

The Order of Deaconesses in the Anglican Church.

PAPER READ BY THE REV. CANON
J. H. BROWNE.

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The subject of my paper, which was settled for me, is clearly defined and limited—"The Advantage to the Church in having Women set apart to the Diaconate." The very obvious and widely recognized advantage of having trained and tested women as Church workers is not within the scope of my paper. I am to point out the advantage of having such women admitted to the diaconate. I begin by stating what I mean by a "Deaconess"—I mean * "a woman set apart by a Bishop under that title for service in the Church." By "set apart" I mean † "admitted in solemn form by the Bishop, with Benediction, by the laying on of hands."

Further, I use the word "Deaconess" throughout my paper to denote an ordained servant of the Church who goes forth to minister *on the strength of her orders*, and in such a way as to be received by those to whom she goes in virtue of her office.

The Deaconess may, or may not live with other women, for reasons of economy or mutual encouragement and spiritual fellowship, but in the former case she will regard her place in the Community as an accident—a very fortunate accident it may be—and in no way affecting her relations as a Deaconess to her Bishop, parish priest, or the people among whom she serves.

By a Deaconess I mean a woman who is *bound* and *free* in exactly the same way as a deacon—who may or may not reside in a clergy house, who may or may not be a member of a Community. It is for this reason that the Memorandum of 1871 states that it is desirable that a Deaconess should not drop the use of her surname, and with

* Memorandum of 1871, signed by the two Archbishops and eighteen Bishops.

† Resolution passed by the Upper House of Canterbury Convocation, 1891.

this end in view her official designation should be Deaconess A—— B—— (Christian and surname), and her official signature should be A—— B——, Deaconess.

What are the advantages to the Church of having women set apart to the diaconate?

1. In the first place, the admission of women to the official ministry of the Church tends to restore the true conception of the Church as the spirit bearing body of all the members of Christ, wherein there can be no distinction of sex—"No male and female, for all are one *man* in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 28).

Theoretically we think of Church membership as resting on a spiritual basis, but in *practice* we suggest that sex has something to do with full and effective Church membership, for we admit to office in the Church (speaking generally) *only men*. Thus sex has come to be regarded as a disqualification for holding office in the Church.

It may be said that our blessed Lord called into the apostolate only men. That is true, but it is equally true, as all the members of the Fulham Conference on Confession and Absolution in 1901 agreed, that our blessed Lord's words (S. John xx. 22, 23), "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosesoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained," were spoken not to the Apostles alone, but to the whole Church, and that on the occasion of their utterance women were present as well as men. This erroneous conception of the basis on which rests Church membership, privilege, and responsibility, would, I contend, be largely removed by the admission of women to the diaconate.

2. A second advantage of women occupying an official place in the Church's membership must present itself at once when we consider the Bishop in relation to his diocese. He is the chief pastor of all Christ's flock within his jurisdiction, women as well as men, and the former are always in a considerable majority.

For advice and co-operation in all that appertains specially to men the Bishop turns to the leaders among his clergymen—first and chiefly to his Archdeacon.

For counsel as to his care of and provision for the larger number of his people—the women—the Bishop has no one among them, apart from the female diaconate, whose help he can claim as a matter of course. True, the Bishop *may* be married, so *may* his Archdeacon, and their wives *may* be, as they very often are, women of power and wisdom and piety, well able to advise and co-operate, but this may or may not be the case, both Bishop and Archdeacon may be unmarried; and when it is otherwise it must be borne in mind that marriage

to a Bishop or an Archdeacon confers on a woman no spiritual "character" or authority, nor does it impose any obligation of official service.

But if in the diocese there is a band of women set apart as Deaconesses, of whom one is the acknowledged head, then the Bishop has at his service one whom he can quite naturally approach for counsel and co-operation in all that specially concerns women's life and work in the Church. He will no longer be one-eyed in his oversight of the diocese, for he will have both an Archdeacon and an "Archdeaconess."

One has only to read the letters of S. Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople in the fourth century, to the Deaconess Olympias to know what a woman occupying an official position in the Church could be to her diocesan.

From the earliest times the Archdeacon has always enjoyed a very close personal relation to the Bishop. In the report presented by the Committee of the Lambeth Conference of 1881 on the relation of religious Communities to the Bishop it is stated, "It must be understood that a Deaconess holds of necessity a direct and personal relation to her diocesan Bishop."

3. I pass to the advantage to the parish priest of having among his official staff a woman who has been set apart as a Deaconess. Here I can speak with some assurance, having as Vicar of a large South London parish had the co-operation of two Deaconesses. When sitting in council with his colleagues at the weekly Staff Meeting, and considering the well being of the parish in the different departments of Church life and work, it is a very real advantage to the incumbent to have the presence of a woman who can be referred to and heard on matters touching certain phases of life with perfect naturalness and freedom by *reason of her office*, when delicacy, or rather conventionality, would forbid the mention (much more the discussion) of such subjects except between men and women who meet on a professional and official footing.

Though under no vow of celibacy, the demands of her ministry are such as to preclude the possibility of marriage for a Deaconess. This fact, in itself, enables an incumbent to feel and say of his parish Deaconess what S. Paul said of Phoebe, in a sense he cannot of a woman not so conditioned—"Our sister who is a servant of the Church."

4. We will now consider the Deaconess from the point of view of the *people*. Two types of clergy have from time to time served the Church of England—the regular and the secular. For some centuries the latter—the free and secular priest, living in his own house, framing his own mode of life, at liberty to marry, owing no allegiance to any Community, but in direct responsibility to his Bishop—has ministered to

the English people, and as one who moves freely among men and knows life as do those to whom he ministers, the secular priest has undoubtedly appealed to the bulk of the English people, and in a way that the regular priest, a member of a Community and living a life removed from the experience of most men, would not have appealed. Of late years there has been an attempt to revive Communities of regular priests, and there is room and work for those which exist and for more, but, unless I am mistaken, the English people will continue to ask to be ministered to by a secular clergy, as providing the type of service they feel meets their requirements.

The revival of the active and public service of women to the poor at the beginning of the nineteenth century by such heroines as Hannah More, Elizabeth Fry, and somewhat later Florence Nightingale, soon led the Church to feel the need of women ready to devote their lives in *organized* service among the poor. It was in response to this felt need that Sisterhoods arose in 1847. What the Church of England owes to these Communities of Sisters which have come into being during the past seventy years it is almost impossible to over estimate. As the pioneers in the systematic care for and rescue of friendless and fallen women, in nursing the sick poor, in the education of the young, in the revival of a deeper spiritual life and the recovery of the duty and power of intercession—in all these and many other ways the influence of the devotional and self-sacrificing lives of Sisters on the religion of the last century has been very great indeed, and must be a cause of profound thankfulness to every intelligent Christian person. But they have rendered their splendid service, not as free individuals, but as members of Communities—*that* has been their strength and their glory. In obedience to her Superior the Sister has gone forth, and as such she has been welcomed and valued by those to whom she has proved a blessing.

Though not members of an Order in the Church's official ministry, yet the appeal and influence of Sisters may be said, I think, to be analogous to those which would be exerted by regular clergy, and *this* was not *all* the Church and circumstances of the age required in the direction of womanly service. Some other form was wanted, corresponding more closely to the Church's system since the sixteenth century, and analogous to the service rendered by the secular clergy. So came in 1862 the revival of the Order of the Female Diaconate, with this as its special characteristic—that the Deaconess goes to the people of England not as one who has necessarily severed herself from all domestic ties and withdrawn from the duties and experiences of ordinary life, but as

one who is a woman among women, facing life as they have to face it, one with them in all daily experiences, and at the same time commissioned and endowed with the grace from on high to minister to them in all their needs and to be at their side for loving service night and day, going in and out under the direct authority of the Bishop and the immediate superintendence of the parish priest. It is this distinctive feature of the Order of Deaconesses to which the Archbishop of Canterbury must, I think, be referring in His Grace's introduction to "The Ministry of Deaconesses" when he writes:—"The principles on which it rests *accord so truly with the character of our English Church* that once rightly understood they are bound to win their way and to bear fruit."

Further, there is, I believe, a growing feeling of resentment among self-respecting intelligent working class people against what they are inclined to regard as the unwarrantable intrusion upon the privacy of their homes by more or less self-constituted and irresponsible amateur visitors; whereas the Parson, the Deaconess—well, they are the real article, and in virtue of their office, if for no other reason, they have a right to call, and should be received with respect, if not with welcome. In spite of some recent indications to the contrary, the English are a law abiding people, and disposed to listen respectfully to the voices of those who approach them in the name of authority and order, both in Church and State.

5. One more advantage, and, though the last to be mentioned, not the least in importance. This present time is characterized by nothing more markedly than the revolt of woman against the idea that unmarried she must always remain in the parental home, and if she cannot find scope there for the full occupying of her time and exercise of her powers she must not seek it elsewhere. The days when that idea prevailed have gone, and women now are pressing forward and demanding opportunities, closed to them in the past, of service worthy of the peculiar gifts with which God has endowed them, and for the freer and fuller service of which the world is in dire need.

Women who feel the call to service beyond the limits of domestic life, not only as parish workers in the accepted and somewhat restricted sense of the title, but in other, and perhaps wider spheres of activity, such as those of the missionary abroad, the lecturer at the university, the teacher in college or high school, the doctor—can find in the diaconate an opportunity of consecrating their womanly powers and gifts according to Scriptural and primitive custom, and entering upon their service assured and strengthened by the formal commission of the Church of God.

Let me close by quoting on this advantage to the Church some words spoken by the present Dean of Westminster (Bishop Ryle) at the Pan-Anglican Congress:—

“ I am convinced that no more attractive, no more happy, no more useful field of work can be offered to a woman of devout mind and cultivated powers, able and willing to devote her days to the definite service of the Church, than that which is presented in the Church's accredited ministry of women. For women the Order of Deaconesses is the Church's highest ministry; its authorization stands in the pages of the New Testament, its sanction in the usage of the early Church; it requires that development of the character, it exacts that training of the intellect, it offers that exercise of freedom which in previous generations were impossible, but in our day point unerringly to the more general recognition and restoration of this Apostolic Order of the ministry of women. It is not an order to be acquired by the casual adoption of a uniform or the light-hearted enterprise upon a round of good works. It is an order of the Church, Scriptural and primitive in origin, conferred by the laying on of hands, weighted with a formal commission and discharged in parish and diocese under the supervision and direction of clergyman and Bishop. I venture to hope that in the development of this ministry the Church is destined to attach to her official organization some of the noblest characters, some of the best trained intellects of future time. . . . Equipped once more with the ministry of women the Anglican Communion will fulfil its stupendous summons of spiritual duty to the world with greater competence and with larger sympathy; the womanhood of our people will find not the least splendid career of trained intellect and high devotion within the recognized ranks of the ministry of the Church.”

PAPER READ BY DEACONESS MARY SIDDALL.

Head Deaconess of the Winchester Diocese.

At the outset I would ask you to notice the subject of this paper—it is the “Preparation for the Life of a Deaconess” and not the “Training of the Deaconess.” For though it is true in all professions that the life and character of the worker is a great factor in the work, for those who are set apart for a religious work it is the essential factor.

I would say at once that in the preparation for the Deaconess life we do not aim at turning out a professional Church worker—such a worker as is described (perhaps from imagination) in a recent number of a Church magazine—who

can say after nine months' training “that she knows how to teach in a Sunday school—she can manage a large mothers' meeting, is not afraid to stand up and address it”—and so forth.

Neither do we think it desirable that our Deaconess Homes, or Institutions, should become theological colleges where the intellectual capacity of a woman is made the chief, if not only, test. The preparation does include both sorts of training, but this training is not the most important part of the preparation.

The two years which are generally spent in a Deaconess Home are both for testing and preparation. During her two years a woman tests her vocation and is tested. It is not assumed, when she comes into residence, that she will become a deaconess either at the end of the two years or at any future time. She comes with the desire to serve—it may be a splendid enthusiasm for work that brings her, or it may be there is the further desire to dedicate herself to a life-long service. In the one case, she may become a Deaconess, and in the other a lay worker, but in either case she is prepared for service. This co-existence of deaconesses and lay workers in the same institution is, to my mind, a very important feature. If a woman does not feel called to a life-long service, no pressure is put upon her to be ordained, or if others judge that it is not expedient for her to be set apart, she can work none the less as a lay worker and her career is not cut short—she is not debarred from service.

But the testing for the diaconate extends, as a rule, beyond the two years. Generally a woman goes out as a lay worker, and she is tested after she has left the Institution by her work and life in a parish. The test is a valuable one. A deaconess must be able to live her life alone—she must have steadfastness of purpose, sufficient force of character to sustain a high standard and right tone, sufficient strength, both spiritual and physical, to bear the strain of discouragement and difficulties, common-sense enough to take reasonable care of herself, sufficient humility and self-control to work loyally under her vicar. These qualities can only be tested when a woman is placed in a position of responsibility.

But the two years are to be regarded, I think, primarily as of the nature of a retreat. During that time a woman is freed from many of the demands that society makes upon her, or she is relieved, for the time being, from the strain may be of an arduous profession. Her times of prayer and devotion are secured to her, she is able to give them a first place in her life; she has time and opportunity to cultivate sympathy with the lives of others. The purpose of the preparation is not to take a woman into a training school and impart to her as

much knowledge as we can, but rather to so order her life as to give her the best opportunity of growth. She is responding to a call and not training for a profession.

We shall have more to say presently of the practical and intellectual training as *part* of the preparation, but it seems well at the beginning to state the ideal that we set before us. The ideal for every deaconess is that she should be able to say in the spirit of the Master, "I am among you as He that serveth." Our women are preparing to be servants of the Church; we want them to go forth with a true ideal of service. In the best type of servant we look for three special characteristics:—

- (a) Devotion to the master set over him. The true servant knows the mind of his master and interprets it to others—all that he does is done in reference to his master's well-known wishes.
- (b) There must be a strong sense of duty. This carries him through many difficult and disagreeable tasks; it inspires him to be faithful when his work may seem at times to be unrecognized, fruitless, and not appreciated at its true worth.
- (c) We expect in the servant some knowledge and skill in the work which he has undertaken.

With these principles in mind, we shall plan our course of preparation. We will begin with the last, not because it is by any means of the chief importance, but because there is more that can be said about it.

(a) Training in technical knowledge will be of two kinds—
(1) Practical; (2) Intellectual.

(1) About half of the working day with us is devoted to gaining experience in practical work. We have care of the sanctuary of the church and its fair linen, which we wash and do up; we make the altar bread for one or more churches; we cut out and make simple garments such as our poor people require. An elementary knowledge of nursing is given, sufficient to enable a worker to give advice in simple cases of sickness and to know when a doctor is necessary. Social questions are studied through co-operation with the Charity Organization Society and the Citizens' Guild of Help, and knowledge is gained of the working of the Poor Law and the many philanthropic agencies in the city. Some experience is gained in teaching through Sunday school work and by hearing lessons in the day school. Practical acquaintance with the homes of the poor people and the people themselves is gained by regular house to house visitation; each worker has a district of her own for which she is responsible. Difficulties are discussed at the end of each day, and no relief

is given except after consultation. Each one is as a rule responsible also for an evening class, e.g., Girls' Club, Sewing Class, or Band of Hope.

I think it is important that this first experience of parish work should be gained during this time. A woman who has had no experience might well be overwhelmed by the sin and misery in our large towns. Going from the Home, as our workers do, she does not feel the full weight of responsibility. She can talk over her difficulties—she finds that others have the same; she is not alone in her failures. Above all, she has the regulated times of prayer which enable her to take a calm view of her work, and she cannot fall into the snare of overworking at a high pressure in the vain hope of overtaking the evil. During those two years she learns something of her limitations. Further, a woman who desires the life of a deaconess desires in the first place a life of active service rather than of contemplation. To such a one it is a great help to her devotion to find at once opportunity for service. The demands that her work make upon her develop her spiritual life, and as her spiritual life is deepened the work is sanctified.

(2) No less important is the *intellectual* training. It is essential that women who are going to teach, even the simplest religious truths, should have a sound knowledge of the Bible, Christian dogma, and Church history. This we try to give by means of lectures, and opportunities for reading and knowledge is tested by terminal examinations. No woman should, I think, be accepted for the diaconate who does not reach a certain standard of intellectual attainment, and this must be tested by examinations from time to time. But though I would regard a certain degree of knowledge as essential to a deaconess, I should be sorry if the two years were devoted solely or even chiefly to theological study, and if ordination were dependent on passing some final examination. It would introduce an element of unrest and nervous strain into the two years' course, which is exactly what we want to avoid. If the two years are to be of full benefit, they must be a time of rest—rest in work.

It must be remembered, too, that at present women do not come to us as a rule at the beginning of their working life—often they have had long years of work in other professions, or they may have had no professional training. In such cases the strain of a final examination, on which everything depends, is neither possible nor desirable. Yet such women may have much ripe experience and a good deal of intellectual power which they have not learnt to express in an examination paper. It would be a hardship to such women to be required

to pass an examination as a final test before ordination, and the Church would lose many devoted lives. As yet very little demand is made on the ordinary parish deaconess to give advanced teaching—it may be presumed, I think, that the vicar should be able to deal with difficult questions of theology.

There will always be room, no doubt, for deaconesses to take up special lines of work—for these special training will be necessary. It might be necessary in a few outlying districts for a deaconess to be a trained nurse—in this case she must have hospital experience. Or a woman may have special gift for teaching and desire to dedicate her life to Sunday school work—such a one must study methods of teaching. Or a woman who has great intellectual gifts may feel called to devote her life to the teaching of theology—for her a special course of theological training would be necessary. But the life of preparation should be additional to any special training of this kind, and should, as a rule, come after it.

I know that our training may be open to the criticism that it gives little knowledge about many things. But it is to be remembered that the aim of the Deaconess is not to become proficient in any one subject, but rather that she may have many channels through which she may bring help to those whom she goes to serve.

(b) I pass now to the second requisite for a life of service. Much can be done, I think, to strengthen the sense of duty in our women by the discipline of daily routine and by requiring obedience to a simple rule of life, which includes such things as getting up at a fixed time, putting out lights at a definite hour, fixed times of recreation, regular hours for study, going out to one's visiting at a given time in spite of the weather, and keeping strictly to one's work outside during working hours. These may seem small things, but they are of importance. I can speak myself as to the value of such a training. In the life of a professional woman, e.g., a teacher or nurse, definite hours have to be kept; she has to be at her post by a fixed time, and she cannot leave her work to accept an invitation or for any trifling cause. In the life of a deaconess there are few such safeguards—there are not many engagements that must be fulfilled at a definite time, she has an almost unlimited command of her day. The discipline of two years' simple rule helps to form a habit which is of great value when one has to plan out one's own time. Again, there is no room in a deaconess's life for luxurious living; as a rule she has not the means, and further it is right that she should maintain a standard of simplicity.

The life in the home must therefore be simple, there must be no extravagance. At the same time a Deaconess leading a busy life in the midst often of unhealthy surroundings cannot be an ascetic.

(c) I come lastly to that of which it is most difficult to speak—the life of devotion. We all of us know how easy it is for one called to minister in the Church to become unspiritual, to have times of devotion crowded out by the many calls to service. We know cases when very much work is done and very little influence exerted. Knowing these dangers, we try to keep constantly before our workers the necessity for a devotional life as being essential to the work of a deaconess. She cannot bring home to others what she herself does not know. As a help to this, we have a room in the house set apart as a chapel where we have regular offices and celebrations in addition to the services in our parish church. We arrange too for quiet days and a yearly retreat, which all are expected to attend. These times of united prayer and the weekly conferences in chapel, when we consider together the difficulties and ideals of a life of service, do much to unite us in forming a true idea of service.

There is a further matter that seems to call for consideration in connection with the preparation of the deaconess, before the close of the subject, that is the relative advantage of having large central deaconess homes and smaller diocesan ones. The first system has many advantages—it is an education for women to mix with others of different types. It is easier to arrange for lectures; again, it is more economical. At first sight it seems that the whole advantage is on the side of these. There is, however, a danger in having central deaconess homes lest they should become merely colleges for training. Something is to be said besides for the smaller diocesan homes. First, they bring the life of service more prominently before the women of the diocese; if, for example, we had not had our home in Newcastle quite half of our number would not, I think, have entertained the idea of offering themselves for service. But still more important is it that the deaconesses in a diocese should have a central home within easy reach, and that they should be in close touch with the Head Deaconess. A deaconess, except in rare cases, lives alone, and she has not the refreshments of home life such as others have. The Deaconess Home should aim at being a home for those who have gone out from it, where they can come at any time for rest or change. There would not, I think, be the same close tie if a woman had gone to a Deaconess Home in another part of the country.

There is also the further advantage in a diocesan home, of learning to know something of the local conditions and people

among whom she is going to work. People in the north country, for example, are less responsive, and anyone coming from the south takes some time to understand them.

On this point, and many others, there will be difference of opinion and other views will, we hope, be expressed this afternoon.

In working towards our ideal, we shall no doubt have different methods, but our ideal must be one and the same. The Church has need as much now as in S. Paul's day of the woman who is "a servant of the Church and a succourer of many"; the woman who is content to serve, and who has wide sympathies reaching out to all.

PAPER READ BY THE REV. H. V. ECK.

Sub-Warden of the East London Deaconesses' Institute.

I do not propose to say anything as to the respective merits of Sisters and Deaconesses. There was a time, now happily past, when the two ministries were regarded as belonging respectively to the two great schools of thought in the Church. It is one among many of the signs of a better mutual understanding that it is no longer possible to regard the two organizations from that point of view. Nor do I think that it is possible to regard them as rivals for the fulfilment of any given piece of work. Each of them, it seems to me, has its place and its work for which by the mere fact of its constitution it is better fitted than the other. That is true on the whole, though it does not deny that either will sometimes be found to be doing—and doing excellently—the work which may be regarded as more particularly the work of the other. I will then take it for granted that we need not discuss the respective merits of Sisters and Deaconesses, or regard them for a single moment as rivals in anything but the loyal service of our Lord in His Church. The Church has need of both, not only for the vast work which lies before her on all sides, but quite as much perhaps for the opportunity which both afford to the daughters of the Church for the fulfilment of the call to a life devotion according to the blessed will of God.

And this leads me, naturally and at once, to the particular division of the general subject of the work of Deaconesses to which I am anxious to confine myself this afternoon. I wish to speak especially of the lines of life and work which have been laid down for the Deaconesses at work in the Diocese of London, and, if necessary, to defend those lines.

The London Diocesan Deaconesses are both Deaconesses and Sisters; that is to say, they are not only set apart by the

laying on of hands to the Order of Deaconess, but they are further admitted into a Community having a definite rule of life, and claiming the allegiance of its members to its duly constituted officers.

It is to these lines of working that we in this diocese stand committed. Alike in West and East London, the Deaconesses working in our parishes are Sisters respectively of the West and East London Diocesan Communities. They promise obedience to a definite, if simple, rule of life, and to the Superior of their Community; they have their place in the Chapter of the Community; they work in accordance with a time-table drawn up for each parish with regard to the special circumstances of that parish.

Now the question immediately presents itself, and indeed is frequently asked in the form of an objection, or at least of a criticism, whether this membership in a Community and obedience to a rule of life and to a time-table imposed from without does not hamper the Deaconess in her work and create difficulties in her relationship with the vicar and with the other workers in the parish.

The answer to that is that it depends upon the Community, the rule of life, and the time-table. Of course, all of these might be of such a kind as seriously to interfere with the parochial life and work of the Deaconess. It might set up an authority antagonistic to that of the parish priest; it might impose a rule which would constantly interfere with parochial duty; it might draw up a time-table which would be in continual conflict with the hours of service, for instance, in the parish church. But there is nothing in Community life which in itself need do any of these things. I suppose that all Communities, other than those known as contemplative, must so arrange their rule as that it need not interfere with active duty. The great Communities which are engaged in educational, or penitentiary, or other active work must be able to work unhampered by the hours of their time-table; that is to say, their time-table must be such as will fit in with the times and seasons of their active life. Just in the same way, our contention is that active parochial work need not be hindered by the fact that those engaged in it are members of a Community.

