he met the architectural conditions. He may seek to ignore it or rebel against it as restrictive, or he may embrace it as inspiration. But this last implies too sudden and drastic a change of heart for it to be likely to occur, for he is by habit personal, whereas the liturgy is impersonal. It is probable that he will continue to sing as a soloist in the midst of the choir, very much as he has been used to singing in the gallery, with a nominal and platonic acceptance of liturgical forms. As the 'painter and decorator' could align himself the more readily with the architectural conditions, so the much-maligned 'repository art', however depraved and mechanical in matters of form, is probably more nearly aligned to the liturgical tradition of the Church.

This is not to say that the contemporary artist is by nature precluded from approaching religious themes in his pictures, or that they need be lacking in genuine religious emotion. But it is to suggest that an improvement in liturgical art is unlikely to arise from an attempt to deflect qualities from the sphere to which they belong, to another to which it is essentially contrasted, in which such qualities would either appear as an intrusion, or else be overwhelmed.

THOMAS DERRICK

THE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY

THE contributors to this volume,¹ as Dr Kirk tells us in his foreword, 'found themselves, some six years ago, united in the conviction that the whole subject of the Christian ministry, its doctrine, its continuity, its place in the full scheme of Christian doctrine, was ripe for a fresh survey'. Convinced that one of the most hopeful features of modern religion is the movement towards reunion, and persuaded that the crux of this movement is the doctrine of the

¹ *The Apostolic Ministry. Essays on the History and Doctrine of Episcopacy.* Prepared under the direction of K. E. Kirk. (Hodder & Stoughton; 45s.)

ministry, they agreed to collaborate in the production of a constructive historical and theological survey of the origins, meaning and importance of the episcopacy in the Christian Church. The whole is considered with special reference to the interests of the Church of England and to the difficulties in this regard felt by non-episcopal communions. This involves a large variety of subjects of research in the ten essays of the volume. All the essays are by well-known scholars of the Catholic school of thought in the Church of England.

It seems to the reviewer that for Catholics at least the part of the book of greatest value will be that which treats of the origins of the ministry, i.e., the essays by Dr Kirk, Dom Gregory Dix and Dr Jalland. Most great Catholic and Protestant scholars of the last fifty years have agreed that we may not assume that the words 'presbyter' and 'bishop' in the New Testament and earliest documents necessarily have the same meanings as we attach to them today. Every possible conjecture as to their meaning has been defended, according as scholars thought that the terms evolved under Jewish or Greek influence, and according as those who put them forward inclined in sympathy towards presbyterian or episcopalian views. But there is already some agreement, and the more startling conclusions of this volume will not appear so revolutionary to the Catholic scholar as they will perhaps to the uninitiated layman.

The Catholic will be refreshed by the appeal to history, scripture and the Fathers rather than to the pseudodemocratic principles of some modern presbyterians or episcopalians. As Dr Kirk writes (p. 29): 'Our problem . . . is not whether a point of view is good liberalism, but whether it is good exegesis'. Canon Green in his Epilogue shows a peculiar incapacity to understand the attitude of Catholic scholarship, when he writes: 'Both orthodox Nonconformity and Roman Catholicism are agreed that the appeal to history is treason to the Spirit'. The contrary is true of the Catholic Church. Pope Pius X condemned the modernist rejection of the appeal to history. The Spirit which infallibly guides the Church does not dispense us from the study of Scripture and history, but rather saves us from misinterpretation of those sources to the detriment of pure faith and morals.

The principal thesis of the book is that Christ commissioned an apostolate or essential ministry, which would have the title and office of representing him in every place and time where Christianity flourishes. The bond between the members and head would be missing wherever Christ is not represented by his apostle. The apostle has the commission to teach and preach, to confer sacraments, and

to hand down to others the commission he has himself received. Confusion has arisen because the first 'bishops' or essential ministry were not called *episcopoi* but apostles. The *episcopoi* of the New Testament were merely presbyters having charge over a Christian community, whether their rule happened to be monarchical or collegiate. When eventually the successors of the apostles took charge over local communities, they acquired the name of *episcopoi*. In course of time, as every important local group had its apostle, the word *apostle* fell into disuse, and the word *episcopos* came to be the technical term for the essential ministry.

The writers of the book are at pains to induce presbyterian theorists to distinguish the essential from the accidental in the ensuing episcopate. All that goes by the name of 'prelacy', which was such a stumbling-block to the reformers, is, according to their contention, accidental to the real apostolic ministry, and in the event of reunion all accidentals would have to be reconsidered. But none who believe that a duly ordained ministry, having its commission from Christ, is of the essence of Christianity could—even for the sake of unity—accept a solution which compromised it. If the ministry is from above, it cannot be created from below.

