

concurrence with clergy and laity, in changes in doctrine and policy. Let the Church of England itself act on that recommendation, both in the letter and the spirit. Let it abolish the Convocations and replace them by a Synod in which bishops, clergy, and laity have an equal voice and all three participate on equal terms in taking responsible decisions.

The Fulness of Christ

BY THE REV. CANON ALAN RICHARDSON, D.D.

SHORTLY after the publication in 1947 of *Catholicity*, the Report presented by a group of Anglo-Catholics to the Archbishop of Canterbury in response to his Grace's request, the Archbishop invited the Archdeacon of Sheffield to collect a group of Anglican Evangelicals to prepare a parallel document. This has now been published under the title *The Fulness of Christ*.¹ It had been preceded by *The Catholicity of Protestantism*,² a similar statement produced by a group of leading Free Church theologians. The three Reports together form an illuminating conspectus of the principal ways of approach to the problems of theology and churchmanship which are dominant amongst the leaders of English Christianity to-day. Perhaps what is lacking in their total presentation is the point of view of those Anglicans who would not like to be called either Anglo-Catholics or Evangelicals, but who are simply content to be Anglicans (of whom the present writer is one); but, as we shall notice, the new Report to a large extent speaks for them. Whereas the Free Church document deals at length with the palpable and unscholarly errors which marred the attempt of *Catholicity* to state the Protestant view, *The Fulness of Christ* sets out to state positively its authors' convictions quite independently of the earlier Anglican work. These convictions are presented clearly, cogently and unpolemically.

One question, however, persistently recurs to the reader as he turns the pages of the Report. What is there in the general position which it advocates which could be termed distinctively evangelical? What does the word 'evangelical' signify as used to designate the standpoint here presented? Certainly not the evangelicalism of such older leaders as H. C. G. Moule or Griffith Thomas, or even of Henry Wace or H. E. Ryle. Nor is it the Liberal Evangelicalism of Vernon Storr and the A.E.G.M. The writers of the Report are in no sense near-fundamentalist, like the older evangelical leaders. Nor, on the other hand, are they mildly and inoffensively 'liberal protestant' like the 'liberal evangelicals' of recent times. What, in fact, does the word 'evangelical' stand for in theology to-day? Many will doubtless think they know what it stands for ecclesiastically—it means surplices instead of vestments, no laymen inside the sanctuary, and Mattins at eleven o'clock. But what theological implication does the word carry?

Perhaps wrongly, but certainly extensively, there is a general

¹ S.P.C.K., 3/6.

² Lutterworth Press, 1950, 5/-.

impression abroad that evangelicalism is essentially the attitude which the writers of the Report call 'Pietism'. What they say about the latter is roughly what many non-evangelicals consider evangelicalism at heart to be :

'It tends to identify salvation with inward experience and to find assurance in states of feeling rather than in the objective promises of God covenanted to us in the gospel and made available through the instrumentality of the Word and Sacraments. It tends to drive men in on themselves, and derogates from the importance of anything which has not directly to do with the "salvation-experience". Thus it may substitute the guidance of the "inner light" for an objective revealed gospel as the standard of belief; feelings for the promises of God as the assurance of salvation; private communion with God for the corporate fellowship of the Church. It makes a rigid distinction between the sphere of salvation and the ordinary life of the world. . . . It may involve either abandonment of the redemptive mission of the Church in the world, or a fanatical zeal to pluck such brands from the burning as God may elect to save; while individualism . . . frequently leads to a multiplication of small sects' (p. 43).

Such a description would never have been quite fair to evangelicalism in its Anglican setting; but if one thinks of 'evangelical nonconformity' or of 'evangelical sectarianism' in America, there is a good deal in the above description which would explain why many of us do not wish to be described as 'evangelicals'. The authors of *Catholicity* made the egregious howler of thinking that both Luther and the present-day Lutherans were pietists in the above sense, but they have been suitably enlightened by *The Catholicity of Protestantism*. The authors of *The Fulness of Christ* reject pietism no less vigorously than do the writers of the Free Church Report. So, then, evangelicalism, in the opinion of these Anglican Evangelicals, is not pietism; and we are still left asking what precisely it is.