And we go further and claim for our method of working special and distinct advantages. I will speak, if I may, not now as the Sub-Warden of a Community, but as a parish priest who has had the advantage of the loyal, faithful, and indefatigable work of Deaconesses in his parish for upwards of twenty years. And I say without any sort of hesitation that the fact of my Deaconesses being members of a

Community, with all that such membership entails, has always been a great advantage. Their time-table, carefully drawn up to fit in with, and to embody, the parochial time-table, has, I feel sure, encouraged the punctual observance of parochial times and seasons. I have never felt that the rule of life stood in the way of any parochial duty, or curtailed the time which a parish priest might reasonably expect that his co-workers should devote to their work in the district or elsewhere—and there have been many occasions when I have been most thankful to be able to consult the Mother of the Community with regard to questions, such as arise in most parishes sometimes in the relationship between the parish priest and his workers. All these seem to me to be special and distinct advantages of the membership of the Deaconess in a Community, but the highest and greatest of all remains to be touched upon. It stands in the emphasis which the Community places upon the *life* of its members.

Dr. Illingworth says somewhere that we mistake the meaning of vocation when we think of it as a call to work for God rather than as a call to God Who sets us our work. And we think that we have seen a risk of this mistake in much of the active work of to-day. Do not our very virtues carry with them the risk and the possibility of this danger? There is, alas! the possibility, and those of us who are most active know it best, that in work for God, God Himself may be forgotten. Intense activity, great zeal, absorbing interest in people and things, great as all these are and worthy of all admiration, may be purchased at far too high a price if that price is the loss of the soul's rest in God. There are clergy whose confession will have to be that of the husbandman in the Book of Canticles: "They made me a keeper of the vineyards and mine own vineyard have I not kept." There are Deaconesses of whom I have read the very activity of whose life, as it was described, makes one tremble. And although, of course, one would not say that the most active worker cannot guard and protect his or her own life from the encroachments of an excessive activity, cannot be at the same time most strict and devout in the devotion of his or her life first and foremost to God and, only secondarily, to the work, yet there must with many be the utmost risk of a reversal of these claims. And it is just here that the Community steps in. It becomes the safeguard of the paramount claims of the great Lord of the vineyard upon all the workers in His vineyard. It says to the worker: "Here in your busy day you must find time and make time for prayer and meditation; here you must clear a little space for rest, so that you may be to others a restful influence in their busy life; here, instead of incessant talking, you must be silent that you may learn to think as well

as to act; here you must set apart an hour for study lest you should have no message to deliver to those who greatly need a message from another world." That is, to those of us who have learnt its meaning, the supreme value of the Community to the work of the Deaconess. And that, too, we venture to think, is its value to an age of such activity and unrest as that in which we live. To ourselves it stands for the closer walk with God, for the life lived in His presence, for the heart and mind stayed on Him. If it stands not for that, it stands for nothing at all. And to the world without we dare to hope that it brings not only the succour of diligent, faithful, untiring work, but the message of the peace which passeth all understanding—the message given not in words, but by the whole atmosphere of the presence of the worker who has felt and responded to the call of Him Who sits above the water-floods and remaineth a King for ever.

So then the Church has need of lives surrendered and dedicated, without distraction of other duties, to the service of God, whatever form the dedication takes. It is not only because of the greatness and extent of the work which can best be done by dedicated lives. It is also that the Church may be able to say to those who desire so to dedicate themselves, "Here is the way in which you can fulfil your vocation."

There is abundant room for the work and for the life of Sisterhoods, technically so called; that has come to be very generally recognized. There is room also for the work of Deaconesses; that is only beginning to receive recognition. But the recognition will increase almost without limit as we come to realize more and more that parochial work must be done by those who have been trained to do it. What I have tried to say this afternoon is that the very necessity and urgency of the work calls for safeguards, and that if it is to be done in the best way it must be done by those whose own lives are being lived in closest touch with the unseen. It would indeed be wicked and untrue not to say that great numbers are so living and working without any restraining or constraining force than that of their own deep, personal religion. All I do desire, and have dared, to say is that the Deaconesses working in the Diocese of London have found the Community life a great help to them in their efforts to abide true to that calling wherein they have been called, as they humbly believe, to the service of God.

DEACONESS JULIA GILPIN.

S.P.G. Missionary in the Diocese of Pretoria.

THE CALL OF THE DEACONESS TO THE CHURCH ABROAD.

The question before us is, I suppose, not only whether there is work in the Church abroad in which the Deaconess may take a share, but rather whether there are any special needs in this work which can best be met by the special contribution offered by the revival of this primitive order.

To arrive at any clear idea on this subject it will be necessary to pass in review very briefly the principal colonial and missionary lands in which at the present time Deaconesses of the English Church are working, and try to discover the nature of the call which has attracted them there. But first there are two or three general considerations which would in themselves suggest that there may be some inherent suitability in this order to meet the needs of the Church abroad, for while the revival of the order belongs to recent days, and took place in our own land with all its highly developed civilization and organization, its original establishment, we must not forget, takes us back to the infant Church of the Apostolic days and to conditions which we see reproduced to-day in the struggling native Churches of India, Africa, and other lands, especially those in which women, long despised and ignorant, can only be approached by the ministry of women. In the early Church it was the Deaconess who prepared the women for baptism, and upon whom devolved not only the ministering to the sick and poor, but much of the spiritual work too, which in these days is so peculiarly her privilege and province, especially in dealing with secluded women in the East. And as we see these old needs reproduced amidst the extraordinarily different conditions of to-day another point seems to strike us—this old order, once so active and then so long dormant in the Church, has come to life with new vigour, new powers, and new adaptability to modern life. The freedom of the Deaconess, combined with the cardinal principle of obedience and loyalty to the Bishop and clergy under whom she serves, enables her, strengthened as she is by the special grace of her ordination, to adapt herself to the special needs and conditions of the country in which she serves.

To take first then the great country of India, we find a twofold and very urgent need. First the English speaking community, including the large Eurasian population. Amongst the Eurasians weakness of character and a low moral standard urgently need to be reinforced and corrected, especially in face of the fact that they, who are all nominal Christians, are often the only representatives of that great

Name who come in contact with Hindus and Mohammedans, and here in many large centres, and in many ways, comes the call for the work of the Deaconess, her recognized standing in the Church, trained judgment, experience and sympathy, helping her to guide and uplift these weaker brethren. There is now urgent need for a Deaconess to establish and carry on the long desired rescue work in the Punjab, and four Indian bishops have intimated that they wish the women's work of their dioceses organized under a Deaconess, none of whom, however, have as yet been able to find the women they seek.

Turning for a moment to the other side, the needs of the Indian Church cannot be exaggerated—it has always seemed to me that it is here more than anywhere that the Deaconess fits in with the social customs and habits of the people and so gains access to the women. They to whom the thought of a young, unmarried lay missionary is so incomprehensible, even distasteful, can recognize in some degree the special position and life-long consecration of the Deaconess, and it is she who can minister in spiritual things to the high caste converts, and one cannot help feeling that it is as members of this order that Indian Christian women, for whom a life of service in the Church in any other way seems almost impossible, may be enabled to come to the help of their fellow countrywomen, as we rejoice to know that two of them are already doing. Apart from these two Indian Deaconesses there are in India, at present, only about ten others, of whom seven are engaged in English and three in native work.

Other countries which have made a beginning in this work include China, where Deaconess Edith Ransome and her late much lamented sister, Deaconess Jessie, have worked for years amongst the Christian women in Peking; Madagascar, where there are two Deaconesses, both of whom have long worked as missionaries in this country; Thursday Island, where, far away among the Australian aborigines, Deaconess F. Buchanan is working alone. Christchurch, New Zealand, has a branch of the London Diocesan Institution, there is one Deaconess working in Tasmania, and two also are working in the great growing field of the Canadian Church; and this small list exhausts the number of those working for the Church abroad, with the exception of South Africa, where there are only seven for both white and native work.

In South Africa there are many branches of work for which a duly trained and experienced Deaconess may indeed prove a most valuable agent. Especially would I suggest the care and shepherding of the many English girls who go out to the colonies as servants, shop assistants, etc., tempted by high salaries, and knowing nothing of the terrible temptations of life in such a place as Johannesburg, for instance. Although

there does not seem scope for the Deaconess as a purely parochial worker on the same lines as in England, help to the clergy in confirmation classes, communicants' guilds, etc., not necessarily in one parish only, could be given by a little body of Deaconesses having their head-quarters in one of the towns, and a few weeks' visits to outlying districts at special times, such as the preparation for a confirmation, etc., might be of great use. And there are many hundreds of native women baptized into the Church year by year, and children of Christian parents growing up; these, like their white sisters, are pressing into the towns for work, and there are surrounded by every possible temptation. They crave for education, which they fondly hope will bring them to the level of the white man, and are passing through the painful and unlovely transition stage between the savage and the civilized and educated Christian. Yet they love their Church and will make sacrifices for it. Here there is work for many Deaconesses in the building up of the Christian women and girls who, in their time, must have such influence on the future native Church.

As to the kind of women, and the sort of training necessary for those called to these far-off fields of labour, the question is far too great to enter on here. The primary requisite is ever the same, they *must* be women "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," and they *should* have many lesser gifts and qualities, for it is indeed no light thing to be called to a share, however humble, in the building up of the Church of Christ in the far places of the earth.

THE WORK OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH.

This paper was compiled in the year 1896, with the full approval of the late Primus of the Scottish Church and the late Canon Body.

Organized by the Church. Women have been dedicated to the service of God in His Church from earliest times.

Three Orders.—Deaconesses, Ecclesiastical Widows, Dedicated Virgins.

Deaconess.—The Deaconess was a Church officer—a servant of the Church—such was Phœbe.

This order rendered necessary by reason of the social position which women occupied in the East. They received ordination by the Bishop, the same words being used to express the Act of Ordination as in the Ordination of Deacons. They were under the immediate direction of the Bishop.

Rom. xvi. 1.

Its Origin.

Mentioned by S. Paul as the "women." As deacons were ordained for the purpose of setting free the Apostles from the burden of "serving the tables" and looking after the alms for the poor, so the Deaconesses were ordained to carry out active ministrations among the *women* of the Church. I. Tim. iii. 11.

Duties.—It belonged to their office:—To be present at the interviews which took place between the clergy and the women of the congregation. To instruct the women preparing for baptism; to assist at their baptism, that all might be done with propriety. To assist at the ceremony of anointing with consecrated oil. To keep the doors on the women's side of the church. To have charge of the widows, the sick, and the poor, and all who were dependent on the alms of the Church. To aid the Church by active ministrations as the need arose, e.g., Phœbe was sent an important errand. Rom. xvi. 1.

Ordination conveyed no sacerdotal functions of any kind, but it conferred grace, which gave the order a distinctive character. Position in the Church.

Form of prayer used in the Ordination Service:—"Give unto her the Holy Ghost, that she may worthily accomplish the work now committed unto her, to Thy glory, and the praise of Thy Christ." Through it she received grace:—To worthily accomplish her work. To acquire a distinctive character, "grave, sober, faithful." I. Tim. iii. 11.

Celibacy.—It is evident that the ordination of Deaconesses included a vow of celibacy, but it appears probable that no vow was actually taken until the fourth century. The Council of Chalcedon pronounced an anathema against those who should marry after having been ordained to the diaconate, for this reason probably. None were admitted under a certain age—originally sixty years of age, afterwards forty—by order of the Council of Chalcedon. Tertullian lays it down that they should be "sixty years of age, widows of *one* husband, and mothers, that their experience may enable them to give sympathetic help to others." This order lasted in the Western Church until after the sixth century, and in the Eastern Church until the eighth century.

Age.

Requirements.

II.—Ecclesiastical Widows.

Requirements.—After speaking of the life and duties of the natural widow, S. Paul describes those of the *Ecclesiastical Widow*: gives rules for her admission and for placing her name on the roll of the Church. This enrolment implied a dedication to a widowed estate, from which it was a sin to withdraw, but no vow was taken, therefore the younger widows were to be refused.

Those only accepted who had been married *once*, as was the case with the Bishops and Deacons. Those who were

I. Tim. v. 3.

I. Tim. v. 9-16.

I. Tim. v. 12.

I. Tim. v. 12, 13.

I. Tim. v. 9.

I. Tim. iii. 2-12.

I. Tim. v. 5. "Widows indeed"—no home ties or duties, "desolate." Those whose spiritual life had been tested as having "trusted in God" and continued in the supplications and the prayers night and day.

S. Polycarp.—S. Polycarp speaks of the devout widows (169 A.D.) "as an altar from which the incense of intercession is continually ascending."

Duties.—Their duties twofold:—

I. Tim. v. 5.
I. Tim. v. 10.

(a) Prayer and fasting, as those of Anna.

(b) Good works—"lodged strangers, washed the saints' feet, relieved the afflicted."

Vow of Perpetual Widowhood.

This primitive class of widows became gradually merged towards the fourth century into a second order of widows, who took the vow of perpetual widowhood, at first privately, afterwards in the presence of the Bishop, and who then adopted a distinctive dress. This was encouraged by the Church, and especially by the Latin Fathers, at the end of the fourth century. At first they lived in their own homes, then in Communities.

In the course of the second century, and alongside with this Order of Ecclesiastical Widows, there arose a strong spirit in favour of abstinence from marriage, and a desire to dedicate the *whole* life to God, and so that of *Canonical Virgins* sprang into existence.

Dedicated or Canonical Virgins.

Dedicated Virgins.

Women, who, for the love of Christ, entirely dedicated themselves to Him in a single life. They chose virginity that they might with more undisturbed minds serve the Lord. They were sometimes included under the name of "widow," and when the Gallican Church enacted in the fourth century that vows of widowhood necessitated entrance into a monastery, the *Order* of Widows merged into that of "Church," or "Dedicated Virgins." Probably the four daughters of the evangelist Philip were "virgins," but of this there is no certainty.

No Office. Recognized by Church in Fourth Century as an Order.

I. Cor. vii. 24.

"A State of Life."

I. Cor. vii. 24.

Position.—They held no office in the Church, and at first lived in their own homes. In time they came to form a separate class, and in the third century were recognized as a distinct order in the Church.

S. Paul speaks of the married and unmarried estates in Christ as being alike gifts of God, and of virginity as a distinct vocation and recognized as equally permanent as the marriage state. "Let every man *wherein he is called* therein abide with God." S. Augustine, as well as S' Chrysostom, S. Ambrose, and S. Jerome, take this view, and that S. Paul is referring to dedicated virginity as a state of life for all time, and not for a present necessity only.

External Signs.—In the course of the fourth century two external signs of the vow of virginity came to be adopted:—

1. The wearing of a distinctive dress.

2. The vesting with a veil *by a Bishop* and by no one else. This vesting with the veil took place only after a certain time of probation, and was a witness of the Church's solemn confirmation of their consecration.

In order to protect the virginity of those who had taken the vow, arose in the fourth century the custom of secluding them and living together in Communities, under episcopal control. This authority varied from time to time.

Relation to Episcopacy—*The main points.*—The Bishop must give his consent to every foundation in his diocese. He must approve the election of the Superior who held office under his supervision. He was responsible for the moral conduct of the Superior and of the whole Community. He must make yearly (at least) visitations, which the Superior or Abbot was bound to attend. He must admonish and correct all misconduct and irregularity. He must approve of the removal of a member from one Community to another. He must endeavour to keep the peace between the Superior and the members. He must *not* interfere with the revenues of the Society and with its internal management, but he is to defend their rights and privileges diligently.

Sisters.—The Sisters of the present day are the spiritual descendants of these Canonical Virgins, who were *lay women* and not Church Officers—whose existence sprang from devotion and not from the needs of the Church—who lived within the home and under its discipline, and were not, like the Deaconesses, living more isolated lives under the immediate direction of the Bishop and clergy. However, it belongs to the episcopate as representing the highest order in the Church to not only formally approve of the constitution and rule of a Community of Dedicated Virgins, but *as visitors* to exercise certain powers which belong to that office. This should be a strength as well as a security, and a great means of promoting a true spirit of unity and charity among its various Societies.

Deaconesses.—*Two distinct vocations were recognized in the Primitive Church.* Not until the eighth Century did the two orders merge into one, and that of Deaconesses cease to exist. Within the Monastic Institutions into which they merged, however, the two vocations are still recognized, some being of a distinctly active character, and some of a distinctly contemplative character, exhibiting the two lives of S. Peter and S. John, Martha and Mary.

The Order of Deaconesses *sprung out of the needs of the Church.*

1. Change of Dress.
2. Vesting with Veil.

3. Seclusion.

Bishop's Authority.

Merged into Monastic Institution.

Origin of Deaconesses.

Origin of Church Virgins.

S. Mark iii. 14, 15.

S. Luke x. 1.

S. Mark x. 21.

Acts vi. 2-4.

S. John xiv. 10.

Special Training Necessary.

The Order of Canonical Virgins *sprung out of devotion*. The principle underlying this is expressed by the act of our blessed Lord when "He ordained twelve that they might be *with Him*, and that He might send them forth to preach." And when "He appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place whether He Himself should come." Some He set apart *to be with Him*, and some He called to work for Him by representing Him in the various places He intended to visit.

Also by the Apostles when they ordained men to relieve them from the burden of serving tables, etc., in order that they might give themselves continually to prayer.

The life of a Deaconess fulfils the one vocation, being of a distinctly active character, i.e., of work sustained by prayer. The life of a Sister fulfils the other, being of a distinctly contemplative character, i.e., of devotion shining forth in her work. Both vocations have their place and work for God in His Church, and both need the strength and security of the controlling power of Ecclesiastical Authority. Both are good and dear to Him, for both are alike the creation of His grace. Both have one end and aim, viz., His glory. Both represent one aspect of His Incarnate Life. His Ministerial Life—always "Doing good." His Hidden Life—"Abiding in the Father."

The active and contemplative life combine in various degrees. It is the *predominance of either which gives to each its special character*. Their lines of work and rules of life are, as it were, set in different keys. S. Peter and S. John run *together* to the Holy Sepulchre, and they work *together* the first miracle at the Beautiful Gate—yet each retains his distinctive character.

The dominating characteristic is manifested in the constitution and rules the *spirit of the life enjoined by the rule and the character and amount of work undertaken*, and this must necessarily determine the especial kind of training required by each. It is not possible to train a Deaconess and a Sister in the same institution and under the same rule.

The Training of a Deaconess.—In training for a Deaconess the time prescribed for devotion must be controlled by the work to be done. The devotional habits which may be necessary for a more contemplative life, would be incompatible with the hard-working, practical life of a Deaconess; nevertheless, she should be as truly religious as those who by their rule have more time given to the cultivation of the interior life and prayer. She should be filled with the spirit of devotion, and by its strength carry out her work. Work is for her prayer, and often must take its place.

The Training of a Sister.—In training for a Sister the first aim is the perfecting of her interior life. She strives to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord and to grow in the love of our Holy Saviour, which love should shine forth in all she does. As the rule of the Deaconess is arranged so as to further the development of her *work*, and is not allowed to interfere with her practical life, so the rule of the Sister is arranged with a view to the development of her character, and the growth of her interior life. To further this, the quiet atmosphere of a Community House, apart from the necessary stress and strain of work, is also necessary.

Revival of Original Spirit—Women's Work.—As in their origin these two vocations were distinct, it is desirable that now the position of each and their relationship to one another in the Church should be recognized and controlled by Episcopal Authority. At the present time the whole tendency of women's work is towards expansion and freedom. Various secular vocations have been recognized and the training for each has been definitely organized by due authority, and is now in full operation, e.g., the teacher and the nurse.

Just in proportion as these realize the greatness of their calling, they are conscious of the insufficiency of their own power to acquire the whole that their profession embraces. They do not attempt impossibilities, but they choose their special subjects and make them their chief study.

There is no rivalry between those who take up the different subjects, so would the recognition of these two distinct vocations greatly tend to hinder the spirit of rivalry which more or less exists between the Deaconess and the Sister. Let the one generously give up to the other and not attempt to develop a life which is not primitive in its origin. Surely it is the spirit of pride and covetousness that has so greatly hindered all Church work, the unwillingness to give up to others—caring more to do *much* than to do *well*, the question not being which life is the higher life or the better life, but which is the life into which God has called the individual soul.

They need to be controlled by Episcopal Authority. The teacher and nurse, etc., are helped and guided and controlled by certain rules laid down by those whose experience and position enables them to act with authority. Where women recognize lawful authority they are willing to obey.

No Rivalry.**Controlled by Episcopal Authority.**

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Woman in the Church and in Life

BY

ELIZABETH FOX HOWARD.

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Woman in the Church and in Life.

THE right position of woman in the Church and in life is so large a subject that it seems important to keep it on a high plane at the outset by realizing its connection with some of the root ideas of religion. Consciously or unconsciously our practices work themselves out in accordance with our creed. The belief which a man holds about his God must reflect in the long run on his practical work, and his whole scheme of life. It has been said rather cynically that man makes God after his own image, and to a certain extent there is truth in this. No one who has ever thought at all about the history of religions, their rise and growth and characteristics, can have failed to notice how men's ideas of God have varied with differing periods of civilization, how in early stages of development God has been credited with attributes which a later age has discarded as wholly unworthy. Even in the history of Israel's moral and religious beliefs we can trace a gradual evolution from lower to higher, a gradual unfolding of a wider and nobler conception of the Divine Being, from a jealous and vindictive tribal God to the pure and holy Father of all men. It is not that God Himself changes, but simply that He *reveals Himself progressively* to the minds of men and of nations as they are able to grasp fresh truth about Him.

We can scarcely venture to say that we in this twentieth century have got to the end of our search into the nature of God, that the Spirit whom Jesus Christ promised to "lead us into all truth" has not revealed fresh mysteries to the seeking soul since the days when "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

THE DIVINE MOTHERHOOD.

I desire to touch in all reverence on a subject too much neglected, an aspect of religion which we tacitly ignore. We may hope that we all believe in the great revelation which

Jesus made of the Fatherhood of God. In spite of some denials and inconsistencies there is little doubt that at the present day this great truth, with its resulting belief in the brotherhood of man, is the central point of our religion. But there is yet another aspect which is hardly ever touched upon: I mean the *Divine Motherhood*. If we are to have a complete conception of the supreme Being, we surely dare not lose sight of this element. It is, after all, one of the deepest human instincts in worship. It has passed through many vicissitudes and has often been discredited, but for all that it cannot be ignored, and I want to show that it has a practical bearing on the subject before us. The earliest form of love is *mother love*, and if we go back to the dim beginnings of religion we find almost universally (according to most students of the subject), that the earliest divinities were earth goddesses. To the primitive man, living on the fruits of the earth, his earliest idea of a beneficent being was the great Mother, the reproductive, creative, nurturing force. We find this in Egypt, Crete, Greece, Asia Minor, and many other countries. The "Diana of the Ephesians," whose temple was one of the wonders of the world, was one of these old mother-goddesses.*

The Semitic peoples were distinctly masculine in character, and in their conception of the Deity. It can hardly be purely accidental that in the comparatively modern Mohammedan religion we find so low an estimate of women, who are, indeed, scarcely credited with the possession of individual souls. In other Eastern religions, such as Hinduism and Japanese Buddhism, we find on the other hand that the feminine principle is recognised, and hence partly the great power and influence of Indian and Chinese mothers in matters of belief and worship.