The Catholic must of course wholeheartedly agree with the central thesis of an essential ministry which was instituted by Christ, without which there could be no Church. We could, however, hardly accept the converse, which they seem to assume, i.e., that where there is an essential ministry *there is the Church*, because of the relation of that ministry to Christ, as expressed in the words *ubi episcopus ibi ecclesia catholica*. Do not the words of the fourth-century St Ambrose, and possibly the third-century St Cyprian, *ubi Petrus, ibi ecclesia*, represent more fairly the patristic ideal of union with the Church universal? St Augustine uses the words *Securus indicat orbis terrarum* to prove that even bishops not in communion with the universal Church are schismatics, even though validly consecrated. St Cyril of Jerusalem tells his catechumens not to look for a bishop but for the Catholic or universal Church.

The position of *presbyters*, according to the contributors, was on the model of the position of elders or rulers in the Jewish synagogue. It was to be expected that the first Christians would imitate the Jewish method of administration. The writers call the presbyterate an 'order', but they regard it as of ecclesiastical rather than divine institution. Such presbyters might exercise *episcopo* or pastoral care as a body, in which case they would all naturally be called *episcopoi*. Where one of their number ruled monarchically, he alone would be

the *episcopos*. At first it was unheard of for presbyter-bishops to preach, administer the sacraments or ordain. For several centuries this was the proper work of the apostle, or *episcopos*, once he became universally known by that name.

The writers are convinced that presbyterianism began at a very early date, when presbyters first encroached upon the privileges of bishops. Presbyters began to offer the eucharist, confer sacraments, preach, and eventually even ordain to minor orders. There is some evidence for their ordaining to the diaconate. Dr Jalland thinks that it is due to the same tendency that the presbyter came to be called *sacerdos* in the fourth century, and that St Thomas refuses to regard the episcopate as an eighth order distinct from the presbyterate. He regrets that the Council of Trent missed its opportunity of defining more clearly the essential superiority of bishops. At times one detects a hint that the Church of England has remained the great witness to episcopacy, while Nonconformity and Roman Catholicism have made concessions to presbyterianism. Might one diffidently suggest that the writers study more the immense distance in power and jurisdiction between bishop and priest in the Catholic Church, much greater than exists in the Church of England today?

Catholics could not agree with the contention that the presbyterate is not of divine origin. Both historically and theologically, the Catholic position supposes that. Records show that no one doubted the validity of presbyters celebrating the eucharist in the fourth and even in the third century. The Church which recognised this would have rejected a eucharist offered by deacons or laymen. How could this have been, unless presbyters' orders were believed to come from Christ? And, theologically speaking, could a Catholic at any time admit the validity of such a sacrifice offered by one who had not orders from Christ? If ecclesiastical orders suffice for this, why do they not suffice for bishops?

But I suspect that some confusion arises from a different understanding of the word 'validity'. Dr Kirk explains clearly what he means by 'valid' ministry as distinct from 'fruitful' ministry. He readily grants—and all must agree with him—that the ministry of many Nonconformists without 'valid' orders is fruitful. But he shows that this does not give them a true commission from Christ. He explains 'valid' further as meaning '*de jure*' as opposed to '*de facto*'. This is his definition: 'That is valid which, by virtue of satisfying conditions laid down by competent authority, is entitled to everything to which it appears or claims to have a title'. To the Catholic theologian that would be a definition of 'lawful' or 'authorized'. Catholic

thought has always admitted the possibility of a valid ministry non-rightfully exercised. The Donatist bishop was a valid bishop, but his ministry unlawful as long as he was out of communion with the Church universal. Every layman can validly baptize, but normally only the priest has the right to confer it.

Dom Gregory Dix's interesting and valuable chapter includes several conjectures which seem rather beyond the evidence. He thinks St Clement of Rome may after all never have been bishop of Rome, but an apostle with general jurisdiction who happened to be living in Rome. The value of this theory to those who are unwilling to regard Clement's letter as an exercise of papal authority is obvious. Against such a conjecture are the later universal tradition of his having been bishop of Rome, and the opening words of the Epistle, as coming from the Church of God in Rome. On p. 199 Dom Gregory Dix states that 'A genuine election by his own Church and the free acceptance of him by all its members as their bishop . . . were as much a *sine qua non* for the episcopate as consecration itself'. He refers to St Cornelius and St Cyprian in their rejection of Novatian, but the evidence seems rather to indicate that Novatian was denied the right and exercise of his episcopate than that the validity of it was rejected on the grounds of defective election. Again, it seems to the reviewer that the view of St Irenæus and others that those doctrines are sound which have been handed down to us through an unbroken succession of bishops cannot rightly be called the original form of the doctrine of apostolic succession of orders. There is a difference between a doctrine being genuine because handed down, and orders being genuine because received from a genuine apostle.

In all these matters one seems to detect a difference of attitude dependent upon the different definition and understanding of 'validity'.

In pointing out some of the conclusions which Catholics will question, I hope I have not given the impression of ungenerously failing to recognize the great interest and importance of the 570 pages before me. The essays I have mentioned seem of greatest interest to Catholics. There are however readers who will derive much profit from the historical chapters; while those concerned about Anglican orders will find an attempt to prove that the Church of England was always anxious to preserve its valid orders intact. Dr Thornton has an elaborate study of the bearing of this on the Mystical Body, but Catholics will prefer the great monumental works on this subject produced within the Catholic Church in recent years.

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