I

To the present writer it seems that *The Fulness of Christ* gives us not so much an account of the distinctive tenets of evangelicalism (whatever they may be) but a lucid and careful exposition of some central points of the historic Anglican position. Broadly speaking, and with the exception of one matter to be mentioned later, the standpoint of the Report is that of the classical Anglican tradition as it is enshrined in the Book of Common Prayer, the Ordinal and the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion. It gives us the teaching of Hooker and the Caroline divines as re-interpreted in the light of the nineteenth-century revolution in biblical scientific method, of which it makes due acknowledgment and use. It represents, indeed, the old 'high church' tradition of seventeenth-century Anglicanism, carrying it forward into the twentieth century. It has a better claim than have the Tractarians and their successors, the Ritualists and Anglo-Catholics, to stand in the mainstream of the historical development of the Anglican teaching—as the writers of the Report are well aware (see

page 54). One could wish that the authors had not been compelled by circumstances to present their findings under the label 'evangelical', but had been able boldly to claim the rightful title of historic Anglicanism.

The Report sets before us a high doctrine of the Church. The Church is the body of Christ—the *body*, not merely a 'spiritual' or 'invisible' communion so dear to the hearts of 'protestant' theologians. As a *body* it has a structure, a visible and historical institution bound together by certain outward forms. The outward life of the Church is the vehicle and expression of its inward life of fellowship with Christ, and everything which outwardly binds the Church together is a means of grace to be thankfully received. Continuity of the ministry through episcopal ordination is such a link.

'We may not say that episcopacy is constitutive of the visible Church in the same way as the Word and Sacraments are. Nor can we say that God cannot and does not, in a divided Church, raise up and use other forms of ministry for the effectual ministration of His Word and Sacraments. . . . We can and must say that episcopacy and episcopal succession is the way in which the Church has learnt, under the Spirit's guidance, to express and preserve the principle of a ministry which is one throughout the ages and one throughout all areas of the Church, and that therefore in a reunited Church it will be an important element in that outward unity which both expresses and conveys the inward unity of Christ's people in Him' (pp. 65f. ; cf. p. 82).

Ordination is no mere human rite, no mere Church-authorization ; it is the giving by the Head of the Body of a calling to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments and of grace to perform it duly. Both preaching and the Sacraments are complementary modes of the divine self-communication, and neither must be exalted at the expense of the other. The functions of the ministry ought not to be performed by those who are not ordained to them, but this does not mean that the Church is dependent upon the ministry in virtue of any mysterious powers inherent in the latter on which the Church's life depends ; on the contrary, the ministry depends ultimately upon the Church, rather than *vice-versa*, because the ministry is an organ of the body, doing the work of the body in harmony with the other members (p. 67).

In fact, what is represented in all this, and in much more besides, is the good, old-fashioned high-church Anglican tradition of pre-Tractarian days—the tradition of Andrewes, Laud, Jeremy Taylor and Cosin. Reformation doctrines, like that of Justification by Faith, are taught as Laud and the others would have taught them. There is no tendency to make Justification the sole article of the Christian religion. The words 'by faith alone' in the Justification formula are meant to exclude any suggestion that our virtues or 'works' have any place in the securing of our salvation (an historical fact of which the authors of *Catholicity* did not seem to be aware) ; they are not meant to imply that inward response may be separated from outward sacramental form (p. 78). Surely this is the position to which Anglicans who are loyal to the Prayer Book are committed.

The Anglican recognition of the Bible as the ultimate and decisive standard of faith, though it means that the Gospel controls the Church and not the Church the Gospel (contrast Rome), does not imply a minimizing of the value of tradition, which represents the understanding of the Gospel which has already been achieved by the Church (p. 79). Indeed, the Report as a whole maintains the historical balance of the Anglican way, endeavouring diligently to preserve the biblical truth in those elements which are usually thought of as 'catholic' and in those which are thought of as 'protestant'. If sometimes we suspect that 'tension' is a jargon-word in the vocabulary of the authors, we must at least pay tribute to the sincerity of their desire to bring together the insights of the different traditions (a politer word than 'parties') in the rich heritage of our common Church life (pp. 72f.). The eirenic, non-partisan and ecumenical tone of the Report is most welcome.

But we are still searching for something which could be singled out as distinctively evangelical in this Report of a group of Anglican Evangelicals. So far we have found nothing which could not less misleadingly be styled Anglican, if by that term we mean the standpoint of the Prayer Book, Ordinal, Articles and Homilies. In its reluctance closely to define theological terms or precisely to delimit the bounds of belief, the temper of the Report is thoroughly Anglican. Thus, for instance, the cautious language used about the presence of Christ in the Eucharist (p. 32) rightly refrains from attempting to define what Scripture itself leaves undetermined. 'Christ said, This is My body', wrote Lancelot Andrewes; 'He did not say, This is My body in this way'. That, surely, is the authentic Anglican accent.