Among Western nations the instinct has found its outlet in what is practically the giving of Divine honours to the Virgin Mary, and it is probably owing to our Protestant dislike of what we regard as superstition, that we have swung to the opposite extreme, and have failed to recognise what is the inner meaning of this enormously wide-spread cult.

It is somewhat interesting to turn back for a moment to the Hebrew development of this instinct. One can hardly

* Travellers in Ephesus to-day are still offered terra cotta fragments bearing the symbol of the bee, the emblem of fertility.

imagine a more purely masculine religion than that of the Old Testament, and yet we find, as thought advanced, that the seers and philosophers among the Hebrews felt the incompleteness and lack of balance in the popular idea of God. And so the conception grew up of the *Divine Wisdom* personified, always in the feminine gender, and having all the perfect feminine attributes. We are familiar with the passages in "Proverbs" which exemplify this, but still more striking is the following extract from the "Book of Wisdom" which, whether of set purpose or not, while describing the Divine Wisdom, sums up also the character of the ideal woman.

ATTRIBUTES OF THE DIVINE WISDOM.

"She that is the Artificer of all things taught me, even Wisdom. For there is in her a Spirit quick of understanding, holy, alone in kind (*margin*: Soul-born), manifold, subtle, freely moving, clear in utterance, unpolluted, distinct, unharmed, loving what is good, keen, unhindered, beneficent, loving towards man, steadfast, sure, free from care, all-powerful, all-surveying, and penetrating through all spirits that are quick of understanding. . . . She is a breath of the power of God, and a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty. . . . From generation to generation passing into holy souls she maketh them friends of God and prophets."*

We ourselves even in the present day are too apt to think of God as of some Jupiter, away on a throne in Heaven. But the more we can clear our minds of such anthropomorphic ideas, the more we shall find that perfection demands as *complete* a conception as we can possibly get. There is no need for us to go to the Virgin Mary to supply qualities thought to be lacking in God Himself. We no longer think of Him as an angry Judge to be pacified. Jesus has revealed to us once and for all the gentler and more tender aspects of the Divine Nature, combining as He does in His own person both the masculine and feminine elements.

At a time when womanhood, especially in the Greek and Roman world, was held in particularly low esteem, His reverent and sympathetic treatment of women of all sorts and conditions has always stood out as one of the great

* "Book of Wisdom," vii, 22.

"reforming" or rather transforming elements of His earthly ministry. It has sometimes been noted that Jesus never condemned slavery, or even war; His method was to cast the seeds of great principles into the world and trust to their bearing fruit as the Christian conscience developed. The raising of women and their recognition as symbols of one aspect of the Divine nature, is a later development of His teaching, for which the world was not then fully ripe.

"Until the symbol was raised to its true dignity, the thing signified could not be rightly apprehended. Ignorance of womanhood's true dignity and equality with manhood hid from the world the tenderest aspect of the nature of God. . . . It seems as if at the present time a new outpouring of tender influences was manifest in the world, revealing the presence of the Spirit of love by care for the weak and helpless, especially by the upspringing of agencies for the protection of the young, and the well-being of children, in the change which is transforming the position of women, and in the keen sensitiveness to human suffering and wrong which is so marked a feature of the age. Mother-love has always been in the world, but it is now throbbing in the heart of humanity with quickened pulsations; this enlargement of sympathy and abounding pity is Humanity's response to the Divine Reality, the offspring's correspondence with the mother-heart of parental love."*

If we feel that in our growing and widening conception of the nature of God we must lay more stress on His nurturing, comforting, and protecting qualities, does it not enlarge our ideas in many directions? God's mother-aspect, if we may reverently describe it in this way, needs expression, and a church or a community which deliberately or even unconsciously ignores this, is missing half the completeness and beauty of the whole. In the code of Manu, the Indian law-giver, hundreds of years before the Christian era, there is this phrase: "Where woman is honoured there is joy in Heaven, where she is despised religious acts become fruitless."

THE TESTIMONY OF FRIENDS.

The Society of Friends as a religious body has from its first start recognized this. The *equal dignity and usefulness* of the man and the woman in the church and in life has been and

* "The Victory that Overcometh," p. 91.—HELEN A. DALLAS.

is one of their root principles, and one of their sources of strength. At a time when the whole question of the social and economic and political status of women is so much before the world, and things are in a state of unrest and transition, it may be of interest to others beside Quakers themselves to realize the ancient and honourable practice which is the heritage of our Society. It may be helpful to note briefly the attitude taken by the early Friends on this subject, and principally by George Fox himself.

From the first, there were women preachers, and the first minister who became definitely recognized in the Society after George Fox was Elizabeth Hooton. We find various mentions of her in Fox's journals, and in the year 1671 she and several other Friends accompanied him to Barbadoes and Jamaica in the service of truth. While in Jamaica, Elizabeth Hooton died, in the very midst of her work. George Fox writes of her as "A woman of great age, who had travelled much in truth's service and suffered much for it. She was well the day before she died, and departed in peace like a lamb."*

The part played by Margaret Fell, the mother of Quakerism, is too well known to need emphasizing. We may note that the "first publisher of truth" in London was a woman from the North of England, Isabel Buttery, who was the earliest to preach and to suffer, though her work was, perhaps, somewhat lost sight of in the full tide of life that swept a little later from north to south. Women were the first to preach in the English University towns, and on the Continent of America.

The earliest print of a Friends' meeting shows a woman addressing the assembly, not from the gallery, but from a stool or tub. It was not until 1706 that a stand or place for their special use was erected at two of the London meeting-houses.

We may note that the preaching of women seems to have begun in England among some of the Independent churches, about 1640, before the commencement of George Fox's ministry. It is thought that this practice originated in certain Baptist churches in Holland. "Many more of their women do venture to preach among the Baptists than among the Brownists in England."—(1646.)

* G. Fox, "Journal," Vol. II, p. 160.

William Prynne, in a pamphlet entitled "A Fresh discovery of some Prodigious new Blazing Stars and Firebrands styling themselves new Lights" (1645), asks, "Whether Independents admitting women not only to vote as members but sometimes to preach, expound, speak publicly as predicants in their conventicles, be not directly contrary to the Apostles' doctrine and practice, and a mere politick invention to engage that sex to their party?" He says also in his preface, that the Independents give women "not only decisive *votes*, but liberty of preaching and prophesying."

WOMEN IN MINISTRY AND CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

So that Friends cannot claim to be the absolute pioneers in the matter, but the striking thing about it is that what other bodies began in a sporadic manner and soon abandoned, they *incorporated into the very life of the Society*. George Fox himself always upheld most staunchly the liberty of women both in the ministry and in church government. In a letter to the Duke of Holstein,* who had objected to women preaching in his dominions, and had brought forward the often quoted words of St. Paul as to women being silent in the churches, George Fox affirms that it was only the unruly and overdressed women of whom the Apostle disapproved! He points out to the Duke that there are far more passages in which Paul speaks of women as his "fellow labourers," † as "teachers of good things," ‡ as "succourers of many," and he takes it as a matter of course that women "pray and prophesy" § equally with their brethren. The only question at issue is whether they should do so with covered or uncovered heads.

But it was not only in the matter of preaching that George Fox upheld the work of women in the church. He realized with his statesmanlike instinct that it is on the mother-side, the care for the poor and suffering, the ordering of money affairs for the benefit of others, that women can perhaps do the best work. The story of how he founded the Box Meeting in London very early in his ministry is told in his journals. || He had just come in from visiting some Friends who were ill, when one Sarah Blackberry came to complain to him of the sad state of the poor, and how many Friends were in want. Within three hours

* G. Fox, "Journal," Vol. II, p. 405.

† Philippians, iv. 2.

‡ Titus, ii. 3.

§ 1 Corinthians, ii. 5.

|| Cambridge Journal, II, p. 342. "The London Friends' Meetings," BECK & BALL, p. 344.

George Fox had collected a meeting of about sixty women "at the sign of the Helmet, at a Friend's House," such as were "sensible women of the Lord's truth, and fearing God." Then and there he established a special separate meeting of women Friends, responsible to no other body, and put into their hands the full power to administer funds at their own discretion. This Box Meeting, as it was called, still meets in London, and has the administration of valuable freehold and funded property. A little later the Six Weeks Meeting was started as a court of appeal for discipline and the arrangement of meetings, and it consisted in almost equal numbers of men and women. They were all to be "grave and ancient persons," but as we find the average age was forty-five years, it seems that this must refer to their standing in the truth rather than their actual years.

In Wiltshire, in 1673, George Fox had to combat a good deal of prejudice over the establishment of separate meetings for women. He affirmed that "faithful women who were called to the belief of the truth might in like manner come into the possession and practice of the gospel order, and therein be meet helps unto the men in the restoration, in the service of Truth, in the affairs of the Church, as they are outwardly in civil or temporal things." After much wrangling, one of the chief opposers was struck down by the power of the Lord, and confessed his error.* George Fox goes on to say: "Women's meetings were settled up and down the nation and beyond the seas in the power of the Lord which was before the Devil was, in which power of the Lord no sect or apostasy can come, but peace and unity." In the present day it is now usual to have joint meetings for Church affairs. In 1896, London Yearly Meeting of Friends decided that "in future women Friends are to be recognised as forming a constituent part of all our meetings for Church affairs, equally with their brethren."

PASTORAL DUTIES.

Women share equally with men the work of *overseers* and *elders*. In both these offices there is plenty of scope for the exercise of the qualities that ought to be found specially in a woman, a spirit of sympathy and motherly kindness, as well

* G. Fox, "Journal," Vol. II, p. 202.

as discriminating instinct and tact. Many a young beginner in the vocal ministry can look back gratefully to the kind and encouraging word or letter received from some woman of larger experience, and this helpful sympathy, even if it cost an effort to the giver, is never thrown away.

We hear a good deal now of the difficulty in carrying out *pastoral work* under the purely voluntary system that prevails in the Society, but it is found that the visitation of members in a friendly way, and yet with a definite underlying religious purpose, is a work which can suitably be carried on by women Friends. In certain Monthly Meetings, there is the beautiful practice of appointing some motherly woman to call at the house after the birth of a child to any of its members, and give the little one a definite welcome. In a community which does not recognise infant baptism, the babies are apt to be overlooked until they are old enough to come to school or Meeting on Sunday, so that it seems particularly right and fitting to carry out this little service.

I have mentioned the recognised right of women in Friends' meetings to take part in *vocal* ministry on exactly the same footing as the men. It would be too large a subject to enter upon here, though full of interest,—whether it is possible to generalise at all as to the *quality* and *scope* of women's ministry, and whether it has peculiar characteristics of its own. Women, perhaps, reach conclusions in a more intuitive and less logical way than men. Their minds, as a rule, grasp details more clearly than large general issues. Possibly their ministry is weaker on the teaching and apologetic side, and stronger on the devotional and spiritual. But these are matters which cannot here be enlarged upon with any profit.

FAR REACHING RESULTS.

My next point is to enquire what has been the *result*, not only on the Church but *on the women themselves*, of this principle of equality which has prevailed among Friends for 250 years, and in no other body to the same extent.* I think no one can doubt that it has bred a wonderfully deep sense of responsibility and of self respect, of noble and dignified womanhood. Quaker women are *expected* to rise to their responsibilities,

* The Salvation Army has of late years taken somewhat the same attitude.

and as a rule they have responded to that expectation. Incidentally this seems to the present writer to apply to the question of whether women are fit to be entrusted with larger political power. The fact that a trust is laid upon a woman, and that she finds she is considered fully capable of carrying it out, inspires and educates her, bringing out all the latent possibilities in her nature. Quaker women know that they are not looked upon as helpless playthings, but as comrades and fellow-workers.

The fact also that a thorough *education* has always been considered by Friends to be as necessary for girls as for boys, and that this has been consistently upheld all through the history of the Society, both in its public schools and in private teaching, has had a great influence on the status of women Friends. They learned how to take an intelligent interest in outside matters, and how to serve efficiently alongside the men in meetings for Church affairs, long before it became as usual as it is at present for women to serve on public bodies. I believe that an unusually large proportion of the women now serving on Councils, Boards of Guardians, and Education Committees, either are or have been Friends, and they have reason to be thankful for the traditions of business habits, self control, and sober judgment which have been handed down to them by their Quaker ancestors.

But it is in *private* even more than in public life that this principle of the equality of the sexes, or rather the absolute interdependence of men and women, has worked out with the greatest success. From the wedding day, when the bridegroom and bride make their declarations in identical terms, with no question of obedience on the woman's part, but a mutual promise that each will be loving and faithful, the compact is entered into as a partnership of love and confidence and service. Partly because of the care which has always been taken over the question of marriage,—the weighty advices as to thought and consideration, deference to the wishes of parents and so on,—and partly because of this principle of equality, such things as breach of promise cases and divorce are almost unknown in the Society of Friends. Or it would, perhaps, be still more true to say that a Quaker marriage is nearly always a matter carried out as in the sight of God, and is looked upon as a solemn, holy, and binding thing. One would not for a moment imply that

this is any less the case with a marriage entered upon in the same spirit in any other place of worship, but it is a source of satisfaction to Friends to know that, as the Secretary of the Society informed the Divorce Commissioners recently, they have not, as a religious body, ever had to take the question of divorce into the region of practical politics. Unhappy marriages among Friends are the *exception*. The *rule* is equality, mutual respect and trust, equal management of household and children, and full confidence over money affairs.

The idea of *equal citizenship* for men and women is daily gaining ground, and women are learning more and more to take their right place as personalities, as individuals, and to carry out the great trust laid on them. The best sort of woman does not seek this larger freedom for herself alone. She asks to be free to serve. If she is despised and thwarted and limited, the Church and the community must, of necessity, suffer and be the poorer. Its resources will be only partly developed, and it will lose half the power that it might possess.

LESSONS FROM THE PAST.

The time is past for the sneering assertion that women's only sphere is the nursery or the kitchen, but there still lurks at the back of some people's minds a certain disapproval of the woman who feels she has a call to service which may clash with her home ties. It is very striking to remember how many women in the Society have felt that the Divine call led them quite far afield, long before the days of missionary enterprise, and how the "service of truth" has always been regarded as binding upon a woman no less than a man if she were sure of the leading of the Spirit.

In the records of the life of Mary Weston,* an ancestress of the writer, we find how, in 1735, she, as a delicate girl of 23, in spite of many home difficulties, made long journeys on horseback all about England with several other Friends, "who having a tender sympathy with me in my Infant state of the Ministry, considering the difficulties I had struggled through in giving up to that weighty work, being poorly in health, proposed my going with them to a few meetings, which on duly weighing, having the approbation of Friends therein, I found freedom to do."

* "The Eliot Papers," edited by ELIOT HOWARD, Vol. II. p. 89.

Later in life, after her marriage, she travelled thousands of miles in America, undergoing much hardship, and leaving her dearly loved husband and little girl at home in England for nearly two years. It never seems to have occurred to anyone to accuse her of neglecting her nearest duties. She had a mission to fulfil across the seas, and the call was looked upon in exactly the same light as if she had been a man. She relates her experiences in sedate old-world language. To take one of these at random. "At Newport we had a meeting which was large, and more so on account of the Assembly sitting at that time, who on hearing of an English friend come to visit that Island, adjourned the House and came in a body to meeting, headed by the Governor, but it proved my lot to sit in silence,"—surely a lot requiring even more courage and faithfulness than the delivery of a message. At another place where the atmosphere was more sympathetic, and she felt that people had not gathered out of idle curiosity, she "visited several in that Town, that were not of our persuasion, feeling great love in my heart to them, and had to express somewhat of it publickly, to the tendering of many."

Her ministry seems to have been much blessed, especially among the rough and godless people in the Southern States, with whom she felt more at home than with the "professors" of New England.

But I only mention this particular instance of a woman travelling in the ministry, to emphasize the fact that, even in the middle of the eighteenth century when the early fervour of Friends had somewhat abated, it was an approved and recognised thing for a woman to set aside her home claims for the time, and follow the call to a larger service, in exactly the same way as a man might have done, with the full approval of her husband and friends.

Elizabeth Fry is, perhaps, the most conspicuous example in our Society of what a noble and sympathetic woman has been able to accomplish.

ALL ARE TO DO GOD'S SERVICE AND BUSINESS.

Possibly the secret of the useful and honourable place which women hold in the Society of Friends is that both they and the men are looked upon as *personalities*, and valued according to their intrinsic worth, with no question of sex. George Fox

ardently desired in his day that "both men and women should take their inheritance of the power of God which is over the Devil," and he says again, that "*all* are to take their possession of it and in it, to do God's service and business."

It may not be out of place to refer to a present-day instance of a young Friend, a wife and mother, at this very time doing splendid pioneer work overseas, and making time to equip herself and go out bravely into places where hearts are hungry,—and this in spite of what some would consider overwhelming home claims. In a recent letter she writes: "I often feel as if I could not do as much as I should like for the Meetings. To have all one's own house work to do, dressmaking and millinery, sewing for the children, and hundreds of little things, does not leave me much time, but it is wonderful what can be accomplished with a little thoughtful planning. I work out most of my lessons for the women's meetings on washing and ironing days, and the thoughts upon which papers have been built for the fellowship meetings and conferences come to me when I am quietly sewing, and then they generally get together roughly on my way into town on the boat, and so the only time really taken for them is the final putting them together in the quiet of evening. The things that are squeezed out of a busy life often mean more to others, because they cost more. And every minute of life is then consciously lived in the presence of God. There are days, very busy days, when I never lose the sense of His presence."

Whatever work the Society of Friends has done, and may still do in the world is *joint* work, the work of those who have "taken their inheritance of the power of God," and have realized their responsibilities as parts of a great whole, "where there is neither male nor female, but all are one in Christ Jesus." Most of the finest and noblest qualities, most of the useful work of the world, both public and private, are common to men and women alike, and there is no need to make comparisons, or draw useless distinctions as to their respective places in the Church and in life. But surely woman was in a very true sense made in the image of God, and is specially fitted to show forth to the world some of the qualities of the Divine wisdom.

The world is crying out for more sense of true brotherhood. Surely as we look round us on all the injustice and suffering, the exploitation of the weak by the strong, the

blunders and the misunderstandings, the need of wisdom and of comfort and of love, we cannot doubt that humanity is also hungry for the Divine Motherliness. If we may show forth *this*, however feebly and inefficiently in our lives, may we not hope to leave the world the richer, not only by a higher estimate of the possibilities of womanhood, but by a worthier apprehension of the nature and the purposes of God?

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

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This Series of Pamphlets is published for the "1905 Committee" of Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting of the Society of Friends, by Ernest E. Taylor, Bannisdale, Malton (with no desire to bind any individual member of the Society of Friends or the Quarterly Meeting).

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MINISTRATIONS OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

EXTRACT FROM
THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE,
ENCYCLICAL LETTER AND RESOLUTIONS
OF THE
LAMBETH CONFERENCE, 1920

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WITH A PREFACE AND BIBLIOGRAPHY.

LEAGUE OF THE CHURCH MILITANT
CHURCH HOUSE, DEAN'S YARD, S.W. 1.
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1920

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PREFACE

THE following section of the Lambeth Conference Report has been printed separately at the request of the League of the Church Militant.

This Society is the only one which, in addition to pressing for equalisation of opportunities as between the sexes, has laid emphasis on the primary importance of effecting this equalisation in the ministries of the Anglican Church.

It has indeed since the Armistice almost entirely concentrated on this one issue, and this not only because it believes in its great urgency, but because the approaching Lambeth Conference gave an unparalleled opportunity for it to be discussed by the most authoritative Council of the churches of the Anglican Communion. How wise this decision was we see from the fact that before two years' work had been devoted to focussing attention on the subject the Conference has taken such an immense step forward as the Resolutions and Report indicate.

From the opposition displayed in some of the Church papers we realise once more that as regards the position of women the Bishops have proved themselves far ahead of the clergy and the ecclesiastically minded layman; and consequently we have a double task to perform instead of a single one.

We have first to overcome opposition and get our "local" Anglican authorities—be they members of Convocation or Assembly, or individual Bishops and clergy—to carry into effect the resolutions, and then we have to ensure that prepared women enter with the immense field of service opened to them, for indeed the harvest is plenteous and the labourers few.

True there are some omissions and commissions in the Report that we cannot wholly endorse, notably the declaration that the "Order of Deaconesses is the one and only Order which the Committee can recommend that our Branch of the Catholic Church should recognise and use."

But just as the Report states that the Committee cannot in its deliberations ignore the quality of women's recent work, both within and without the Church, nay, that to give even grudging recognition to such work would be to run a grave risk of wasting a great power for spiritual good, so we may hope and

pray that, having obtained the ratification of the resolutions, women may prove themselves so faithful in that which is least that men may see what God can accomplish by the new powers placed in their hands, and viewing the matter in a new context the next Conference may be led by the Holy Spirit to frame resolutions of a far wider scope.

That this question cannot be safely set aside is evident, for it is already a stumbling block that, while lay bodies with no definite religious basis are day by day removing restrictions from women, the Church is still content to ignore the implications of her own teaching in her own life, and to refuse in this particular to act up to that Great Charter of the oppressed, "neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, no male and female."

Therefore we appeal to all who read this "extract" to do what in them lies by word and deed to promote the carrying out of the resolutions, and as a first practical measure to join the League of the Church Militant.

HELEN B. HANSON, M.D.

Hon. Secretary, L.C.M.

EXTRACTS FROM THE ENCYCLICAL LETTER

TO THE FAITHFUL IN CHRIST JESUS,

We, Archbishops and Bishops of the Holy Catholic Church in full communion with the Church of England, two hundred and fifty-two in number, assembled from divers parts of the earth at Lambeth, under the presidency of the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the year of our Lord 1920, within two years of the ending of the Great War, give you greeting in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

We who speak are bearers of the sacred commission of the Ministry given by our Lord through His Apostles to the Church. In His Name we desire to set forth before you the outcome of the grave deliberations to which, after solemn prayer and Eucharist, we have for five weeks devoted ourselves day by day. We take this opportunity of thanking from our hearts all those, both far and near, who have prayed God to give us His Spirit's present aid. We hope that the results of our work may bring encouragement and help to this great circle of intercessors, even in remote parts of the earth. Our deliberations were preceded by careful inquiry upon many sides into the matters about which we speak. In this Letter we propose to give a connected view of these matters, in the hope that it will make our Resolutions more intelligible, and lead some to study them, together with the Reports of our Committees on which they are based.

We find that one idea runs through all our work in this Conference, binding it together into a true unity. It is an idea prevalent and potent throughout the world to-day. It is the idea of Fellowship.

The minds and the hearts of men already go out to this idea. Men never prized the universal fellowship of mankind as they did when the Great War had for the time destroyed it. For four terrible years the loss of international fellowship emphasized its value. But the war which broke one fellowship created others. Nations became associated in alliances, which they cemented with their blood. In every national army, comradeship, novel and intense, united men of different classes and most various traditions. Thousands gained quite a new

impression of what human nature might be, when they experienced the fellowship of man with man in danger and death. Comradeship ennoble war. To-day men are asking, Can it not ennoble peace?

But the power of fellowship was prominent even before the war. Through trade-unions and other societies it had changed the face of industrial life. It bound together workers in science, education, and social reform. It gave its character to our recreations. In these and many other phenomena of the times, there is the same motive taking different forms, the desire for fuller and freer life, and there is the same conviction that it is to be gained by effort in fellowship.

To a world that craves for fellowship we present our message. The secret of life is fellowship. So men feel, and it is true. But fellowship with God is the indispensable condition of human fellowship. The secret of life is the double fellowship, fellowship with God and with men.

This cardinal truth was emphasized by our Lord in words which can never grow old, when He said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment." It can never yield the primacy to the second, which is like unto it: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." For that primacy belongs to the order of creation. God made man in His own image, and God is love.

Men to-day are tempted to despair of the world and to blame its design. But this at least we can say: the life of men upon earth was designed to give opportunities for love and nothing has defeated that design. Those things which most perplex us, suffering and sin, have been the occasion of the most conspicuous triumphs of love. This design is the clue to the labyrinth of life. We lose our way in the maze whenever we let go this clue.

Men lost the clue and they are always losing it, for they will not keep God in their knowledge, nor love in their hearts. It is ours to recall men to God and to His revealed purposes and His acts which reveal them. It is ours to bid them pause in the hurry and stress of life, in the midst of its trivialities and its tragedy, and contemplate anew the ways of God. He made men for love, that they might love Him and love one another. They rejected His purpose, but He did not abandon it. He chose a nation, and made it in a special sense His own, that within it love of God and men might be cultivated, and that thus it might enlighten the world. Into that nation He sent forth His Son, both to reconcile the world to Himself and to reconcile men one to another. And His Son formed a new and greater Israel, which we call the Church, to carry on His own mission of reconciling men to God and men to men. The founda-

tion and ground of all fellowship is the undeflected will of God, renewing again and again its patient effort to possess, without destroying, the wills of men. And so He has called into being a fellowship of men, His Church, and sent His Holy Spirit to abide therein, that by the prevailing attraction of that one Spirit, He, the one God and Father of all, may win over the whole human family to that fellowship in Himself, by which alone it can attain to the fulness of life.

This then is the object of the Church. In the prosecution of this object it must take account of every fellowship that exists among men, must seek to deepen and purify it, and, above all, to attach it to God. But in order to accomplish its object, the Church must itself be a pattern of fellowship. It is only by shewing the value and power of fellowship in itself that it can win the world to fellowship. The weakness of the Church in the world of to-day is not surprising when we consider how the bands of its own fellowship are loosened and broken.

* * * * *

The duty of preserving and strengthening the fellowship of the Church belongs specially to a smaller fellowship within it, the fellowship of the ordained ministry. The three Orders of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons have always been assisted in their ministry by many others who at different times and in different places have had different names and positions. In a wider and more general sense these all belong to the ministry of the Church; for the special kinds of service which they have to do distinguish them from the main body of Christians, who are commanded in general terms "by love to serve one another." Thus the great fellowship is throughout cemented by service, which is love in action.

There has been much discussion of late about the admission of women to share in the ministry of the Church, both in the wider and in the narrower sense of those words; and the Church must frankly acknowledge that it has under-valued and neglected the gifts of women and has too thanklessly used their work. We have thought well to give in a series of Resolutions what we think to be the general mind of our branch of the Catholic Church at this time about this subject. We feel bound to respect the customs of the Church, not as an iron law, but as results and records of the Spirit's guidance. In such customs there is much which obviously was dictated by reasonable regard to contemporary social conventions. As these differ from age to age and country to country, the use which the Church makes of the service of women will also differ. But this use will be further determined by a more important consideration. It is the peculiar gifts and the special excellences of women which the Church will most wish to use. Its wisdom will be shewn, not in disregarding,

but in taking advantage of, the differences between women and men. These considerations seem to have guided the primitive Church to create the Order of Deaconesses. We have recorded our approval of the revival of that Order, and we have attempted to indicate the duties and functions which in our judgement belong to it. We also recognize that God has granted to some women special gifts of spiritual insight and powers of prophetic teaching. We have tried to shew how these gifts can be exercised to the greatest benefit of the Church. The arrangements which we have suggested are not applicable to all countries alike. Yet everywhere the attempt must be made to make room for the Spirit to work, according to the wisdom which He will give, so that the fellowship of the Ministry may be strengthened by the co-operation of women and the fellowship of the Church be enriched by their spiritual gifts.

* * * * *

To a world full of trouble and perplexity, of fear and despair, of disconnected effort and aimless exertion, we present what we have been permitted to see of the purpose of God. **Conclusion.** It is enough to guide us. But, if it often seems that the message of religion is too general and its application to details too difficult, then it is our duty to recall to ourselves that we have to do, not with a theory, but with a Person. God is working His purpose out. If in simplicity we give ourselves to Him, He will work with us beyond our understanding: and we shall have contributed to the fellowship of man, because we have been working in fellowship with God.

Signed on behalf of the Conference,
RANDALL CANTUAR:

THEODORE PETRIBURG: }
H. H. MONTGOMERY (Bishop) } *Secretaries.*
G. K. A. BELL, *Assistant Secretary.*

August 7th, 1920.

RESOLUTIONS

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE COUNCILS AND MINISTRATIONS OF THE CHURCH.

46. Women should be admitted to those Councils of the Church to which laymen are admitted, and on equal terms. Diocesan, Provincial, or National Synods may decide when or how this principle is to be brought into effect.

47. The time has come when, in the interests of the Church at large, and in particular of the development of the Ministry of Women, the Diaconate of Women should be restored formally and canonically, and should be recognized throughout the Anglican Communion.

48. The Order of Deaconesses is for women the one and only Order of the Ministry which has the stamp of Apostolic approval, and is for women the only Order of the Ministry which we can recommend that our Branch of the Catholic Church should recognize and use.

49. The office of a Deaconess is primarily a ministry of succour, bodily and spiritual, especially to women, and should follow the lines of the primitive rather than of the modern Diaconate of men. It should be understood that the Deaconess dedicates herself to a lifelong service, but that no vow or implied promise of celibacy should be required as necessary for admission to the Order. Nevertheless, Deaconesses who desire to do so may legitimately pledge themselves either as members of a Community, or as individuals, to a celibate life.

50. In every branch of the Anglican Communion there should be adopted a Form and Manner of Making of Deaconesses such as might fitly find a place in the Book of Common Prayer, containing in all cases provision for:—

- (a) Prayer by the Bishop and the laying on of his hands;
- (b) A formula giving authority to execute the Office of a Deaconess in the Church of God;
- (c) The delivery of the New Testament by the Bishop to each candidate.

51. The Forms for the Making and Ordering of Deaconesses should be of the same general character, and as far as possible similar in their most significant parts, though varying in less important details in accordance with local needs.

52. The following functions may be entrusted to the Deaconess, in addition to the ordinary duties which would naturally fall to her :—

- (a) To prepare candidates for Baptism and Confirmation ;
- (b) To assist at the administration of Holy Baptism ; and to be the administrant in cases of necessity in virtue of her office ;
- (c) To pray with and to give counsel to such women as desire help in difficulties and perplexities.

(d) With the approval of the Bishop and of the Parish Priest, and under such conditions as shall from time to time be laid down by the Bishop : (i) in Church to read Morning and Evening Prayer and the Litany, except such portions as are assigned to the Priest only ; (ii) in Church also to lead in prayer and, under licence of the Bishop, to instruct and exhort the Congregation.

[Note.—Clause *d* (ii) was carried by 117 votes to 81.]

53. Opportunity should be given to women as to men (duly qualified and approved by the Bishop) to speak in consecrated or unconsecrated buildings, and to lead in prayer, at other than the regular and appointed services of the Church. Such diocesan arrangements, both for men and for women, should wherever possible be subject to Provincial control and co-ordination.

54. The Conference recommends that careful inquiry should be made in the several branches of the Anglican Communion as to the position and recognition of women workers in the Church, the conditions of their employment, and the remuneration of those who receive salaries.

REPORT

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE † APPOINTED TO CONSIDER AND REPORT UPON THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE COUNCILS AND MINISTRATIONS OF THE CHURCH.

WE, appointed as your Committee to consider and report on the "position of Women in the Councils and Ministrations of the Church," have drawn up the following Report with a deep sense both of the difficulty and of the importance of the subject entrusted to us. The questions connected with the position of women in the life and in the work of the Church, through the events of the last few years, have had a new emphasis laid on them ; and they must be considered afresh in their new context. We are profoundly conscious that the Holy Spirit teaches Christian people by those age-long precedents which we believe to be the outcome of His guidance. But sometimes it becomes our duty, faithfully retaining the lessons of the sacred past, in a very special sense to trust ourselves to His inspiration in that present which is our time of opportunity, in order that He may lead us into whatsoever fresh truth of thought or of action is in accordance with the will of God. For the Holy Spirit is with us and with our generation no whit less than He was with our elder brethren in Christ in the first days of the Gospel.

The foundation of a right and stable view of the whole

† Names of Members of the Committee :—

Bishop of Aberdeen	Bishop of Liverpool
Bishop of Arizona	Bishop of Lucknow
Bishop of Ballarat	Bishop of New York
Bishop of Barbados	Bishop of Ossory
Bishop of Chester	Bishop of Peterborough
Bishop of Columbia	Bishop Remington
Bishop of Coventry	Bishop of Rhode Island
Bishop of Edinburgh	Bishop of Sheffield
Bishop of Ely (<i>Chairman</i>)	Bishop of Southern Florida
Bishop of Gippsland	Bishop of Swansea
Bishop of Grafton	Archbishop of Sydney
Bishop of Hull (<i>Secretary</i>)	Bishop of Tokyo
Bishop of Jamaica	Bishop of Toronto
Bishop of Kingston-on-Thames	Bishop of Truro
Bishop of Leicester	Bishop of Uganda
Bishop of Lincoln	Bishop of Western Michigan

subject must be laid in a review of the witness of that creative epoch in which first of all our Lord Himself lived on earth and taught, and in which later His Spirit was most conspicuously directing the thought and action of the Christian society. With deep reverence we recognize that the supreme ministry of redemption was wrought out by *One Who was a man*,* (*ἄνθρωπος*) Jesus Christ our Lord. It is certain that the Apostles were men; almost as certain that the Seventy were men. On the other hand a woman was chosen to be the handmaid of the Lord in the Incarnation of the Son of God. In our judgement there is nothing to prevent our believing that the Apostolic commission recorded in St. John xx. 19-23 was delivered to women as well as to men. In the parallel history (St. Luke xxiv. 33) we read that the two who came from Emmaus "found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them." It seems impossible to argue that the last words (*τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς*) were meant to exclude women. In Acts i. 14 "the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus" are named as having part in the fellowship of the upper room. With Bishop Westcott and Dr. Hort we venture to think that the great commission was given to those who were representatives of the whole Church; and among those representatives we have every reason to think that women had a place. Again, we are led to conclude that the evangelistic charge (St. Matt. xxviii. 16-20) was delivered to a company which included women. The words of the Evangelist are: "But the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw Him they worshipped Him; *οἱ δὲ ἐδίστασαν*." The natural meaning of the last words is "but others doubted." Others then, we infer, beside the eleven were present; and if others, then we may say with great probability that women were among them. This probability is immensely increased if we identify, as there is strong reason for identifying, this appearance of the risen Lord with that of which St. Paul tells us (1 Cor. xv. 6), the appearance to above 500 brethren at once. Demonstration in these as in so many other important matters is beyond our reach. But at least the strong probability is that women were among the recipients of the great commission and of the evangelistic charge, as afterwards they were of the gift of Pentecost.

We turn now to St. Paul. Two passages must be briefly considered. (a) In Gal. iii. 26-28 the Apostle wrote: "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female: for ye are all one

* Compare St. Luke xxiv. 19; Acts ii. 22, xvii. 31. What is said in the text above does not exclude the belief that in our Lord's human character there were manifested traits which are commonly feminine.

man in Christ Jesus." The passage quoted begins with the assertion of the potential universality of sonship. It ends with the assertion of the oneness of the body (*εἰς ἓστρέ*). But quite obviously the oneness of the body allows, indeed implies, diversity of function. The passage does not touch the question of the character of woman's functions in the Church. It does not in the least suggest that the functions of women are the same as the functions of men. It simply asserts that membership in the one body is not restricted by race or by social status or by sex. (b) It is often said that in his first Epistle to Corinth St. Paul is inconsistent, and various expedients are resorted to in order to reconcile him with himself. Let us look at the passages themselves. In xi. 5 the Apostle writes: "Every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled dishonoureth her head." Here St. Paul assumes that there is nothing wrong in a woman praying or prophesying; and prophesying implies the presence of others. He takes it for granted that women will do this. The great Pentecostal prophecy itself foretold that "your daughters" as well as "your sons" "shall prophesy"; and it is added that "upon my handmaidens" will I "in those days pour forth of my Spirit." But in chapter xiv. the context is wholly different. St. Paul is there speaking of the *ἐκκλησίαι*, the public assemblies of the Church. "Let the women keep silence in the assemblies . . . it is shameful for a woman to speak in the assembly" (compare 1 Tim. ii. 12). In the assembly St. Paul contemplated the whole Christian society in Corinth being gathered together (v. 23); and, what is far more important for our purpose, he expected that persons ignorant of the faith and even that unbelievers—heathen men—would find their way in. Those who were converts from the worship of idols and those who still worshipped idols alike knew only too well the shameful position which women took in the heathen temples and their rites. Corinth was a very bye-word for vice. The Greeks coined a word "to corinthianize," meaning thereby "to play the harlot." The female temple slaves were simply prostitutes. At Corinth then in the Christian assemblies with their doors thrown open to all comers, St. Paul sternly said that it was "shameful for a woman to speak." Here women must set an example such as no one could question (to use the words of the Pastoral Epistle) of "shamefastness and sobriety." Further, what shall we say of St. Paul's words in this passage about the "subjection" of women? In our belief, as we have already said, St. Paul asserted the spiritual equality of men and women; neither is afore or after the other. This spiritual equality will be realized without let or hindrance in the spiritual world which is to come. But in this present world of action between these equals, man and woman, man has a priority, and in the last resort authority belongs to him. As the world in which we live

becomes more like the world to come, this qualification becomes less and less operative, just as the stronger races assert their power in diminishing degree over their spiritual equals, the weaker races. In times such as that in which St. Paul wrote the necessary qualification became a predominating influence, and in this matter, as in the case of slavery, St. Paul's teaching was conditioned by the existing circumstances of the world around him. He stooped to it that he might raise it. The statement then of what we believe to be the truth in regard to the human relations between men and women, as (we reverently say) in regard to the divine relations between the Persons within the Godhead, must needs take the form of a paradox. Difference of function between man and woman in the Church, as in the world, and the relative subordination of the woman in no way imply an inferiority of woman in regard to man.

Our firm conviction is that the precise form which St. Paul's disciplinary directions took was relative to the time and to the place which he actually had in mind, but that these directions embody an abiding principle. To transfer with slavish literalness the Apostle's injunctions to our own time and to all parts of our own world would be to renounce alike our inalienable responsibility of judgement and the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. On the other hand it is our duty to endeavour clearly to discern the abiding law which underlay St. Paul's stringent temporary and local rules. We believe it to be this. Human nature being what it is, the Christian Church, whose duty and desire is to keep itself unspotted from the world, and to be like a home of brethren and sisters at unity with each other, must exercise unsleeping vigilance that in its regulations for worship in the congregation there lurk no occasion for evil or even for suspicion of evil; no occasion for confusion or strife; nothing which falls below the purest and strictest ideal of peace and seamliness and order.

It will be observed that in our terms of reference nothing is said about religious communities of women. That great subject therefore with its special problems lies outside our purview. But we cannot refrain from expressing our sense of the notable services they have rendered to the Church and to the world, and our hope and belief that God will be pleased to perfect that which He has begun in them and by them. We may be allowed to add one remark suggested to us by our slight contact with the subject. We believe that much good would result by a closer relationship between a community and the Bishop of the Diocese and by the creation of central advisory bodies, containing an ample representation of the communities themselves, which would promote co-ordination and mutual communication between the several communities.

Before we pass to our proper task of dealing with the position of women in the Church first in relation to its Councils and then in relation to its Ministrations, there are two matters on which we desire to lay stress.

In the first place, the Anglican Communion is spread throughout the world. It has many parts, and these parts are very diverse in character and that in many respects. A Missionary Diocese is utterly different from a diocese which looks back over a continuous history of many centuries. One Church is established; another has no relation to the State which differentiates it from all other religious bodies. The political and social conditions which surround one Church are in marked contrast to those which surround another. Hence we give the advice, which as a Committee we are appointed to give, with the full consciousness not only that, if we may be forgiven for stating a truism, each constituent part of the Anglican Communion is absolutely at liberty to accept or to reject our counsel, but also that, even if it is accepted by all as essentially wise and right, yet all cannot equally and at once translate it into action. It is in this sense that we submit our conclusions to our brethren in the Conference and to the wider circle of all those throughout the world who are joined with us in the fellowship of the Anglican Communion.

Again, when we contemplate the position of women in the Church in the two relations indicated, we are led to believe that there are reasons for change in the custom of the Church, and that on the other hand there are reasons for caution.

When we survey at any rate the recent history of some, if not all, parts of the Anglican Communion, we are obliged to confess that the Church has failed to treat women workers with generosity or even with justice. It is a platitude to say that some of the very best work of the Church has been done, with singular patience and conscientiousness, with singular vigour and ability, with singular devotion to our Lord, by women. But the women to whom we owe this great debt have received but scanty acknowledgement from the Church in the way either of actual salary or of recognition or of a responsible share in directing the activities or the policy of the Church either centrally or parochially.

It is now, we believe, generally, if not universally, recognized that the future must be different from the past. The education of women has advanced in a way which would have seemed incredible to our fathers. Witness the place which women take in the new and even in the ancient universities. Again, in most parts of our Communion the Church is in a new environment of social life which it is impossible for us to neglect. Women sit in legislative and in municipal assemblies. They speak at public meetings on all manner of questions social, economic, political; and that with a grasp of their subject of which the

women of a former generation would have been incapable. We may see dangers in this revolution, but we cannot ignore it or refuse to allow it a practical influence on our judgement. And, further, within the Church we have seen an advance, great, though not commensurate with that in secular matters. Within the last few years many of us have watched the work of the Pilgrims of Prayer and of the Women Messengers. We have noted how these movements have stirred especially country parishes, and have won in a remarkable degree general confidence. They have shewn, past possibility of doubt, that women possess a wonderful evangelistic gift. In their addresses *cor ad cor loquitur*. Women also of mature judgement have spoken at mixed meetings of men and women on the difficult and delicate subject of sexual sin, its prevention and the rescue of its victims, with sympathy, with power, with restraint. These are facts; and we are convinced that, if the recognition of these facts is grudging and inadequate, at least two evil results will ensue. We run a grave risk of wasting a great power for spiritual good, which, as many are profoundly convinced, it is the will of God that we should use for His better service. We also run the grave risk of alienating from the Church, and even from Christianity, not a few of those able and high-minded women before whom, if they turn to social or educational work, there open out careers of great and increasing responsibility.

On the other hand there are reasons for caution. We dare not forget elementary facts of human nature. Women have the power of moving men. By effective speech on religious truths and experiences strong emotions are called into play. On strong emotions possible perils wait. And, especially in a generation which seems sometimes even contemptuously and recklessly to brush aside what a very few years ago were regarded as wise and indeed necessary restraints, the Church must be above suspicion and must not fear to be watchful. Again, there is a deep wisdom in the words of the New Testament which say of a faithful Christian woman "she shall be saved through her child bearing." The Church, while fully acknowledging that some women are called to a life of celibacy, yet in these days of a falling birth-rate and of all that that sinister phenomenon implies, must not do anything which obscures or renders difficult woman's fulfilment of her characteristic function in human life. Again, looking at the whole position from another point of view, we realize how heavy a responsibility rests on the whole of our own Communion, and especially on its rulers, to avoid any action which might retard the growth of mutual recognition and regard between ourselves and other historic branches of the Catholic Church. Lastly, while a real advance as to the position of women is, we believe, not only advisable but even necessary, we feel that the Church owes a duty

to all classes of its members, to those who are (as some may think) slow of movement as well as to those who are (as others may think) ambitious of revolutionary speed.

We now turn to details. And here we wish to record our gratitude for the assistance which we have received from memoranda placed in our hands, from interviews with certain representative women, from the Report (as yet unpublished) of a Committee appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to consider questions relating to the office of Deaconess, the Chairman of which was the Bishop of Chester, and from *The Ministry of Women* (a Report by a Committee appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and presided over by Bishop Ryle, the Dean of Westminster). We have entirely relied upon this last named book, a work of wide research and learning, for information as to the facts of history.

(1) *The position of women in the Councils of the Church.*—In quite recent times there has been a very considerable advance in regard to the share assigned to women in the Councils of the Church. We may instance in England the "Rules for the Representation of the Laity" (under the "Church of England Assembly (Powers) Act"), which, after enumerating the various Assemblies—Parochial, Ruri-decanal, Diocesan, and the House of Laity in the National Church Assembly—adds the comprehensive direction "All representatives may be of either sex." But the advance made has not been uniform throughout the Anglican Communion. Indeed, considering the great variety of conditions to which we have already alluded, such uniformity is impossible. We have endeavoured carefully to consider the whole question, and we are strongly of opinion that to whatever Assemblies of the Church laymen are admitted, women should be admitted to the same on equal terms. For the sake of clearness we add that in making this recommendation we have in mind provincial or central Assemblies as well as those which are diocesan or parochial.

When this recommendation is acted on we have but one fear. We are conscious that there is a danger lest Churchmen should shirk their responsibilities and leave too heavy a share in the counsels of the Church to Churchwomen, as they have already too often done in the work of the Church. In regard to the conduct of the business of the Church and to the determination of its policy we lay the utmost stress on the ideal of co-operation of Churchmen and Churchwomen; and we believe that the attainment of this ideal, if only there is a conscientious response to the call of plain duty, lies well within the limits of what is possible.

(2) *Deaconesses*.—For the history of Deaconesses in the early centuries of the Church's life and for an account of their functions we must refer to the *Ministry of Women*. It is now about sixty years since, in the Anglican Communion, an effort arose to restore this ancient ministry. But this restoration has been carried out not on the authority of the several churches of our Communion, but rather on that of individual Bishops. The Church in the United States of America is an honourable exception to this statement; for there among the Canons there is a section entitled "Of Deaconesses."

The result of this general informality of action is that a large measure of uncertainty prevails as to the status of a Deaconess and as to the conditions under which she exercises her functions. Is a Deaconess set apart for a religious office? Or is she in the full sense of the word Ordained so that she possesses Holy Orders? Again, can she lay down her office and thereby cease to be a Deaconess? Or does she receive a "character" which is permanent? Again, is a Deaconess at liberty to marry? Or is she by a somewhat indefinite understanding pledged to celibacy? We believe that the fact that it is not possible to give a clear and authoritative answer to these and other like questions has seriously retarded the growth of the diaconate of women among us; for many of the best and ablest women, as we believe, shrink from joining a body the position of which is so ill-defined and precarious. We are persuaded that this period of tentative and provisional action ought now to come to an end, and that the time has arrived when in the interests of the Church at large and, in particular, of the Ministry of Women, the Diaconate (the revival of which ancient office was hailed with thankfulness by the Lambeth Conference of 1897) should be canonically and formally recognized in the several Provinces; and our advice is that, so far as possible, the proper steps should be everywhere taken to secure the restoration of the Order of Deaconesses. We lay stress on the word *restoration*: for what we recommend is not in any sense the creation of a new, but the constitutional restoration of an ancient, Ministry.

We pass to the fundamental question of the status of a Deaconess and of the nature of her ordination. In our judgement the ordination of a Deaconess confers on her Holy Orders. In ordination she receives the "character" of a Deaconess in the Church of God; and, therefore, the status of a woman ordained to the Diaconate has the permanence which belongs to Holy Orders. She dedicates herself to a lifelong service.

But here at once there arises the grave question of the possibility of a Deaconess marrying. We are well aware that opinions on this subject differ, and many who hold the office of Deaconess desire that, though they have taken no vow of celibacy, marriage should be regarded as wholly out of the question for

them. We have given the question our anxious consideration. And we record our deliberate belief that it ought plainly to be understood that no promise of celibacy is required for admission to the Order of Deaconesses. We recognize that a Deaconess who is married is likely to possess as a married woman a peculiar power by prayer and counsel to help married women; and, that being so, we do not think that Deaconesses should be precluded from marrying. A married Deaconess might, especially during the earlier years of her married life, be compelled to ask the Bishop to allow her to suspend the actual exercise of some, if not all, of her functions. But she would retain the status of a Deaconess and, after an interval, would in most cases be able to resume her active work.