II

There is, perhaps, one point at which the Report, while emphasizing an insight recently recovered at the Reformation, fails to develop the full richness of biblical and patristic teaching. Perhaps it is at this point that the Report is distinctively 'evangelical', in the sense that here, in its anxiety to do justice to a Reformation truth, it obscures another Catholic and biblical one. The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers is stated to mean that every Christian enjoys equal access to God in Christ (pp. 34 and 66). This is, of course, a great Christian truth which was recovered for us by the Reformers. But it does not exhaust the content of the biblical doctrine of the priesthood of the *Laos* or People of God. This doctrine is taught in both Testaments. According to the teaching of the great prophets of Israel, as it is embodied in the Pentateuch (e.g., Exodus xix. 3-6), the nation of Israel was chosen by God to be 'a kingdom of priests' to the rest of the world ('for all the earth is mine'): it was not that every Israelite was to be *his own* priest. Thus, in the great vision of Zechariah (viii. 23), every Israelite was to be a priest to ten Gentiles. In the New Testament this teaching is fulfilled in the Christian Church. The Church of Jesus Christ is a 'royal priesthood', which is to shew forth the excellencies of God who called it out of darkness (I Peter ii. 9f.; cf. Rev. i. 6, v. 10, xx. 6). Thus, the biblical emphasis is not so much upon 'every man his own priest' as upon the Church (that is, the

Laos, laity) as the priesthood appointed by God to offer to Him the 'service' (liturgy) of the whole non-Christian world. The notion of priesthood must not be emptied of its biblical content : whatever else he is, a priest in the Bible is a man who offers sacrifice to God on behalf of others. Thus, St. Paul speaks of himself as a *leitourgos*, a sacrificing-priest of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles, ministering-in-sacrifice (R.V., margin) the Gospel of God, that the oblation of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit (Rom. xv. 16). The Report does scant justice to the rich sacrificial language in which the New Testament abounds.

Whether St. Paul had the Eucharist in mind when he wrote Romans xv. 16 might be debated for a long time. But it is surely difficult to assert that one who could so naturally employ such a metaphor would be unlikely to think of the Christian Eucharist as an oblation. Nor may we easily suppose that a Church which regarded itself as a 'royal priesthood' would be likely to have no doctrine of a priestly offering at its great weekly passover-festival of the Eucharist ! On the question of the Eucharistic oblation the Report is reticent. This is a pity, because this is one of those points which most obviously needs discussion between 'catholics' and 'protestants'. Furthermore it is a point at which non-evangelicals are inclined to suspect that there is some kind of inhibition in the minds of evangelicals, which prevents them from entering into the full richness of biblical and Catholic thought and devotion in the sphere of the Eucharist. The Reformation on the continent, resiling from the mediæval corruption of the 'sacrifice of the Mass', abolished entirely the notion of a eucharistic oblation and wiped out the offertory from the liturgy. Even the Lutherans, for all that they kept a high doctrine of the Real Presence and preserved much of the ancient liturgy of the Church, have repudiated the whole conception of eucharistic sacrifice. The Anglican Reformers, though stigmatizing the mediæval 'sacrifices of Masses' as 'blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits', nevertheless retained the idea of the oblation and the practice of the offertory.

Concerning eucharistic sacrifice the authors of the Report write that, in virtue of the one true sacrifice of Christ, 'the Church is enabled to make that offering of praise, thanksgiving and self-oblation which (apart from the alms) is the only sacrifice actually offered in the Eucharist. Only as united to Christ in his death and resurrection through receiving the Body and Blood of Christ is the Church able to offer itself acceptably to the Father' (p. 32). In a footnote they (rightly) add that the Anglican Order of Holy Communion 'admirably illustrates this Reformation principle by placing the Prayer of Oblation after the communion of the people'. (Presumably by 'Reformation principle' they here mean 'principle of the Anglican Reformation', since it was the principle of the continental Reformers to delete the notion of oblation in every form.) In implying in the first sentence quoted above from p. 32 that the bread and wine are *not* offered in the Eucharist, they deny the primitive (second-century) conception of the Eucharist as a sacrament of Creation as well as of Redemption, through the offering up of the 'first-fruits' of the created order under the forms of bread and wine. In the early Church every Lord's Day

was a Harvest Festival as well as an Easter Sunday. Furthermore, they deny the primitive symbolism of the offering of the sacramental elements as representing the worshippers themselves—'There you are on the altar, there you are in the chalice', said St. Augustine to his congregation at the Eucharist. They destroy the whole symbolism of 'the People's Offering', now so widely practised in Anglican churches, with the precious note of realism which it introduces into the liturgy as the worshippers come to offer to God not only themselves but all the labours of their hands, represented under the forms of manufactured articles, the bread and wine of the eucharistic offering. There is lacking the sense of grandeur and mystery in the eucharistic oblation, which Christ, the true priest at every celebration, offers to God as He presents His body the Church already—eschatologically—made pure and spotless, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God. But the Church (*Laos*) is one with Christ as Offerer as well as one with him as offered; the priesthood of the *Laos* derives from the eternal high priesthood of Christ.