We desire to see in use in every branch of the Anglican Communion a Form and Manner of making of Deaconesses, such as might be fitly included in the Ordinal. We assume that all such Forms of Ordination would be of the same general type, and so far as possible similar in their most significant parts, though varying in less important details in accordance with local needs and desires. In all of them there should be included provision for

- (1) Prayer by the Bishop with the laying-on of his hands;
- (2) A form of words to be said by the Bishop giving authority to execute the office of a Deaconess in the Church of God;
- (3) The delivery of the New Testament by the Bishop to each candidate.

Letters of Orders should be given to each Deaconess by the Bishop during or immediately after the ordination, and the names of those who are ordained should be duly entered by the Bishop's Registrar or Secretary in the Diocesan roll in like manner as the names of those who are ordained Priests and Deacons.

We lay great stress on the requirement that each candidate should pass through a course of appropriate training, devotional, practical, and intellectual. Special attention should be paid to the study of the Bible, Christian doctrine, the Book of Common Prayer, and the history of the Church. It will be important to maintain a high standard in intellectual attainments. Each candidate should be examined by persons well qualified for the work and appointed by the Bishop himself.

There is a considerable divergence of opinion as to the right age for admission to the Order of Deaconesses. On the one hand it is pointed out that women who have taken a degree at a University will desire as soon as possible after graduation to enter on the full exercise of the office to which they hope to dedicate their lives. On the other hand it is urged that the office of Deaconess requires a certain maturity in experience and character and is rather a goal of a term of service than of necessity its

beginning. On the whole we think that the determining conditions will vary in the different parts of the Anglican Communion, and that the question of age is a subject best left for independent determination.

We spent much time and careful thought on the definition of the duties of a Deaconess. We are of opinion that the following functions may rightly be entrusted to the Deaconess:—

- (1) To prepare candidates for Baptism and Confirmation;
- (2) To assist at the administration of Holy Baptism, and by virtue of her office to be the ministrant of that Sacrament in cases of necessity;
- (3) Under such conditions as shall from time to time be laid down by the Bishop, and with the approval of the Parish Priest, (i) to render assistance at the administration of the Holy Communion to sick persons; (ii) to read Morning and Evening Prayer and the Litany in Church, excepting such portions as are assigned to the Priest only; (iii) in Church also to lead in prayer and, under licence of the Bishop, to instruct and exhort the Congregation;
- (4) To pray with and to give counsel to such women as desire help in difficulties and perplexities.

Further, we are anxious that the office of Deaconess should be a standing witness that the Church welcomes workers of many kinds, and believes that a pure Christian intention hallows labours which are often regarded as secular. We therefore urge that, while a sufficient training in devotion and in doctrine must ever be considered as an indispensable element in the preparation of a Deaconess, Deaconesses and women looking forward to the Diaconate should be encouraged to qualify themselves for, and to take part in, work for public welfare, *e.g.*, educational, medical, or social. We should rejoice to see a Deaconess devoting much of her time to social or civic activities, provided she undertook those duties as part of her share in the great work of forwarding the Kingdom of God, and performed them in the name of Christ.

The attachment to the office of Deaconess of the functions which we have specified, so sacred, so intimately human, so conspicuously important, so wide in their range, is a sufficient indication that we regard, as we earnestly hope that Church-people generally will increasingly regard, that office as one to be held in reverence and honour.

Circumstances may arise, such as family reasons to which we alluded above, which would cause a Deaconess to desire to resign the exercise of her functions, at least for a time, though by that suspension of her activities she would not forfeit her status as a Deaconess. In such a case she should in our judgement apply to the Bishop of the Diocese in which she has been licensed. Further, we recommend that the Bishop of the Diocese in which

a Deaconess is serving shall have power to suspend her from the exercise of her office and for grave reason to deprive her of her Orders as a Deaconess, the right of appeal in the latter case being duly safeguarded.

We are conscious that many other matters must be determined, if the Order of Deaconesses is to make its full contribution to the life of the Church. But we think that we have dealt with the great principles which are of universal application. Other questions must be determined in the several Dioceses and Provinces of the Anglican Communion.

We desire to call attention to one further matter before we turn from the subject of the restoration of the Order of Deaconesses in the Anglican Communion. The question will certainly be asked whether we have any ulterior object in the proposals which we have made. We have not. We believe that for Women the Order of Deaconesses is the one and only Order of the Ministry which has the stamp of Apostolic approval (Rom. xvi. 1, 1 Tim. iii, 11); and for Women it is the one and only Order which we can recommend that our Branch of the Catholic Church should recognize and use.

(3) *Laywomen*.—In the last place we have endeavoured to give careful consideration to the question of the ministrations of laywomen, that is, of women other than Deaconesses. We desire to lay down the principle that with regard to lay people speaking both in consecrated and in unconsecrated buildings the same opportunities under the same conditions should be given to women as to men. We also think that in Churches as well as elsewhere at services other than the regular and appointed services of the Church laywomen should have the opportunity of leading in prayer.

We realize that in carrying out in practice the recommendation which we have just formulated there will be some necessary variation under the very different conditions prevailing in the several parts of the Anglican Communion. We assume that everywhere women will exercise the ministries which we have above assigned to them with the approval of the Bishop of the Diocese and of the Parish Priest, and under such conditions as shall from time to time be laid down by the Bishop.

We have above equated the opportunities of speaking in consecrated buildings offered to laymen and to laywomen. Among men the habitual exercise of this function is practically confined to those who have been admitted to the office of Readers. An analogy therefore is bound to grow up between the Lay Readers who are men and the women who are entrusted with similar duties. In this context therefore we venture to put on record our opinion that the time has come when the regulations as to Lay Readers (whose devoted work we gratefully acknowledge)

should everywhere be made more definite and precise; and in particular that it is urgently needful that everywhere the standard required of men who are to be admitted to the office of Lay Reader should be raised. We think it our duty to emphasize the importance of carrying out as soon as possible this reform, so essential to the spiritual efficiency of the ministry of lay people.

As we are bidden to make recommendations which shall apply to all parts of the Anglican Communion, we find it impossible effectively to deal with the more general activities of women workers in the Church. Such activities are called out by local needs and are shaped by local circumstances. We cannot let this opportunity pass without expressing our sense of the great blessing such work has brought to multitudes of our people. What however at this moment we feel bound to note is, that women so working are always in danger of becoming isolated and of losing the strength and the larger vision which are the outcome of a wider recognition than that of a Parish. We believe that the security against these possible evils and defects lies in Diocesan organization; and that this security would be provided by a recommendation we put forward which deals with the whole range of women's work in the Church and with which we conclude our Report. We submit that in every Diocese there ought to exist a Board of Women's Work, including among its members men as well as women. This Board would endeavour both to inspire and to direct women workers of all kinds within the Diocese. All approved women workers would be placed upon its roll. It would be ready to give them counsel. It would arrange for Retreats and Quiet days, and take other measures for building up the spiritual life of those who bear a heavy strain of work and difficulty and sometimes of disappointment. It would advise and encourage those younger women who are considering the call to Church work. But among its other functions this Board would always include these two. It would draw up and carry out a scheme whereby certificates of ascertained fitness and competence, recognized at least throughout the Diocese, would be given to women workers qualified in various departments of work. And in the second place it would from time to time consider the questions relating to the training of all women workers in the Church and the conditions of their employment and also to the remuneration of paid women workers in the Church. By such an organization we are persuaded that their position would be raised and rendered more honourable, and that their efficiency, on which so much depends in the coming years, would be made more uniform and more stable.

(Signed) F. H. ELY,
Chairman.

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(Anglican.)

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OBJECTS.

1. To urge the Church to fuller recognition in its own ordered life, and to more strenuous advocacy in the life of the nation, of the equal worth of all humanity in the sight of God, without distinction of race, class or sex.
2. In obedience to this principle to pray and work for
 - (a) The establishment of equal rights and opportunities for men and women both in Church and State.
 - (b) Equal opportunities for all to develop to the utmost their God-given faculties in a community ordered on the basis of justice and brotherhood.
 - (c) The settlement of all international questions on the basis of right, not of might.

STATEMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE LEAGUE OF THE CHURCH MILITANT ON THE REPORT OF THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE ON THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE COUNCILS AND MINISTRATIONS OF THE CHURCH.

The following Resolution was adopted at the Meeting of the Executive Committee on Tuesday, October 5th, 1920:—

"The League of the Church Militant cordially welcomes the Report of the Committee of the Lambeth Conference and the Resolutions founded thereon, relating to the place of women in the Councils and Ministrations of the Church. In so far as laywomen are concerned the proposal practically sweeps away all distinctions of sex. The position in the Ministry accorded to women marks a tremendous advance on anything the present generation has known, and though failing to correspond with the ultimate aims of the League, gives women at once a really valuable and honourable position in the Ministry of the Church."

"THE CHURCH MILITANT."

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WOMEN AND THE CHURCH.

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L.C.M. Leaflet, No. 1.



History or Antiquarianism?

By A. MAUDE ROYDEN.

IN rejecting the idea of the priesthood for women on grounds of the "immemorial and sustained custom of the Catholic Church," and the permission to prophesy "except within the limits of apostolic teaching and Catholic tradition" the Lower House of Convocation has begged the whole question of what tradition means. It seems that they find in it only a mass of rules and regulations some of which have become so obviously impossible in different conditions of civilisation and climate that they have been scrapped altogether, not by any reversal of the rule but simply by common consent (the most striking example of this is, of course, the neglect of the apostolic injunctions about *kosher* food, Acts xv. 29), but others "remain to the present day." The grounds on which they were based have been repudiated by modern thought, and although here and there one may be found to argue that women must not preach because men were created first and sinned second, we may, we believe, disregard this folly as curious and exceptional even in the Lower House of Convocation. Generally speaking even the official Church would not to-day affirm that we are bound to accept as historical fact versions of creation which contradict one another so glaringly as do the first and second chapters of Genesis. We are however, startling to relate, apparently expected to accept rules formulated by the apostles on these grounds which, as I have said, we have rejected; and we are to accept these rules because of tradition even though the reasons have disappeared.

Tradition and Evolution.

Surely our Lord taught us something better than this? No one, I think, can believe that He attached little importance to tradition. On the contrary His most startling departures from the accepted teaching of His contemporaries and pre-

decessors are always based on tradition. The Sermon on the Mount, whether a verbal report or not, surely enshrines a principle which must have struck the evangelist as very characteristic of his Master's teaching. The paragraphs with their repeated opening "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time" are too striking not to make us feel sure that this appeal to tradition really was made. It shows how deep a sense of reverence for the past Christ had, and how definitely He based all advance on well doing in the past—on evolution, that is to say, rather than what is generally understood as revolution. When, for example, He taught us the duty of forgiveness He based it on the finest teaching of the Jews throughout their history, "Ye have heard it hath been said an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." This, as His words must have reminded them, was a notable advance on the old heathen doctrine of revenge which permitted a man who was injured to extort ten-fold, and if he had lost his eye to take a man's life; if he had lost something more important, then to slay his wife and his children and his cattle and if possible to exterminate his tribe as well. The Jewish law forbade such extremities of revenge and affirmed that a just man must confine himself to the infliction of an injury equal to that which he had suffered. Now, says our Lord, from this splendid tradition you must go forward. You must realise that any kind of injury is wrong, and having passed from revenge to justice you must go from justice to mercy.

I need not labour this point. The whole of the Sermon on the Mount is based upon it. It is the teaching of the constructive statesman with his emphasis on development and not on destruction.

On the other hand the same sermon and many another contains impressive and indignant reminders that to observe rules merely as rules, to the neglect of the principles they were supposed to affirm, is a wickedness in the sight of God. It is "to make the word of God of none effect through your tradition." It sometimes seems on a cursory reading of the Gospels as though Christ had laboured this point almost to weariness. The history of the present day shows that He certainly said not too much—one would be tempted to say too little.

Principles and Rules.

What is the tradition of the Christian Church? Surely it is the breaking down of barriers, the removal of inequalities, the recognition of a fundamental equality of all human beings in the sight of God. It is "to break down the middle wall of

partition"; it is to affirm that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, bond nor free. It is this tradition which we are bound continually to develop. If we would be true to the teaching of Christ we must continually proclaim and act upon the principles which He laid down. To reiterate instead the different rules by which from time to time it was sought to give substance to these principles, even when the rules have, as rules will, ceased to express and even come to violate those principles, is to fall into precisely that fault against which our Lord warned us so earnestly and so often. To affirm on the one hand the great principle of the spiritual equality of the sexes, and at the same time to seek to perpetuate rules which are a denial of this spiritual quality, is to make the word of God of none effect through our tradition. The great tradition is the development of this idea of equality. The rule varies from time to time and from age to age. We have outgrown many rules laid down by the apostles. We have outgrown the idea that we must eat *kosher* food. We have outgrown the idea that we ought to send runaway slaves back to their masters. We have outgrown the idea that women are spiritually inferior to men. It is a violation of that great principle, once realised, to perpetuate a rule laid down by those who had not yet grasped its full significance

The True Cause of "Disorder."

It is perhaps worth while to add that probably no Jew of the time of Christ supposed that it was right to deny a principle in a rule. He did often deny it, but he would doubtless have affirmed that he was not denying it, and that the rule did in fact express the principle. It has remained for modern ecclesiastics to assert the strange belief that it is quite permissible to hold a principle and to deny it in a rule. Thus they declare that "the principle of subordination" may be "combined with essential equality"; that is to say, it may be right to affirm that men and women are spiritually equal and yet to assign to women a position of permanent subordination. It is impossible to imagine a more disorderly system than that which deliberately bases itself on a denial of its own principles. So long as men and women believed that there was a fundamental inferiority in women it was quite possible to assign to the latter a permanently subordinate position without creating discontent or disorder, because the system did really correspond with the underlying belief. Now that both men and women affirm the spiritual equality of women, it becomes ludicrous to expect women to accept a position of subordination "on the grounds of order." Nothing could be more disorderly than this, and as long as this

affirmation of a principle is accompanied by a denial of it in action, so long will there be disorder and rebellion within the Church.

History and Antiquarianism.

It is the absence of all realisation of the difference between a great tradition and a system of rules that underlies, I venture to think, the whole of the Report lately issued by the Archbishop's Committee on the Ministry of Women. That Report claims to be "purely historical in character." It is not historical; it is antiquarian. It does not deal with great movements or developments; it does not touch on the gradual alteration of the position of women in society as the result of Christian teaching; it hardly even refers to the great work done by women like St. Catherine and St. Theresa, or its inevitable effect on the attitude of the world in general and of the Church especially towards women as a sex. It does not explain the effect on the Church of the growth of the ascetic ideal, nor again of the gradual abandonment of this ideal. All this is history and all this is profoundly important. The Report is not important: it is merely interesting. It tells how one lady carried a crozier and another wore a mitre; how "widows" may be women who have lost their husbands or women who performed certain duties in the Church when they had reached a suitable age. It discourses at length on ancient pictures of the curious garments worn by notable ladies, and of the strange ceremonies with which they were sometimes saluted. These matters are, as I have said, interesting, and will doubtless always be so to persons of antiquarian mind. To regard them as likely to influence the course of Christian development in the twentieth century is to suppose an absurdity. They concern us no more deeply than the question of the clothes that may have been worn by the women of Corinth in the first century.

Is it too much to hope that Christendom will begin to realise that the promise of our Lord that we should be led into the truth has not yet come to an end, and that it is in obedience to that promise that we look for evolution along the great lines of Catholic tradition?

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WOMEN AND THE CHURCH.

L.C.M. Leaflet, No. 2.

(First published as a Leading Article in *The Church Militant*, April, 1920.)



The Case Re-stated.

By F. M. GREEN, B.D.

WITHIN a few months from now the Lambeth Conference will be in session and amongst the many subjects to which the assembled bishops will be asked to direct their attention there will be few more important than that of the Ministry of Women. The importance of the subject is, we think, very generally recognised. If loyalty to Holy Scripture and Catholic principle constrains the Church to oppose the whole tendency of modern thought and life it should do so definitely and boldly. If Society is drifting towards destruction the warning voice of the Church should be clear and unmistakable. If on the other hand the modern tendency to ignore sex-distinctions and throw open to women all activities which they have capacity to fulfil is really a corollary of the truth which the Church has proclaimed for centuries, nothing could well be more disastrous to the influence of the Church than that it should fail to put its own principles into practice and should appear before the world as a champion of the system which in very truth it has done most to overthrow. We make no apology, therefore, for re-stating what we regard as the case for permitting and encouraging women to exercise all such ministries as are open to laymen in the Church of God.

And in the first place we would emphasise the revolutionary character of Christ's teaching upon the position of women. It is only necessary to compare the position of women in the Jewish Church with their position in the Church of Christ, at any period whatever in its history from Pentecost till to-day, to realise how revolutionary in fact that teaching was. Compare the ordinance of Circumcision with the Sacrament of Baptism, the Passover with the Holy Communion. Under Judaism woman had no independent place within the covenant, no obligation to participate in its solemn worship. Under Christianity she is from the first a person, not a chattel, admissible to its privileges, directly subject to its ordinances.

It would hardly be too much to say that under Judaism women had no rights unless they were specially conferred; that under Christianity women are subject to no disabilities unless they are specially imposed. That the formal recognition of women in the Sacraments of the Christian Church from the beginning is in line with our Lord's attitude to the women whom he knew in the days of His flesh is too obvious to need more than passing mention.

If, therefore, women are to be debarred on the ground of sex from the enjoyment of any privilege or the discharge of any office in the Church of Christ, it clearly rests with those who would set up or would maintain the barrier to justify their attitude.

Those who are opposed on what they conceive to be grounds of principle to the exercise by women of those lay ministries to which men are habitually admitted are wont to rely on three main arguments:—(1) The exclusion of women from the number of the Twelve by the action of our Lord; (2) The teaching of St. Paul as to the permanent subordination of women; (3) The continuous practice of the Catholic Church down to our own time. Let us, then, first of all examine the validity of these arguments.

The first might be concisely refuted by observing that, whatever its validity in relation to the priestly office, it cannot be taken as establishing a limitation upon the function of women as lay members of the Church. But even in relation to the priestly office itself the argument is obviously precarious. It assumes, for example, that our Lord did not call women to the Apostleship because of some inherent disability on the part of women for its exercise. But that assumption cannot be verified. It is no doubt an adequate interpretation of our Lord's action, but it is by no means the only possible interpretation. It is surely permissible to suggest that His action may have been determined not by any inherent unfitness on the part of women but by the social conditions of His day, even, perhaps, by the prejudices of the world in which His Society was to be established. In applying what we may term the negative example of Christ we need to be on our guard lest we interpret His conduct in the light of our own prejudices. That Christ called no woman to the Apostleship is not in itself any sufficient reason for excluding women from the priesthood: it is no reason whatever for excluding them from the various lay ministries of the Church of which He is the Lord.

As to the teaching of St. Paul, there is no one who has done so much as he to emphasise the equal place and worth of all humanity in the sight of God which is not so much asserted as assumed in the recorded teaching of his Master. The great passages in which he affirms the equal sonship of all humanity

and sweeps aside all barriers of race and class and sex are familiar to all. But, whilst we acknowledge him as the mouth-piece of the Spirit of God, we refuse to shut our eyes to the fact that his outlook and in some measure his application of the great principles he proclaimed were limited and conditioned by the age in which he lived. His principles were fatal to slavery; but he accepted slavery as one of the familiar facts of life, and one may question whether he foresaw or even desired its total abolition. Certainly any one bold enough to advocate slavery to-day might fairly urge that St. Paul unquestionably recognised that Philemon was deprived of his rightful property when Onesimus escaped from bondage. His principles strike at the root of the whole system which treated woman as an inferior part of creation; but the application of his principles is partial; and he is not always himself conscious of their full scope and meaning. As in the Old Testament so also in the New the divine and human elements are intermingled; the treasure is in earthen vessels. But the treasure is there; and the Pauline charter of Catholic Christianity—neither Jew nor Gentile, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female—makes it grotesque to emphasise his restriction upon the liberty of the women of Corinth as though it constituted what was essential and permanent in his message to mankind.

There remains the practice of Catholic Christendom down to our own time. That practice has not been by any means so uniform as some would have us think. But we have no intention of searching for precedents in Apostolic or post-Apostolic days for women preachers, of which we might find many, or women priests, of which we should find none which could bear examination. The simple fact is that Catholic custom in the main has clearly acquiesced in the subordinate position of women and taken shape accordingly. But whilst Catholic principle is unalterable Catholic custom may vary as it has varied in the past; must vary, when the clearer realisation of Catholic principle so requires. That is precisely the situation which confronts us in relation to the ministries of women to-day. We are realising, as our forefathers never did, the full implications of the great Catholic principle of the equal place and worth of all humanity in the sight of God. St. Paul's great utterance, which we have already quoted, comes home to the hearts of men and women to-day as never before. The Catholic custom which restricted the activities of women in an age when, if unrestricted, they would have often been misunderstood and ill-directed, which in the past played a useful part in human development, has become not merely outworn but mischievous. To plead for its retention on Catholic grounds is to prefer the letter to the spirit, to make more account of the form than of the truth it is designed to express.

One thing, and one thing only, could invest such a custom with a title to permanence; that it was not simply the obvious product of circumstances and conditions as they existed in the Church and in the world in past ages but was the definite embodiment of some great underlying truth, the witness in the outward life and order of the Church to some part of the deposit committed to its care. If the subordination of woman is a Catholic principle, then the Catholic custom which excludes woman from the altar, whether as priest or server, from the choir and from the pulpit should doubtless be maintained. But is it credible that such a judgment will prevail? There are not wanting some who assert it. But to regard women as placed by the divine will in a position of permanent and essential subordination is to rob the indisputable Christian principle of the spiritual equality of the sexes of all life and meaning and reduce it to a mere form of words; it is to regard the whole woman's movement which, despite the serried ranks of prejudice and selfishness arrayed in opposition, has won its way to astonishing success as inspired by ideals fundamentally false and wrong; it is to challenge the root principle of democracy, a principle which has preserved the democratic movement from being a mere class struggle and enlisted on behalf of democratic ideals those of every rank who were susceptible to the appeal of the magic words "liberty, equality, fraternity." Surely no one who believes that the Spirit of God is still operative in the affairs of men can doubt that the great liberating movements of the past century, despite all the faults by which they have been marred, have had their source in Him. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Can a position which contravenes the fundamental principle of all these movements shelter itself under the aegis of the Catholic Faith?

If then on grounds of principle there is no valid reason for excluding women from the exercise of those ministries which laymen are encouraged to undertake, are there any grounds of expediency which would render such a course desirable? It has been asserted by high authority that the regulation of the lay activities of women in the Church is purely a matter of expediency. We deny it utterly, and shall presently give reasons for our denial. But we are not unready to examine the matter on grounds of expediency alone. What advantage is it thought will accrue to the Church of God if the proposal that women should be allowed to address the congregation, subject to such regulations as authority may see fit to impose, is rejected? Is it thought that women lack the persuasive power which might render such a ministry effective? Few who know the eagerness of almost any audience to hear a capable woman speak and the effect produced by such oratory will venture to

express such an opinion. No one, we may safely assume, will dare to assert that women have less personal knowledge of the truths of religion than men; and personal experience is vital to a successful presentation of the divine message. The records of the Universities sufficiently disclose that women have capacity for careful study and exact knowledge. Again we ask, what possible advantage can accrue to the Church from the exclusion of women from the occasional use of its pulpits, what hurt could arise if the same opportunities were open to them as to others of the laity? It may tend to shorten the discussion of this point if we emphasise the fact that what is in question is literally the admission of woman to the pulpit. Some who would refuse her such a place would allow her to speak from the chancel step: almost all would welcome her help in the adjacent schoolroom or parish hall. It is not then the capacity of women to deliver a message which is really in question. It is, for those who regard the matter as purely one of expediency, the psychological effect which would result from the admission of women to the pulpit. It is feared that men would be alienated; and doubtless the type of man whose doses of religion must be rendered palatable by expedients which pander to his sense of masculine superiority, who will hardly consent to worship save at a Service for "men only," might take it amiss. Is it not time that he was taught better? And if he were alienated would his loss outweigh the loss which is going on silently year after year by the alienation of women who feel that the attitude of the Church which thus excludes them is a perpetual insult to their womanhood? Or is it feared that the admission of women to the pulpit would tend to degrade the rites of religion by opening the door to sex-attraction? But surely it is those who emphasise sex by excluding women not those who desire differences of sex to be ignored in the House of God who make this a real danger and hinder that wholesome comradeship of the sexes which is the only real alternative to what should at all costs be avoided. But we can make our appeal to experience. Amongst the "Friends" distinctions of sex are ignored in the fellowship of worship. Has it ever been suggested that the result has been hurtful to propriety of thought or conduct? The suggestion that such service to the Church would be injurious to women themselves, imposing too great a strain on sensitive organisms, would be rather less preposterous if it were proposed to discourage women from speaking at all in public on subjects which arouse the religious emotions. Since it is merely a question of pulpit or platform, we can only say that the former, in the experience of most, involves the less physical strain.

We have not thought it necessary to deal with the singularly

confused ideas of those who imagine that they are obeying the teaching of St. Paul by withholding from women permission to preach in consecrated buildings whilst encouraging them to do so elsewhere. Woman has long ceased to keep silence "*in the Churches.*" She breaks that silence when on the platform and in the press she makes her appeal to her fellow-members in the Body of Christ. We have no sympathy with those who would regulate life by texts; but those who desire to do so should at least try to understand what the texts mean, and not darken counsel by a literalism which is not merely servile but ignorant to the point of absurdity.

But we do not rest our claim for the admission of women to an equal place with men in the lay ministries of the Church upon the absence of any good reason to the contrary. We believe that there are positive reasons which urgently require the modification of what has hitherto been the custom of the Church in this respect.

In the first place we set the fact that the denial of these privileges and opportunities to women obscures the vital truth of the equality of the sexes in the sight of God. We are prepared to admit that equality of status need not necessarily involve identity of function. St. Paul's illustration of the body and the members helps us here. All members have not the same office. No, but the office of each member is determined not by arbitrary regulation, but by natural endowment. The eye cannot choose but see and is quite incapable of hearing. In the Body of Christ also there are diverse gifts and endowments and, where opportunity for the use and development of these is afforded, there is no danger of schism in the Body. But whilst differentiation of function is a familiar fact of experience, acceptable to all as springing from God-given endowment, differentiation of function by external authority without regard to the gifts bestowed by God is something very different and is really inconsistent with any genuine doctrine of equality of status. All this is becoming more apparent year by year. What was tolerable, perhaps inevitable, in the past, when the whole life of woman moved on a different plane from that of man, is becoming utterly intolerable to-day. It will be utterly vain to attempt to persuade women that the Church accords them a status equal to that of men so long as there is denied to them on the score of sex opportunity to use those capacities and endowments which they have received from God.

But there is more to be said. What if the refusal to permit women to exercise their capacities and endowments in the Service of Christ and His Church be in effect a silencing of the Spirit of God? Women are part of the Body in which the

Spirit dwells. His gifts are not differentiated along the lines of race, class or sex. He divideth to every one severally as He will. Has the Church such store of prophets that it can afford to silence any who believe that they have a message from God; or is it so devoid of reverence as to be willing to do so?

And, if the higher considerations of principle demand that women should be given scope equally with men for the exercise of their gifts, is it doubtful that considerations of expediency point in the same direction? Is it not of the first importance to the Church to enrich its witness by all sincere testimony, to secure that every aspect of truth as learned in the manifold experiences of life should have free and full expression? Is it not vital to the Church to retain that whole-hearted devotion of women which won the tribute of praise from the lips of the Master and has since made splendid many a page in its chequered story? It is difficult to write of the disasters which may befall if the claim of women is disregarded without seeming to add threats to arguments. Nothing is further from our thoughts, as nothing is further from our desires than that our warnings should be found true should such a situation unhappily arise. But we cannot be blind to influences already at work amongst us, nor silent when so much is at stake. Whilst the great mass of women is still content to accept restrictions which immemorial custom has made it almost impious to challenge, there is a steadily growing minority of the more thoughtful women of the present generation which finds such restrictions well-nigh intolerable. Amongst them are not a few who have lacked the self-restraint to await the considered judgment of the Church upon their claim and have abandoned their share in the fellowship of the faithful; but there are many more who have realised that the customs of centuries cannot be transformed in a moment, that those who believe should not make haste. What will the result be upon these women if their claim is now formally disallowed by the most august body to which in a divided Christendom it can be submitted; or if, after years of patient waiting, it is deferred to a more convenient season? What will the result be upon those who will come to womanhood during the next decade and who will find, as in that event will assuredly be the case, that the Church alone treats them as a subordinate part of the human family and forbids to them that free opportunity for the exercise of their gifts which it insistently urges upon men? If principle demands that the matter be put to the proof, we would not have principle disregarded for any consideration which expediency could advance. But if it be felt that considerations of expediency may rightly be brought into account, then we urge our Fathers in God to think well

ere they expose the Church to the risk of such a disaster as neither we nor our fathers have known.

It may be said that the whole of this argument, whilst formally limited in its application to the question of the lay ministries of women, is really, if valid at all, equally valid in relation to the matter of the priesthood. Quite frankly, we believe that to be true. We believe that at no distant time the Church will feel constrained to reconsider its attitude during all the ages to the question of women priests. But the priesthood and the lay ministry are things apart. Many who desire to see women called to the sacred ministry feel that their desire can never be realised till Christendom is reunited. All advocates of such action, who have not cast aside all sober judgment, realise that, even if the Anglican Communion is competent to take such a step, it is essential that it should only be taken after full deliberation and with something approaching to general consent and approval. Those who are "agitating"—the term has been applied to us—for a women priesthood are not doing so because they conceive the time to be ripe, but in order that, if it be in the counsels of God, the time may become ripe. We should welcome some statement from the bishops at Lambeth which would make it plain that they do not ask for women ordinands, not because they count women spiritually inferior or subordinate to men, not because there is any essential unfitness in womanhood for the sacred ministry, but in conformity with the unbroken tradition and custom of the Catholic Church. More than that at the moment we do not desire, and we would not even press unduly for such a pronouncement as we have outlined. But the time is ripe and more than ripe for the admission of women to all ministries which the laity may exercise in the Church of God. In regard to the chief of these—the ministry of preaching—the main point has been long since conceded. When women were invited to address Church Congress meetings, to go abroad as missionaries, to plead on the public platform for every sacred cause which the Church seeks to further, to preach in the open air, Pauline regulations and ancient customs (by no means unvarying, be it remembered) were in reality set aside. The Bishops at Lambeth will have an unexampled opportunity to affirm anew the essential principle of Catholicity—the equal sonship of all who are in Christ—and to secure its formal expression in the ordered life of His Church. We believe that they will take it.

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WOMEN AND THE CHURCH.

Price 1d.

L.C.M. Leaflet, No. 3.



Women and Theology.

By A. MAUDE ROYDEN.

THE entrance of women into the learned professions will have a much greater effect on the thought of those professions—and through them, on the thought of the world—than is realised by those who regard it merely as the fortunate opening of new careers for women, or the deplorable invasion of yet more of the sphere of men. The only one in which women have already entered in sufficiently large numbers to create a corporate as well as an individual impression is medicine. Those who have watched their progress will probably agree that their most valuable contribution to the great science of hygiene has been their repudiation of the ancient heresy that "woman is a natural invalid." I do not forget the brilliant work done by individual women physicians and surgeons, or the high level reached by medical women as a whole, when I say that this beneficent revolution (it is nothing less) outweighs in importance to the race of the future anything else that has been done.

That the coming of women into the legal profession will result in another peaceful revolution in thought, I have no doubt at all, and I believe that here it will be along the lines of a much greater emphasis on the sanctity of life as compared with property. But here, since women have not yet begun practice in either of the legal professions, one is in the dangerous region of prophecy.

Prophecy, too, is all that is possible in the case of women in the ministry, for the number who have entered it, in any Christian communion, is too small, and their entrance too recent, for them yet to have exercised this kind of influence. But I believe that theology has been and is the poorer for the almost complete lack in it of the influence and experience of the ordinary woman.

It is true that there have been distinguished women who have shared in the building up of our theology; but here, as in medicine, it is not the exceptional woman's individual work that I am thinking of, but rather the contribution of many women—women in numbers large enough to give something of the point of view of their sex as a great part of the community, as well as of their individual minds.

One is inclined at first to argue that since intellect and spirit have no sex, women *as women* neither have nor ought to have any such contribution to make. The same argument might be applied to medicine; but it has been shown to be untrue, and the whole race will benefit immeasurably from the fact that women doctors have, on some matters, a different point of view from men, and are able to give effect to it. I do not attempt to make generalisations about the "fundamental differences" between the sexes. No one yet knows what they are, and no one can know until artificial differences have ceased to be created by convention. But apart from "fundamental" differences, there is no doubt that the actual lives and experience of women *as a whole* have been different from that of men *as a whole*, and that this difference has either been created by, or has created, differences of outlook. Men have been more active in public and women in private life: men in creating States, women in creating homes; men in making and administering laws, women in bringing up families.

It is possible that our depressingly legalistic theology may suffer something like a peaceful revolution when women begin to interest themselves in it. Let me take a single instance to show what I mean.

It is a commonplace that the great and adorable doctrine of the Atonement has suffered such incredible distortion and perversion at the hands of theologians that it has become, to many seeking minds, the worst stumbling-block of all, in the way of their acceptance of Christianity. This doctrine is sublimely stated by St. Paul: "God was in Christ, *reconciling the world to Himself.*" But St. Paul's doctrine has hardened into a legalism so harsh, so un-divine, so remote from the spirit of Jesus Christ, that it has become unrecognisable.

Partly, no doubt, this has been due to the influence of Rome and the majesty of Roman Law; but has it not also been due to the fact that men naturally think of our relation to God in terms of King and subject, judge and offender, creditor and debtor, lord and servant, rather than in terms of parent and child? All these analogies were used by our Lord in His teaching, and all, obviously, convey something of the nature of our relation to God. But all will agree that the very heart of His revelation was the great assurance that God is our Father. Compared with this, the others are mere incidents of His teaching—figures of speech used to point a particular moral, or throw light on some single perplexity. Transcending all is the sublime truth that we are the children of God, that He is our Father, and that His "Kingdom" is in fact our home.

If the doctrine of the Atonement had been seen and interpreted in this light, it could not have become the terror that it has been for so long and to so many. It would have been interpreted, surely, in the light of that master-parable of the Christian life—the parable of the Prodigal Son. It has been said that if all the rest of Christ's teaching were lost, this parable alone would give us the heart of His revelation. It is

an exaggeration, but it is a striking testimony to the character of that revelation. Not God as king or judge or lord or creditor is the God of Jesus; but God as Father: not man as subject, offender, servant, debtor; but man as son, even if an erring son.

It is at least remarkable that this story, which has so seized the imagination of the world, was recorded by one evangelist only—St. Luke—and in that part of his gospel which Biblical criticism has now assigned to a woman! The "great interpolation" may have been given to St. Luke by our Lady, by Joanna, by the group of women who ministered to our Lord: but that it was from women or a woman is very widely believed. Is it a coincidence merely that while (male) theologians have darkened understanding with their strange and harsh interpretations of the doctrine of the Atonement, a woman saved for the world that perfect revelation of the real attitude of God to man—the story of a father, an erring son, and no mediator at all?

I take this single example to show what I mean when I prophesy that the coming of women into this last of the "learned professions" will have its effect in ways we do not dream of. It may be argued that theology has always been open to them; that they have never been forbidden to read; and that in St. Catherine of Siena and St. Theresa of Spain alone, there is proof enough that women could, without entering the ministry of the Church both study and influence the direction of theological thought. It is true; and many names hardly less great could be added to these. But it is also true (*a*) that women have generally been discouraged not only from study in general, but especially from the study of theology (*vide*, almost in our own day, the prohibition of Ruskin in 'Sesame and Lilies'!); and (*b*) that it has never been their *business* to study theology. This is more relevant than it may seem. People do not study subjects which can lead them nowhere for the obvious reason that life is too strenuous, except in the case of persons of exceptional leisure. And life seems always to have been fairly strenuous for women, even women of the richest classes, during the Middle Ages! Women now are beginning to turn their attention to theology, but this is precisely because it does now seem that there will be a possibility of their using such knowledge in the service of their fellow men.

And for the few outstanding women theologians of the past, whose bent was too strong to be denied by adverse circumstance, it must be repeated that it is not so much the individual work of exceptional genius that we are thinking of here. Such work will generally not represent the normally characteristic experience and point of view of women, because it comes from women whose experience has been as exceptional as is their genius. Neither St. Catherine nor St. Theresa lived the ordinary life of women, and their genius transcends sex. The pressure, the moulding power, of women as a whole, will be felt and only felt when women in considerable numbers are studying, writing, teaching and preaching theology.

It is possible that this influence is not only an important one in itself, but actually the essential one for the world of to-day. Looking at the ruins of our civilisation, seeking the new hope and the new vision which shall lead us to a better, the hearts of all Christian people turn again to their Lord. Here and here alone is the Light of the World. But this civilisation that has ended in such tragic wreck, it also was called Christian, it also was built up by nations nominally Christian. And horrible as have been its crimes, awful as is its failure, we cannot help believing that there is an element of hope, a possibility of effort, in people born into a religion so full of promise, which cannot let us despair. We build again; but it is reasonable to ask where and how our building failed before. I believe it was in a too prosaic and legal interpretation of the gospel of Christ; a greater insistence on the sovereignty than the Fatherhood of God; a tendency to reduce the relation of Father and child to a legal contract, a harsh bargain, a dwelling on justice human rather than divine. To a new world, Christians must preach the lovelier message of a God, who, though Judge, King, Lawgiver, is more still, and more completely, Father. They must learn that there is a Divine Justice not less just than ours but more divine—a Justice which is not retaliation but Love.

I am reminded that in Mr. Homer Lane's "Little Commonwealth," that great pioneer found a tendency among the children to elect girls rather than boys as judges. After the first shock of seeing so monstrous a regiment of women, they found—or so they believed—that girls were more just than boys. The boy was inclined to regard chiefly the outraged majesty of Law! The girls were more apt to consider every circumstance that accounted for the human offender. After all, should not justice consider all these things? But it is not in the law-courts—it is in the home—that one realises that.

There must be some way of reconciling Justice with Mercy; some way of showing that they are the same thing. There must be a possibility of building the new civilisation on Love, without weakness, since only Love can ever create at all. If it be true that in the past, we have gone astray through too lawyer-like a theology, then it is possible that the age now dawning will be "the woman's age" in a much deeper sense than has been realised.

We are all beginning to understand how much the East has to give the West; how much each nation has to give to our idea of God. Until all are Christian, can we be perfectly orthodox? And until both sexes share equally in the interpretation of our religion, will not one aspect always be over-weighted, over-stressed?

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WOMEN AND THE CHURCH.

L.C.M. Leaflet, No. 4.

Price 1d.



The Diaconate.

By E. A. GILCHRIST.

In the past there have been Councils of the Church which have dealt with the Ministry of Women, but it has been left to the Bishops of the Anglican Communion to express in resolutions and utterances of great importance a corporate judgment on the question of women and the Diaconate of far greater moment than any pronouncement made before.

The portion of the Encyclical Letter on the 'Ministry of Women' (p. 14 in the Lambeth Conference Report, S.P.C.K.); the Resolutions 47 to 52 inclusive (p. 40) and the fifth of the reports of special Committees (p. 95) when carefully read and compared have the salutary effect of making ordinary church-people try to recollect what they have been taught concerning Holy Orders, and to ask for guidance where their knowledge is faulty or their intellect puzzled. It is in such a spirit that the following reflections are advanced. No apology is necessary on the score that one of the laity is approaching the subject, for the question of ministry touches the laity most. No one would dream of discussing in the same way the rules of a religious order, self-formed (with no doubt the approval of authority) and self-contained like any other guild or corporate body within the Church's fold. The Diaconate is something more than that: deaconesses concern the whole Church and we need to be very clear on this point, or the result will be confusion worse confounded.

The Question at Issue.

Shortly before the Report of Bishop Ryle's Committee* was published, an article on *Women Deacons* was contributed to one of the Reviews.† This article originally contained a passage which the writer agreed to omit (in deference to the wishes of the editors), to the effect that ambiguity as to the exact standing of women in the Diaconate would sooner or later affect the whole question of orders. If such a statement is far-fetched it is to be hoped some one will disprove it. The case, as I understand it, is as follows:

The historic tradition, held for centuries with remarkable unanimity in the Church, is of a threefold ministry—Episcopate,

* *The Ministry of Women*, S.P.C.K., 1919.

† *Englishwoman*, May, 1919.

Presbyterate and Diaconate—to which is entrusted (fully to the Bishops, who by authority ordain Priests and Deacons) the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments. There have been in different times and places other orders known as *minor* or lesser orders which are in no case essential, although they may be convenient. It is undeniable that in the infancy of the Christian Church, and continuing for several centuries, there were women as well as men deacons, and the question before the Lambeth Conference was to decide whether the modern deaconess was to be considered as belonging to the Third Order of Christian ministry, or whether a Fourth Order was to be created of a minor character.

Let us consider what the Bishops decided.

The Special Committee's Report.

The Committee appointed by the Lambeth Conference to consider and report upon the 'Position of Women in the Councils and Ministrations of the Church' † entirely relied upon the book issued by Bishop Ryle's Committee for historical facts, and there is internal evidence that their deliberations were not altogether uninfluenced by the suggested new form for ordaining deaconesses, set forth in Appendix XIV. of that volume. §

The Committee comment most sympathetically on the difficulties created by the prevailing uncertainty as to what a deaconess is, and in one unequivocal sentence declare:—

"In our judgment, the ordination of a Deaconess confers on her Holy Orders."

By itself this is definite enough, but the context might be taken to show that the Committee did not mean Holy Orders in the sense of the historic Diaconate; for they refer to the "restoration of an ancient ministry," and all know that the Third Order of the Christian Ministry has never been lost. On the other hand they cannot mean deaconesses are in minor orders (which is not proved by history) for the distinctive word "Holy" is employed and, moreover, at the end of the section (p. 105) they emphatically deny in advance having any ulterior object in the proposals they have made (presumably, the introduction of minor orders similar to those in the Roman Communion, or the making of the diaconate in the case of women a step to the priesthood, or the institution of that contradiction in terms, a "lay diaconate"). The conclusion, then, might be that the Orders of Christian ministry to which it has been the pride of the English Church to adhere, as the witness of the Prayer Book shows, have been incomplete, and that a Fourth Order, lapsed for centuries is now *re-created*, rather than that women are *re-admitted* to the Diaconate, which is the only continuous and universally recognised ministry of assistance.

† For personnel see Lambeth Conference Report, p. 95.

§ There the deaconess is made not the equal but the subordinate of the deacon, and if carried out the proposal would mean that the ordained deaconess of many years' standing would have to ask permission of the young deacon fresh from college before she could teach the children their Catechism.—*Vide Ministry of Women, S.P.C.K., p. 251.*

The Resolutions.

When we turn to the resolutions agreed upon by the Conference we are inclined to revise our previous considerations and to conclude that on the whole the re-admission of women to the Diaconate is intended. It is true that the framers of the Resolutions employ the term *Order of Deaconesses*, but frequently we talk of the *Order of Deacons*, and in both cases the Diaconate (for men and women) might be meant. It is quite possible to read Resolutions 48 and 49 in this way, but the phrase in the latter, '*the lines of the primitive rather than of the modern diaconate of men,*' raises another question. Does the modern deacon not belong to the same order as the deacon in the early Church, even though some of his functions have been altered or neglected?

Resolution 51 seems superfluous in view of the resolution immediately preceding it, which is so explicit that the form already in our Ordinal could be used, possibly modified. In this connection it may be useful to compare Resolution 52 with a portion of the diaconal service in the Prayer Book.

Resolution 52 passed by the Lambeth Conference.

The following functions may be entrusted to the deaconess, in addition to the ordinary duties which would naturally fall to her:—

- (a) To prepare candidates for Baptism and Confirmation;
- (b) To assist at the administration of Holy Baptism; and to be the ministrant in cases of necessity in virtue of her office;
- (c) To pray with and to give counsel to such women as desire help in difficulties and perplexities.
- (d) With the approval of the bishop and of the parish priest, and under such conditions as shall from time to time be laid down by the bishop: (i) in church to read Morning and Evening Prayer and the Litany, except such portions as are assigned to the priest only; (ii) in church also to lead in prayer and, under licence of the bishop, to instruct and exhort the congregation.

Book of Common Prayer.

It appertaineth to the office of a Deacon [the Bishop is directed to say in the English Ordinal] in the Church where he shall be appointed to serve, to assist the Priest in Divine Service, and specially when he ministereth the Holy Communion, and to help him in the distribution thereof, and to read Holy Scriptures and Homilies in the Church; and to instruct the youth in the Catechism; in the absence of the Priest to baptize infants, and to preach, if he be admitted thereto by the Bishop. And furthermore, it is his Office, where provision is so made, to search for the sick, poor, and impotent people of the Parish, to intimate their estates, names, and places where they dwell, unto the Curate, that by his exhortation they may be relieved with the alms of the Parishioners, or others.

The Encyclical Letter.

The first paragraph in the section of the Encyclical Letter (p. 14) relating to the Ministry of Women renews the query as to whether a minor order was in the mind of the Episcopate, but before the end of the section is reached the impression is once more given that deaconesses belong to a Fourth Order, which it is proposed to re-create. I think it is correct to say that the re-creation of a lapsed degree of Holy Orders is a unique act and if that was intended (which I am far from asserting) then speaking for myself only, were I a prospective candidate for the "Diaconate for Women," I should be a little shy of entering it, and

altogether sorry that the branch of the ministry to which I felt called had not the mark of continuity which the Church of my baptism so particularly prizes. It would not make any difference to me that my sex had not been admitted to the Third Order of Ministry for a considerable time, for the Order itself has continued and I know that others—Indians, for instance—may not have been admitted for long periods of time, but I should not feel it was quite the same thing to enter a ministry which had lapsed altogether because—rightly or wrongly—the thought would stir in my mind that if so serious an error had been made in the past that one branch of Holy Orders had been temporarily lost, might not there be some doubt as to what the “character” of a deaconess is, and how could such a doubt be resolved?

The Diaconate in the National Assembly.

No one who has studied the history of the Church in this land of England can fail to be impressed with the way in which essentials have been jealously guarded, while the living organism has adapted itself to meet the claims of changing environment. This is exemplified among other things in the need for the woman deacon to-day and in the institution of the National Assembly of the Church of England.

Not very long ago a member of Parliament was addressing a number of deaconesses on the subject of the Enabling Act, when he was asked the question, “How is the deaconess to be represented in the Assembly?” The speaker faltered and finally hazarded the suggestion that they might be in the Third House, e.g., among the laity; which was received with profound dissatisfaction. He then turned over the question to his audience, and the answer was made without hesitation, “We will sit in the Assembly wherever the deacons sit.”