At point after point the Report exhibits a remarkable capacity to see both sides of a question—the 'catholic' and the 'protestant' sides. It manifests a praiseworthy determination to discover and hold fast to the truth which each side embodies, insisting that it is through the isolation of the one from the other that error and distortion arise. One reader at least cannot help but feel that, in this question of the priesthood of the Church and the sacrifice which it offers, this laudable intention has not quite been carried into effect. There is more in the New Testament teaching, in the primitive tradition, in the Book of Common Prayer and in the classical Anglican writers, than is conveyed by the brief and bald sentences of the Report upon this central and vital question. The legacy of the Anglican Reformation is happily not that of the continental. Evangelical theologians can be of great assistance in preventing the wrong kind of 'counter-reformation' (the revival of the false mediæval doctrine of eucharistic sacrifice) by developing the positive implications of this great biblical and primitive theme; and the worship of 'evangelical' churches will be enriched and deepened as the Eucharist takes its place once more—in practice as well as in theory—as the uniquely important act of Christian worship.

III

To conclude: the great value of the Report lies in its determination to be Anglican, not partisan. It rightly stresses that the Church of England is Catholic and Protestant, even though it contains within itself 'catholics' and 'protestants'. If the type of thought which the writers represent becomes more and more widespread, there will be fewer and fewer Anglicans who can be labelled by the words in those horrid inverted commas. The one lamentably outstanding success of the Anglo-Catholic movement has been to turn the ancient Catholic Church of the English people into a denomination, one amongst many, in which a section only of its members are 'catholics', while others, despite their baptism into the ancient Church of Jesus Christ in this land, are presumably not. The Report shews that the leaders of the Anglican Evangelicals are not content to hand over the Catholic

heritage of the Church of England to any mere section within it. It also bears promise of the revival of interest in theological matters within evangelical quarters. This interest is what has been so sadly lacking during recent years. Indeed, it would be difficult to name any work of outstanding importance in the development of English theology which has been written by an evangelical Anglican in the last fifty years. Let us hope that the Report proves to be a harbinger of better things to come.

Three Years of Church Union

BY THE REV. L. W. BROWN, B.D., M.Th.

I HAVE been asked to give a factual report of the first three years of the Church of South India. I can write with only a limited knowledge, but my impression is that we are finding the meaning of unity much more rapidly than any of us ever anticipated. It is wrong to speak of 'achieving unity'. The unity of the Church consists in the fact that we are already one in Christ; what we have to do is to understand more and more of the implications of that fact. In this sense the three years have seen a deepening in unity. They have also seen the beginnings of wider unity in that we are seeking the way in which others at present outside our fellowship may enter it, so that we may realise together our common discipleship.

I

The first Synod of the Church, held in March, 1948, inherited the enthusiasm of the Joint Committee and of the wonderful services of Inauguration in Madras the previous September. Everyone who came was still wondering at the fact that we were together in one Church. We passed a resolution affirming that evangelism was the primary task of the Church and went on to approve machinery by which inherited missionary activities and the different ways of administration of all sides of church life could be co-ordinated and become activities of the one Church. There was little argument and no issues which raised special difficulty, and the whole meeting was a great spiritual experience for all who took part in it.

The second Synod in March, 1950, was confronted with grave and difficult problems. Its members were no longer on the crest of the wave of enthusiasm and joy which had swept them along to the first Synod. The Nandyal problem was in everyone's mind, and a good deal of canvassing was carried on by the group which was supporting Bishop Joseph against the decision of the Synod Court. It is difficult to state this problem in a few lines, and my knowledge of it is not first-hand. Just before union, when the appointment of Canon Bunyan Joseph as bishop of the new diocese of Anantapur-Kurnool was announced, a party who were not on good terms with some of the Bishop's relations and supporters, and who were moreover unwilling to break the connection with S.P.G. which they had just learned would