At present there is no provision for the representation of the Diaconate in the Second House, but that will no doubt come in good time, for it is only fair that the clerical as well as the lay element should be represented in our National Synod as widely as possible.

In conclusion, may not the stress laid upon the difference between men and women deacons be purely arbitrary? In baptism or in confirmation there has never been any heretical suggestion in the English Church that the Holy Spirit operates differently according to the sex of the recipient, and surely the grace conferred by Orders is a spiritual endowment also, and the diaconate not divided, but one sacred order of ministry “evermore had in such reverend estimation” that it “may be continued and reverently used and esteemed in the Church of England.”

In order to leave Contributors to this Series free to write as they feel guided, it is understood that the League is not necessarily committed to the opinions expressed.

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WOMEN AND THE CHURCH.

L.C.M. Leaflet, No. 5.



“The Coming Clergywoman.”

By EDITH PICTON-TURBERVILL, O.B.E.

LAMBETH has spoken. With the result that recently *The Church Times* had a long article on “The Coming Clergywoman.” Let us be quite clear as to what Lambeth has said.

In spite of *The Church Times* many people seem in doubt. Only a few days ago I met a clergyman in entire sympathy with the admission of women into Holy Orders, deeply deploring that the Lambeth Conference had refused to allow women to speak in churches! This points to the fact that in spite of the splendid sale of the Lambeth Conference Report, in spite of the fact that Church papers have lately devoted much space to the Ministry of Women, there are a large number of people who still are uncertain as to what has been recommended by the Bishops concerning it. So let us be clear.

The Lambeth Conference Report contains two sections on the Ministry of Women. One is the report on that subject drawn up by the Special Committee appointed to consider it, the other section a series of resolutions.

The Special Committee which issued the report was composed of thirty-two Bishops from all parts of the world, thirteen of them being Bishops of our own provinces of Canterbury and York. They presented their report to the whole Conference of two hundred and fifty-two Archbishops and Bishops; on that report the whole Conference formed the Resolutions on the Ministry of Women.

The report and the resolutions are practically the same; there is one difference which will be referred to later.

In the resolutions the Lambeth Conference decides that the Order of Deaconesses should be “formally and canonically” restored. The Conference evidently does not consider the present Order of Deaconesses, which is the result of an attempt to restore the Order sixty years ago, a real one. The reason for this is stated in the report. The attempted restoration sixty years ago was “carried out not on the authority of the several churches of our communion, but rather on that of individual Bishops.” The restoration of the Order of Deaconesses has now the authority of the Lambeth Conference consisting of all the Archbishops and Bishops of the several churches of the Anglican

Communion throughout the world. The resolutions go on to say that a form should be adopted for the making of Deaconesses such as might fitly find a place in the Book of Common Prayer. The report recommends that "letters of orders should be given to each Deaconess by the Bishop during or immediately after ordination, and the names of those who are ordained should be duly entered by the Bishop's Registrar or Secretary in the Diocesan roll in like manner as the names of those who are ordained Priests and Deacons."

What are the duties of the Deaconess?

1. "To prepare candidates for Baptism and Confirmation."
N.B.—Women who have not been ordained have constantly been entrusted with this.

2. "To assist at the administration of Holy Baptism, and to be the ministrant in case of necessity."

3. "To pray with and to give counsel to such women as desire help in difficulties and perplexities."

It is perhaps hardly necessary to point out that godly women have ever done this, therefore the first three functions mentioned as work of a woman in Holy Orders have been performed by ordinary Churchwomen for a long time. However, in the last-mentioned function to be entrusted to Deaconesses comes an innovation. They shall have the same power as a Deacon to read Morning and Evening Prayer and to "instruct and exhort" the congregation, which, stated quite simply, means to preach. Nothing is said about speaking from the lectern or a special step, so we may take it for granted that the pulpit, which is a convenient article of Church furniture for the purpose of speaking from, will be used.

There is one recommendation in the report of the Special Committee of Bishops, which is not referred to in the resolutions of the Conference. The Report recommends that ordained women should render assistance at the administration of Holy Communion to sick persons. It is a little difficult to understand *why* if in virtue of her ordination a Deaconess is qualified to assist at the administration of Holy Communion, that assistance *should be given only when administering to sick persons*. On the recommendation concerning the Holy Communion, the Conference made no pronouncement.

Concerning the Laywoman.—Women not ordained but approved of by the Bishop shall have opportunity to lead in prayer and to preach in consecrated buildings at "other than the regular and appointed services of the Church." It is not quite clear what is meant by this. Strictly speaking both Morning and Evening Prayer end with the Grace. A sermon is not compulsory. A vicar wishing to have a layman or a laywoman to preach on a Sunday morning or evening, is acting in conformity with the resolution, if he retires to the vestry for a few moments after Grace is said, and the hymn is being sung. This he does to indicate that the service is over and returns to hear the sermon. But even this is unnecessary, for it is clear that the service ends with the Grace.

The question will naturally arise in the minds of many as to how the woman—be she deaconess or a laywoman—should be dressed when ministering in Church. And here I suggest that she should be clothed in cassock and surplice, not because they are beautiful garments, though they are eminently suitable, being not unlike Western feminine attire, but I would recommend it on the ground that it is well for the clergyman and laywoman or deaconess to be clothed alike.* A different dress will emphasize the sex distinction which from an external point of view is just what needs to be forgotten. When the woman ministers in Church we need to think of her primarily as a ministrant, a messenger, a voice. The clergyman has always adopted garments, that from an external point of view, as far as possible conceal his sex, when ministering in Church; it is well for the woman to do likewise. For this reason I would urge that the simple cassock and surplice is worn. The Deaconess or laywoman should, I think, wear a soft silk cap on her head. The one aim should be that the preacher should wear nothing likely to distract, nothing to emphasize sex, for what difference that there is between the minds and spirits of men and women will be clear in the message delivered. It is perhaps one of the most difficult things in the world to let personality take its right place, and yet the spiritual message only has abiding power when the messenger is truly but a voice.

The Lambeth resolutions mark a great advance in the movement for Woman's Ministry in the Church. Let it be remembered, however, that unless the Bishops, clergy and laity are prepared to work them, not in the letter only, but in the spirit, there will be little advance.

A great opportunity lies in the hands of the Anglican Church to-day. As Mrs. Creighton has said, it was not that women desired to assert themselves or to make new claims that this movement began. They saw in the Church a crying need for service which they felt some women at least could render, and should be permitted to do so. It is more than likely that this opening of Holy Orders to women will bring not only deeper sources of spiritual power to the Church, but new ones. Spiritual healing in the Church for all we know may be widely extended by the admission of women into Orders, women in spiritual darkness, girls in woeful difficulties, often from ignorance, will many of them seek spiritual guidance more willingly from a woman than a man.

It is impossible to foretell the results of the Lambeth Conference on the Ministry of Women, suffice to say that in the judgment of the Archbishops and Bishops throughout the whole Anglican Communion it will bring blessing and spiritual power to the Church.

There are those who say the resolutions do not go far enough, and as the Conference is united in believing that not only was

* Mr. Hudson Shaw at St. Botolph's always arranges this, and when I preached with Episcopal approval at Sunday services in Lincoln, Dublin and Geneva the incumbent in each case provided a cassock and surplice, and in each case the pulpit was used.

the Evangelistic charge (Matthew xxviii. 19) given to women as well as men (cf. 1 Cor. xv. 6), but that the Commission in John xx. 20-23 was committed to women also (cf. Luke xxiv. 33) one is a little at a loss to know the reason why Holy Orders for women is to be confined to the Diaconate.

It is remarkable how long a time it has taken for the tradition that these charges were given to the apostles only, to perish in the clear light of truth. Long ago Westcott and Hort called attention to the fact that women were present in the upper room when our Lord gave His Commission. The Fulham Conference on Absolution and Confession (1901) also came to the conclusion that the Commission was given to the whole Church. Yet although this fact was generally known to all scholarly ecclesiasts, it was not until women began to realize this truth *themselves* that any movement to alter a system built upon a false assumption was initiated. Another false assumption has been that the Holy Spirit in cloven tongues of fire fell upon the Apostles alone, and the artists of the Renaissance have in their pictures perpetuated false conception. That the Spirit fell upon all is clear in Acts ii. and that it fell upon the women is doubly clear when St. Peter sees in the Pentecostal gift the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel, "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy and . . . your young men shall see visions."

It appears as though the whole hierarchical ministry of the Church is built upon the assumption that the Commission in John xx. 23 was given to men alone. We now know this to be simply untrue. In the proper preface of the Communion Service for Whit-Sunday come these words: "The Holy Ghost came down as at this time from heaven . . . lighting upon the Apostles to teach them, and to lead them to all truth." Wordsworth in one of his most beautiful sonnets speaks of a "malignant truth." The writer of that proper preface no doubt unconsciously utters a malignant truth, for while stating that the Spirit fell on the Apostles, which is true, it infers, what is entirely false, that it fell upon them alone.

Whether or not the general feeling is that there has been an inadequate dealing with, and somewhat timid handling of the subject, no one, unless he or she be utterly lost in the abyss of prejudice, will fail to give heed to recommendations coming from so weighty a source, or fail to recognize that they are the result of careful thought and prayer.

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WOMEN AND THE CHURCH.

L.C.M. Leaflet, No. 6.



The Lambeth Conference and the Ministrations of Women.

By A. MAUDE ROYDEN.

(Report of Speech at Southend, October 22nd, 1920.)

MR. CHAIRMAN, MY LORD BISHOP, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I SHOULD like to begin by saying with all the frankness that has been desired, that I do, like all other women of my way of thinking, regard the Report of the Lambeth Conference on the Ministry of Women as a very real step forward, and realise that it has been given to the world in a spirit of good faith and genuine desire to see what is right and to do what is right, which ought to make those of us who are not satisfied that "enough" is recommended, feel grateful to the Bishops who composed that Committee.

If the Church of England herself is as broad-minded and progressive as her representatives at Lambeth were, we shall see a very live Church indeed during the next generation.

Having said that, I should like very briefly to comment on the points which I consider are the most important in this report.

First, there is the very frank recognition of the fact that neither with regard to the prophetic nor the priestly office is the exclusion of women to be based upon the words or the action of Our Lord. This is crucial. We modern women feel very strongly that St. Paul is to be followed most closely when he

Full Report of the Lambeth Committee on the "Ministrations of Women," with Resolutions, Extracts from Encyclical Letter, and Bibliography. Price, 6d., from the L.C.M. Office, Church House, Westminster, S.W.1.

tells us to test everything by the standard of Jesus Christ. Those of you who attach greater importance to other passages in St. Paul's epistles will remember that this is at least a fundamental one! And consequently, we do not feel that we can accept an answer to so great a question as this, unless it agrees with the authority of our Lord Himself. Let me then quote the Report:—

“With Bishop Westcott and Dr. Hort, we venture to think that the Great Commission was given to those who were representatives of the whole Church; and among those representatives we have every reason to believe that women had a place. Again, we are led to conclude that the evangelistic charge was delivered to a company which included women.”

The last sentence of this paragraph of the Report reads: “Demonstration, in this as in so many other important matters is beyond our reach. But at least the strong probability is that women were among the recipients of the Great Commission and of the evangelistic charge as afterwards they were of the gift of Pentecost.”

From this, it follows that the exclusion of women from the ministry, however much it may be justified on grounds of custom or expediency, at least cannot be justified by the words of our Lord Himself.

So far, indeed, as the ministry of the Word is concerned, the Church has already recognised the power and vocation of women. Women are prophesying all over the world and the country which has produced a Mrs. Booth and a Mrs. Josephine-Butler can hardly be said really to have lost the tradition that women prophesy as well as men.

The Church has, to a large extent, conceded this claim. With the question of priesthood, it is different: and here again we find important statements in the Report. I do not know whether their Lordships realise it or not, but it does seem to me when they affirm that the setting apart of women as deaconesses constitutes “ordination,” and that the ordination of a deaconess confers upon her Holy Orders, they make untenable the contention of some of our opponents, that a woman is *incapable* of the grace of ordination. The Bishops propose the admission of women only to minor orders; yet they speak definitely of “Holy Orders.” Again I submit that when that is

granted it is not possible to hold the extreme position any longer.

The question ceases to be one of principle, and becomes a matter of expediency and of order. There again we have reason to be grateful to the Bishops: they have not asserted anywhere in the Report that women should be excluded from the priesthood, on *principle*. They have not based their exclusion on the belief that women are, for some reason, fundamentally incapable of Holy Orders. The Bishops rather base their refusal (which is not affirmed, but rather implied or understood) upon the long established custom of the Church. They tell us they do not see, at present, at any rate, any reason for interfering with that long established and Catholic custom.

I want therefore to ask this question:—

What is the vocation to the prophetic or priestly office? What gifts or qualities constitute that vocation? The vocation of the prophet surely consists in having a message from God. It may be a great and fundamental message for all time, as with our Lord. It may be a message to a single generation. But whether great or small, it is the possession of that message that makes the prophet. The Church can hardly prevent such a one from exercising his vocation. The prophet is a very difficult person to silence. But the Church has decided that the message shall not be delivered within the walls of a church, if that message be given by a woman. Why it should be this one building, namely the House of God, where she may not deliver her message given by the Holy Spirit of God, I have never been able to understand. But then, I do not belong to the sex which specialises in logic. I find no answer to my difficulty in the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, for though we know that St. Paul said a woman should not preach in church, he could not have meant “in a consecrated building,” for there were no such buildings when he spoke. He must have meant by “the Church” the congregation of the faithful, and when the Bishop of Chelmsford asked Miss Picton-Turbervill to address the Church Congress he was really “scrapping” St. Paul more than most people have quite realised. The Church Congress is surely a congregation of the faithful! Here we have a Bishop as President, Bishops and Canons presiding at the different meetings, priests as well as laity in the audience. After that, to say that women must not

speak in the Church because St. Paul said they must not, is a little late.

The Church has in fact abandoned the idea that women cannot exercise a prophetic office. She did so when she agreed to send women all over the world to preach the Gospel: and for people now to split hairs about the special building, or the special place in the building, from which a woman may be allowed to speak, is really farcical.

When I was prohibited by the Bishop of London from taking the Three Hours' Service in St. Botolph's, we meekly went from the church to the school-room. The Bishop afterwards thanked me for this, and said that "of course the school-room was all right." I contend that if my congregation in church would have been "the assembly of the faithful," they still were "the assembly of the faithful" in the schoolroom! And I assure you I gave them the same address, because I was not prepared to alter it at the last moment. The difference was in the building in which I stood, and yet the saying of St. Paul on which all this is based *could* not have referred to the building.

We rejoice then that the Lambeth Report sets aside this unreal distinction as to place and frankly recommends that women should be allowed to preach in church. It is always an advance for people to have the courage of their convictions, and the Bishops have to make it clear to the world that the Church does not attach importance to such minor points as the character of the building, or the place in the building, in which a prophet's message may be delivered. It is indeed difficult to understand how anyone can read the Gospels and think Our Lord would have attached importance to such a detail.

Surely it is what people say that matters, and not the place from which they say it?

Now let us turn to the other great office—that of the priest. The vocation of the prophet is to have a message from God. What is the vocation of the priest? I do not find it set out in any authoritative book. But it seems to me, judging by Our Lord Himself, who was the great High Priest, and judging by people who have everywhere in all ages been recognised as having the priestly vocation, that that vocation consists in a great passion for souls, a love for every individual human being, such

that, in the sight of the priest, every human being, whether good or bad, young or old, learned or ignorant, black or white, is simply a child of God, whom it is not possible to see perish without having that anguish that a mother has for her dying child, for whom the priest is prepared to travail in spirit, as a mother travails in body, that he may bring that immortal soul to life. That passion for souls seems to me the great mark of the real priest. But if this is so—if this is the vocation to the priesthood, can anyone in this Hall tell me what it has to do with sex? The ministerial priesthood is a spiritual vocation, and our Lord has told us that sex is not eternal—it is not of the spirit—therefore in spiritual things there cannot be any sex exclusiveness or sex barriers. This passion for souls is the vocation of the priesthood, and it has nowhere about it the mark of sex. If you will look back over history, I think you will find that the greatest figures of the Church were both priests and prophets. Our Lord was both Prophet and Priest, and after Him came perhaps the greatest of all the saints, St. Francis of Assisi, a man who was both priest and prophet. He had both a message for the world and a love of the individual soul. Others have only one vocation. I suppose that St. Augustine, Luther, Wesley and others of like character were men who had rather the great message to deliver—whose appeal was rather to the great mass of humanity, than the individual office of the priest; while St. Francis Xavier and St. Francis de Sales were the ideal priests: and men like Pusey and Keble who were not on that grand heroic scale that belongs to the prophet, but rather had the fineness and sensitiveness which are the mark of the priest. It is only the greatest of all who have both vocations on a great scale; but many have one or the other, and perhaps all of us, in a measure, have a little of one and the other. Most of us have care for some individual souls. In women like St. Catherine of Siena or St. Theresa of Spain, you get the great prophetic message to the world, and withal that love of the individual soul which makes these great ones serve humanity, not in one way only but in both. And it is astonishing that in such a matter as this, anyone should raise the question of sex at all.

But it is argued that, though these gifts may be found in women, they cannot be publicly exercised because of the expediency which keeps women to some extent, out of public life, and here I want to touch upon a thing which it is very

difficult to speak about, but which I believe to be at the back of a great deal of the opposition. Forgive me if I speak very plainly upon this question. I have again and again seen it written, and heard it said, that a woman cannot be at the altar, cannot come within the sanctuary rails, cannot minister as a preacher, without great danger to the people to whom she ministers, and that danger I suppose, to put it frankly is this: we are all in these days of psychology, aware that the religious and sex emotions are very closely allied, so much so that the age of conversion very often coincides with the age of development into manhood and womanhood. We are even warned that a person may fall into the mistake of thinking he is religious, when it is the other side of his nature that is moved. Spiritual revivals of a certain type are sometimes accompanied by an increase of immorality in the district—not when rightly and wisely conducted, but when the appeal made is too emotional or sensational in character. Is there not a danger then, it is argued, that when women in the pulpit appeal to the people, they may arouse the emotions and move their hearers in an undesirable way? Is it not detestable to think that people might mistake the appeal of sex for the appeal of religion?

Ladies and Gentlemen, when I hear people say that, and know how true it is, how tragically true, that the religious and sex emotions are very very closely intertwined, I ask myself why do not men realise that there may be a hardship to women, in having men only in the pulpit?

Has it not ever occurred to you that women have religious and sex emotions? Certainly it has! The woman who mistakes a flirtation for religion, the woman who does not know when she is sentimental and when she is religious is the bye-word of the religious world. You all know the kind of woman to whom I refer. And let me remind you that a man, nine times out of ten, knows if he is in danger. I ask you to believe that in many cases a woman does not know. She is brought up in ignorance of what sex means. She genuinely does believe her emotion is religion. She has not even the safeguard of knowledge that a man has. I believe that men and women who cannot distinguish between religion and sex, are over-developed. They are abnormal. But such over-developed people are not found among one sex only, and I ask you to have a little consideration

for the women who are suffering and who have suffered under this difficulty for centuries.

I know that there are women who would rather perish than make their confession to a man, simply because they are conscious of their own danger. It is a refinement of cruelty to a woman who has that temperament to forbid her to go to one of her own sex. Her wish to do so ought to be respected. I wish the Lambeth Report had spoken a little more frankly on this point.

Had it stated simply that men and women, as part of the laity were entirely equal, a beginning would have been made. For this would affirm the right of women to be allowed to serve at the altar, as a layman may do. And if this is granted, it rules out the idea that it is "a danger" to have a woman in the Sanctuary during Divine Service.* Let us admit that there are men, as there are women, who feel this "danger"—who are sexually over-developed. But who expects the great mass of normal people—those who are temperamentally sane—to regulate their lives according to the wishes of those who are abnormal?

A pamphlet written by a very distinguished physician, whose name will be known by all who know anything of scientific research, Sir Almroth Wright, made this claim for the abnormal man. He claimed that because there are men who cannot work with women, therefore women should be excluded from public life. The claim has not been admitted. We will not consent to have the world regulated by people of abnormal temperament.

In the East there are men who cannot look upon a woman without danger; for their sakes, women are secluded and veiled. In the West we have acted differently, and more justly. While we respect and pity the abnormal, whether in man or woman, we deny their right to demand the sacrifice of a whole sex, or to expect the world to conform to their standards.

To say that the sight of a woman in the pulpit, or a woman in the sanctuary, is a "danger," is simply an insult to the normal man and woman of decent standards. To ask us to regulate our custom by other standards is unworthy.

While therefore the Bishops have gone a long way, I regret that they did not make this point clear. If they had said that

* This statement was seriously made by the Rev. O. Hardman in *The Challenge*, July 20, 1920, and repeated by him in the same journal, October 1

men and women as part of the laity were *equal*, it would have been the beginning of the end of that detestable kind of opposition, which bases itself on the needs or wishes of abnormal people—on a view which is not that of the normal man and woman.

Finally, let me remind you that if women desire to give a greater service to the Church than has been possible for them in the past, it is not because they think to get anything for themselves. I say, without hesitation, looking round on the women that I know, that it is rather that they are profoundly moved by a desire to serve, by a conviction that the only solution of our problems is a spiritual solution—the only answer to our difficulties is Jesus Christ.

Some of us have done political work, social work, work in industrial life, public work of different kinds. It is because we are increasingly convinced that at the bottom of all these problems there lies a real spiritual difficulty, that we have been forced, step by step, into the demand to be allowed to do more purely spiritual work, and I suggest that, though any one of us may be mistaken as to our own vocation for such work, this is a point which should be decided on its merits, and not by a refusal of *all* women.

The Church ought not to refuse the commission where the vocation exists. We speak too much as though the Church gave the vocation. It does not. The vocation, where it exists, is given by God. The Church cannot give you a message to deliver to the world. The Church cannot create in your heart the passion for souls. These are the gifts of the Holy Spirit of God. It is for the Church to recognise them and give the commission. Where they are found, the commission ought not to be withheld, for it is not a question of whether people "want" this, that or the other kind of priest; it is a question whether God has given the vocation. And, to my mind, part of that Report should have been the assertion that where God has given the vocation, there the Church should give the commission, whether to rich or poor, white or coloured, man or woman.

To the question whether I could say anything upon the point raised by Canon Goudge in a discussion, when he suggested that the ordination of women would have a bad effect on family life.

There are two answers. One is that the same difficulty has always been raised with regard to women doing anything outside their own homes. We have come to the conclusion in regard to other matters than this, that it is best to leave it to the individual to decide between the claims made on her. My own feeling is, that probably the number of women who would desire to be ordained either to the diaconate or priesthood, would be considerably smaller than the number of men. If a woman marries, and while she has young children, she will generally feel her first duty is to them. The ordained woman would therefore probably be either unmarried, or would have children who are grown up. I should like to point out that children *do* grow up! And I submit that a married woman who has had children and brought them up, is very likely to be a woman who could give very fine spiritual service to the world. I would further suggest that there are, especially in this country, a very large number of women who will not marry—who cannot marry—and it has been the glory of the Christian Church (I think this is true of no other religion in the world) to teach that even an unmarried woman has a human value. As Canon Scott Holland said, the "old maid" is a purely Christian institution! In other countries there are no old maids, simply because if there are too many girls, they are exposed or thrown into the river soon after birth.

I am always trying to teach the young girls who form a very large part of my congregation, and who form a very large part of those individual people who come to me for advice, that their lives need not be either wasted or futile, because a cruel war has made it very probable that they will not marry. I do not know what answer, ladies and gentlemen, you give to such young women to whom life has become a tragedy (because when a woman is born with a vocation for marriage and motherhood, it is a tragedy if she loses it)—I do not know what answer you would give them, but I will tell you what I say. I tell them—"You can serve the world wherever there are people lost or suffering or weak, or sick, or in any kind of human need. That instinct of motherhood you can use for the service of humanity. It is not easy, but it is possible, and it is the path chosen by some of the greatest women God ever made." I can say that to them, and I believe it is true, and from my own personal experience, I know that such a life can be as rich and

full of opportunities for service as the life of the woman who lives and serves in her own home.

If a woman is not to have children, is there no vocation for her in the world? I claim there is, and one of those vocations is surely the service of the Church of God.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, In answer to a question, let me point out that I did not say that, because the Lambeth Report affirms the presence of women on a certain occasion when the Great Commission was given, that therefore they should at once be admitted to ordination. What I said was that we could no longer argue that *Christ* excluded them. Most of us feel that if Christ definitely excluded women from ordination, or if anything that He ever said or did, justifies us in believing that He would have excluded them, that ends the matter. Naturally therefore I regard it as a great gain that the Lambeth Report deliberately rules out that possibility: that in the opinion of the Bishops, when Our Lord gave the Great Commission, there were women as well as men present. You cannot, therefore, quote Our Lord as having ruled against us. And we believe that Our Lord, on the contrary, acted and spoke in such a way as would suggest that He did not make any spiritual difference between men and women.

I have not developed this argument to-day because to-day it has been my special duty to deal with the Lambeth Conference Report. Otherwise, I invariably go on to point out the different ways in which our Lord touched upon these problems, and the attitude He Himself had towards men and women respectively, from which I deduce the fact that He Himself would not have erected this barrier. When He gave the Commission He did not say—"These special men out of this assembly shall be ordained." He said—"To the assembly this power is given." It therefore rested with the Church to what special individuals the *exercise* of the power should be given. Christ gave it to the whole Church and the Church was to decide. And the Church did decide, and she gave it at first only to men. One of the speakers has pointed out that this was an age filled with the Holy Ghost. I do not think that the Church was more directed by the Holy Spirit at one moment than at another. I believe the Holy Spirit has guided the Church throughout all the ages. I believe the Church is guided now, and is therefore able to develop her institutions. Our claim is that

the time has come to go forward and to give the ministerial priesthood to women.

Some say "No—you run the risk of schism."

I would remind you that the Lambeth Conference did not only consider the question of the position of women. It also considered the question of re-union—the possibility of re-union between ourselves and other bodies—and that no one raised objection on the ground that in some of these bodies, women are already being ordained.

I am told it is not possible "lightly to set aside" the great tradition of the Church. Such a phrase as "lightly to set aside" is not a fair argument. No one dreams of "*lightly* setting aside" a great tradition.

I should not dream of asking you now and at this moment to say at once that women should be ordained. I do not consider that enough thought has been given to the subject or that the Bishops are in a position to say at once that women should be ordained. No one more than I would regret a "light" decision on such a matter of importance. Yet such decisions may have ultimately to be made, even in matters of great importance.

After long consideration the Church of England did decide to set aside the custom of the celibacy of the priesthood, and did not consider it was doing anything that was wrong, or beyond its powers. Our forefathers realised that Churches cannot be united by clinging to the errors that they happen to have in common! Such a "union" would be like a rope of sand. Each question must be considered on its merits; whether it is right or wrong. The nearer you get to the Truth—which is Christ—the nearer you will get to one another. But if you stick to a thing which is not right, in the hope that that can form a bond of union, you are trying to unite the Churches with ropes of sand. I therefore contend that our sole concern in considering this question, must be whether it is after the mind of Christ or not. If after the mind of Christ, it must, in the long run, be a bond of union, for the Churches are all endeavouring to get nearer to Christ.

I do not know any fallacy that seems to me more serious when you are approaching the question of re-union, than the fallacy that you can arrive at a real understanding by refusing to consider whether any problem that suggests itself to you is

after the mind of Christ or not, because you fear a danger to re-union. Christ alone can make us One. Let us seek unity by conforming ourselves to Him.

I cannot forget the words of God about tradition—"Ye do make the Word of God of none effect by your tradition." We are just as able to deal with matters of this kind in our time and circumstance, as anybody who lived a good many centuries ago.

Now one thing we must all try to avoid in a matter of this kind, is making it a party question.

We must each consider the matter on its own merits, and not be swayed by any party feeling. If we do that, then we are entrusting ourselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. If we do not, we are putting self prejudice in the place of guidance, and we cannot expect the right result.

We must take our stand on the Gospel as preached by Our Lord. God is Love—His whole teaching was love, and he that loveth is born of God. Now self is the antagonist of love. Where self is, love cannot be, and therefore in all we do we must put self far away and seek only the good of others—the good of the community. We must preach this matter—the women must preach this matter, not because they want to serve as priests or deaconesses or anything else, the only question that must be considered is whether the use of the ministrations of women in our time, in our country, in our social conditions is for the glory of God, the advancement of His Kingdom—the Kingdom of love and joy.

In order to leave Contributors to this Series free to write as they feel guided, it is understood that the League is not necessarily committed to the opinions expressed.

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WOMEN AND THE CHURCH.

L.C.M. Leaflet, No. 7.



Study Outlines on Lambeth and Womanhood,

By E. LOUIE ACRES.

Book taken as a basis of study :—

'The Ministrations of Women in the Church,' being the full report of the Lambeth Conference Committee, with Resolutions and extracts from the Encyclical Letter. (League of the Church Militant, 6d.)

Books for reference :—

See Bibliography at end of above Report.

'The Lambeth Conference and the Ministrations of Women' (Report of Speech at Southend, October 22nd, 1920) by A. Maude Royden. (League of the Church Militant 3d.)

'Church Congress Official Reports,' 1919, 1920.

'Five Lambeth Conferences,' (S.P.C.K. 1920.)

NOTE.—Study outlines previously published by the L.C.M. have been divided up into a six weeks' course. This plan has not been followed in this instance, as it was thought that different groups might wish to discuss at length varying points raised by the questions, thus making what might be one week's questions provide material for two or three meetings. It is always possible to shorten or lengthen the course at the discretion of the leader of the group.

I.—INTRODUCTION.

What is the Lambeth Conference? Study a resumé of its history. What distinction should be drawn between the authority of the Committee on the Position of Women in the Councils and Ministrations of the Church and the Encyclical Letter and Resolutions? Do you consider the bishops justified in their claim that the "Holy Spirit is with our generation no whit less than He was with our elder brethren in Christ." What is your idea of Catholic tradition? of the inspiration of the Bible? (especially St. Paul) of the Hierarchy of the Church?

Discuss the statement that "Difference of function between man and woman...and the relative subordination of the woman in no way imply an inferiority of woman in regard to man." (Refer to Bishop Gore, Canon Goudge, Dr. Sparrow Simpson, *The Church Militant*, April, 1919.)

II.—WOMEN IN THE COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH.

Note that the principle of equality is affirmed. Comment on the effect of the Enabling Act in this respect on the home provinces. Is this equality achieved in other parts of our Church? the Colonies? the mission field? Should the Church wait until social progress in the district concerned demands this equality or should it lead the way? What was the practice of the Primitive Church? (Acts xvii. 6).

Should rules be laid down for a fixed proportion of men and women on Councils or should electors be free to elect the most suitable candidate—man or woman—for every post? Which course of action most effectively carries out the principle of equality? How should the Diaconate be represented in the Councils of the Church?

III.—THE DIACONATE.

Why is the diaconate in connection with women spoken of as a "restoration"? Has the order ever lapsed? There was a "revival" sixty years ago. How do the present proposals differ from that? Would it not be historically more correct to speak of the *re-admission* of women to the diaconate? What is known of the primitive diaconate for men and women? How, if at all, did the ministry of the deaconess differ from that of the deacon?

Read the "Form and Manner of making of Deacons" in the Prayer Book. What are the essentials of such a service? Are these allowed for in the suggestions in Resolution 50, or in the proposed new form in 'The Ministry of Women,' p. 241.

What duties are to be allotted to the woman deacon? What functions are seemingly withheld from her that are entrusted to the male deacon? Is the status of the deaconess the same as that of the deacon? Compare the Report and the Resolutions carefully on this point. Show how confusion has arisen by the irregular use of the title "Deaconess," and careless speech as if the Diaconate of women were a fourth order of the Ministry. Is the Diaconate into which women are ordained a part of the threefold ministry of the Church? Are the Resolutions and the Report equally clear on this point? Does the woman deacon receive Holy Orders?

Is the call to the Diaconate incompatible with the call to marriage and motherhood? Is there any halfway course possible between perfect freedom to marry and a vow of celibacy? Does the reception of orders render men incapable of acting in spheres outside the regular ministry, e.g., Secretaries of Societies, Schoolmasters, &c.? Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of Community or Institutional and private and parochial life for women deacons. Sketch out a scheme whereby deaconesses could best be used in parochial and diocesan life to meet the needs of town and country. Is the diaconate likely to attract "able and high-minded women"? Will the ministry of the woman deacon be welcomed by clergy and laity?

Are the present opportunities open to women for theological training sufficient? Should the training given be identical with that given to men students? How, if at all, would you amplify or reform the training for the diaconate? What intellectual standard should be aimed at? Should there be a uniform standard for all dioceses? Draw up a scheme for theoretical and practical training which you consider suitable preparation for the diaconate.

IV.—THE PRESBYTERATE.

Do the bishops for ever rule out the question of the admission of women to the priesthood? Is it suggested that women are incapable of receiving the grace of Holy Orders? Were the Great Commission and the Evangelistic charge given to men only? What does tradition teach as to the custom of the Church? Does the Church limit itself on other matters to such things only as have "the stamp of Apostolic approval"? Has any branch of the Catholic Church ever departed from Tradition in any other matter comparable in importance to this?

V.—THE POSITION OF LAYWOMEN.

What distinction is there between preaching in a consecrated and an unconsecrated building? What did St. Paul mean by "the Churches"? Is the sermon an integral part of

the service? Compare the position of the Licenced Lay Reader with that of women and men invited to preach who are not Lay Readers. Compare the suggested regulations for the preaching of women deacons with those laid down for the laity. Comment on the growing desire to use churches for conferences and services other than the regular services of the Church, as suggested by the resolution passed in the Upper House (Canterbury) of Convocation in 1919. State how you think this can be carried out most effectively.

What are the arguments in favour of reviving the minor orders in the Church of England? Is it advisable that women deacons or laywomen with a special gift of prophecy should make preaching their special work? Is there any office commonly held in the Church by laymen which is not open to laywomen? May a laywoman "serve" at the altar? If you think not, what are your arguments?

VI.—CONCLUSION.

Discuss the economic position of women in the Church.

From your historical survey at the commencement of this study do you find that Resolutions passed at previous Lambeth Conferences have ever been barren of influence on the life of the Church? If so, why?

Which do you think there is greater need of at the moment on the part of those desirous of seeing women given full opportunities for service in the Church—patience at delay or boldness of action? What should be the next step? Can the Resolutions be acted upon at once? If you think not, give your reasons. How best can each individual help to bring the Resolutions to bear on the parochial life of the Church? Through parochial, rural-decanal, diocesan representatives and through the National Assembly? By influencing through the clergy the proctors in Convocation? How can a sound public opinion be created? How is the question bound up with that of Reunion? Do you think that the suggested reforms will be for the strengthening of the Church and for the greater glory of God?

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WOMEN AND THE CHURCH.

L.C.M. Leaflet, No. 8.



The Ministry of Women.

By A. MAUDE ROYDEN.

WHEN women have won their victory nearly all along the line, even in the matter of government, it seems at first sight strange that the Church should hold out against them. I discount the easy but deceptive retort that "organised religion" is always conservative, for one has only to look at the history of Christianity to see that organised religion has often been a revolutionary force in order to realise that it may easily become so again. I seek the explanation in something deeper than the easily assumed perversity of religious people; and then it does not seem so difficult to understand why the *spiritual* equality of the sexes should be harder to admit than their political, social, or even economic equality.

The spiritual nature of Man is the last, highest product of his evolution: religion, after all, the deepest and most unconquerable of his interests. Naturally therefore, in whatever other matter he may admit equality with those he has been accustomed to regard as his inferiors, in this matter his reluctance will be greater than all.

The belief that the race we belong to is one of peculiar spiritual achievement is a very old one. The Aryan had it, the Greek had it, pre-eminently the Jew had it. It has been the boast of conquering peoples: it has been the consolation of oppressed peoples. If the race to which we belong is an imperial race, it is, we assure ourselves, because God has blessed us beyond other nations. If we are in servitude, as the Jews were, it is because "whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth," and our

very stripes become a warrant for a profounder spiritual pride.

The belief in a spiritual class is no less enduring, and has left its mark very deep on history. Not Christians only, but priests of all religions have sought to arrogate to themselves a peculiar relation to God. The existence of priests does not make sacerdotalism, but the conviction of priests that they are not as other men. The conviction that, by some magical or ritual process, the priest becomes the intermediary between God and ordinary humanity, without whom ordinary humanity cannot and ought not to approach God, is the real sacerdotalism; and this pride of class has its roots in the same error as the pride of the "peculiar people," the nation "holy to the Lord."

Of the same nature is the pride of sex. As women have claimed and won advance after advance within the Church, the nature of the opposition becomes clearer and clearer. To-day it has been forced to define itself, and that it should have done so is itself a victory for women. There are, I believe, few men who will continue to hold a view which has been defined in all its native ugliness as some of our opponents have now defined it.

The advance of feminism within the Church of England has already been very great. When the question of women missionaries was first raised, the great principle that women might preach the gospel was at once established. People, knowing only of the decision, and being perfectly accustomed to the idea of women-missionaries, have forgotten how the battle raged, and with what earnestness and sincerity religious people pointed out that our Lord had only sent out men, chosen men apostles, and never even suggested that women could preach. St. Paul's familiar figure was at once brought forward, accompanied by St. Peter, and the author of the Epistle to St. Timothy. In fact the controversy followed lines now exquisitely familiar, and reached its cheerfully inevitable end in the defeat of the opponents of women missionaries.

More recently, women have been invited to preach to Church Congress meetings, to National Mission meetings, at conferences and in retreats. Great care was taken however, to insure that such "preaching" was always to be called "speaking," such sermons to be described as "addresses," and such meetings never to be held in consecrated buildings. For reasons difficult to apprehend, it is held that the Almighty attaches enormous importance to the difference between a *sermon* and an *address*,

and that He is unmoved by a speech delivered in a hall or school-room, which would arouse His indignation if heard in a church.

It is however, obvious that such distinctions cannot really be maintained. It is true that St. Paul said that women should not speak "in church." Whatever he meant—and I am not scholar enough to decide a point on which scholars disagree and St. Paul himself seems in doubt—but whatever he meant, he *cannot* have meant that women must not speak in consecrated buildings, because at the time of his writing, consecrated buildings did not exist. Christian people as we all know quite well if we stop and think, met mostly in each other's houses, but did not meet in what we call "churches," for the simple reason that they had not built any churches to meet in.

If therefore, when St. Paul said women were not to speak "in church" he really meant to lay down an eternal principle, he must have meant that they were not to speak *in the assembly of the faithful* and no assurances that they were not "preaching sermons" but only "making speeches," and that these were delivered in a hall, and not in a consecrated building, would have mollified him in the least. Frankly, we have ignored St. Paul on this point, when women were allowed to speak at Church Congresses, National Missions or Pilgrimages, and it is useless now to make a point about "consecrated buildings" which St. Paul never made because he could not.

It is here, however, that the real nature of the opposition defines itself. The ministry of the Church is, in fact, to be reserved for men because of some inherent superiority in their sex. As it was with the Jews as a race, and with priests as a class, so it is with men as a sex: it is claimed that they stand in a special relation to God, and through them alone is God mediated to the world.

Man, we are told, has a "headship" over women. He is nearer to the divine. "No one" said a distinguished writer the other day, "ever thought of God as a woman." As a matter of fact, any student of comparative religion can tell us of some most ancient beliefs in which God was always represented as a woman. But we are not now dealing with facts: we speak of something much more intractable—of prejudices; and it is a deeply-rooted prejudice in the minds of many that if God is not exactly a man, He is at least much more like a man than a woman!

Woman, in fact, must approach her Creator through the diviner man. He is "for God only, she for God in Him." Or, as St. Paul has it, "The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man." Could it be more baldly stated? "The head of Christ is God." Man therefore stands one degree nearer to God than does woman, and is a more divine and sacred being. In the nature of woman, there is something which makes it a desecration for her to enter the sanctuary of the pulpit, which places her in a position of permanent subordination to man as her "head," which makes it an outrage on divine order that she should lift up her voice in a consecrated building.

Now I believe that the average and normal man probably thinks that men have, on the whole, more strength, more judgment and more knowledge of affairs than women. They are often inclined to concede to women a certain superiority, rather than a defect, in spiritual or religious gifts. But *on the whole*, as I say, they would probably say that men were, taking them all round, the superior sex, just as in their hearts, most Englishmen think that Englishmen are the superior race. But such men—and I believe that they are in the great majority—would never dream of denying that any given woman might have gifts quite equal to those of men, or of fencing her out of a position she was qualified to fill *merely* because she was a woman. Of course most of us are slow to welcome any change in long established custom. Of course, in any given question, professional jealousy, class jealousy, or actual fear of competition may come in. But stating the matter broadly, I simply do not believe that the average man really thinks that he is nearer God than his mother, or that he is more fit to speak in a consecrated building than she. Women, have, I believe, nothing to fear from his opposition to her in the Church.

But there is another type of man, from whom opposition comes, and it is he who is the real enemy. Such a man—self-described years ago by a distinguished doctor of medicine—literally cannot work with women without extreme difficulty. He suffers from an obsession of sex so great that the mere spectacle of a woman at the altar or within the sanctuary appears to him "a source of scandal and even of danger." Lest my hearers should suppose that I exaggerate, let me add that I quote the actual words of an opponent. In the nature of women however saintly there seems to him to be something so essentially earthy

and corrupt that it really and deeply shocks him to think of her celebrating the Holy Communion. In conception, motherhood, child-birth, and all that leads up to and follows from it, he discovers an element of uncleanness, which makes the priesthood for women impossible. I do not speak of physical incapacity, for this is a perfectly simple matter quite easy to discuss—let me add, quite easy to exaggerate—in the light of day. But the imagined disability to which I refer is something which our opponents assure us they cannot bring themselves to discuss at all—it is too profound, too mysterious, too fundamental to be put into words; but its nature may be dimly guessed by the conclusion drawn by those who are able to understand it—namely, that women may speak, but not in a consecrated place; may come inside a church, but not inside the sanctuary rails; may be members of the Church, but not "in holy orders."

This ancient superstition about the uncleanness of a sex dies hard even in the twentieth century. One finds it not only in the strange and often cruel "tabus" of primitive religions, but among the superstitions of uneducated and unthinking people everywhere. One finds it, also, among the educated and the civilized, and modern psychology is teaching us the reason, and tracing out the cause of this obsession. It is the man whose nature has been in some way repressed but not controlled, who suffers from what in the jargon of psychology we call a "complex," to whom the presence of women is so disturbing, and association with them in work so impossible. To him, as to some of the most famous of mediæval ascetics, the mere presence of a woman is a possible source of danger. Is he likely to trace the cause of his difficulty to himself? Most certainly not. It is the woman who is in the wrong! It is she who must not be allowed to obtrude herself. It is she who is the disturber of the peace of his soul. And if it be urged that, on the contrary, she is a singularly lofty and spiritual person, he is the more sure that there must be something in the very nature of woman that is out of place in holy things, since the fact that this one is personally holy has not removed the sense of disturbance and scandal in him! *All* women, therefore, whatever their gifts of power, intelligence, holiness or spiritual genius, *all* women, simply because they are women, must be fenced off from holy places and from holy orders. God must be mediated to them through men, as to men through

Christ, for by their very nature women are further from the divine than men.

It is this belief that stands to-day between women and the establishment of their equality with men in the Church and every ministry of the Church; and it is this belief alone. I do not now discuss the question whether women should wait to press their claims for this or that branch of the ministry till some more convenient season, till the question of reunion has been settled, or till the Bishops can make their peace with the English Church Union, or decide whether women are "normally" fit to address men or not. I want at this time rather to emphasize that the sole reason for excluding women from *spiritual* office is the belief that they suffer from a *spiritual* inferiority. Those therefore who hold that, at whatever point women may fall below men, it is un-Christian and untrue to give them an inferior *spiritual* status, those to whom the physical nature of woman is as holy as that of a man, those who would shrink with disgust from the idea that she is in some strange way a degree further from the divine, ought now to claim with us the recognition of the Church for her. It is useless to quote St. Paul to us against our Master Christ. He Himself warned us to try every teacher by one standard only, and that is the one to which we appeal. Was St. Paul most like Christ when he affirmed that the head of the woman was the man, or when he said that in Christ there was neither Jew nor Greek, male or female, bond nor free? Was the Church of England more or less Christian when, at the Reformation, she affirmed the use and value of a priestly class, but refused to allow that God could only be mediated to the laity by a priest, or that any priest had the right to stand between man and God? To that same spirit women appeal to-day, with the same conviction that in affirming their complete spiritual equality with men, they are appealing past even the greatest of His Apostles, to the spirit and teaching of their Master Christ.

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Women and the Ministry.

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(Anglican.)

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2. In obedience to this principle to pray and work for

(a) The establishment of equal rights and opportunities for men and women both in Church and State.

(b) Equal opportunities for all to develop to the utmost their God-given faculties in a community ordered on the basis of justice and brotherhood.

(c) The settlement of all international questions on the basis of right not of might.

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WOMEN AND THE CHURCH.

Price 2d

L.C.M. Leaflet, No. 9.



Women and the Lay Ministries.

A MEMORANDUM.

By LETITIA D. FAIRFIELD, C.B.E., M.D.

I have attempted to deal in the following notes with certain medical aspects of the proposal to admit women to the lay Ministries of the Church. That this side of the discussion should not be overlooked, is shown by the fact that in the past medical objections have always been raised against the participation by women in any new form of activity, whether it be manual or intellectual, heavy or light. The mere fact that a function has hitherto been performed by men, makes it regarded *ipso facto* as dangerous to women, especially if good pay or an honourable status is attached thereto.

In the case of the duties now under discussion, the actual work involved would be covered by at most a few hours during the week, even where the woman was giving her whole time to the service of the Church. Obviously neither preaching nor serving is a heavier task physically than district visiting or Sunday School teaching, or addressing congregations in Church Rooms or Mission Halls; or, indeed, a multitude of duties performed daily by thousands of women inside the Church and millions outside it, with no injury whatever to their physical well-being. The valuable Memorandum on the Health of Munition Workers prepared by Dr. Janet Campbell, 1918, showed what vast reserves of strength women possess if only they are well fed and living under good conditions.

It has been objected that a woman server could not be relied on for regular attendance if placed upon a rota. But hundreds of thousands of nurses and servants come on duty day after day at 7 or 8 A.M. without interruption except for holidays.

As far as their health is concerned, they might just as well be attending Mass either as members of the congregation or servers.

The few women (I believe not more than 5 per cent.* of the total) who are subject to real periodic disability not amenable to medical treatment, would of course have to accept their limitations.

It is frequently urged by anti-feminists that any new opportunities opened to women, whether physically damaging in themselves or not, are mischievous in that they distract women from their primary and all-important function of child-bearing. Such critics may properly be reminded that (a) there are now nearly two million more women than men in the country (even before the war it was $1\frac{1}{2}$ millions), and owing to the teachings of Christianity the vital force of these women must inevitably be used for some purpose other than that of reproduction. To what nobler uses could it be diverted than the service of their Lord, in whatever form for which they individually manifest a vocation?

(b) There is no evidence whatever that the intellectual training which is particularly dreaded by this class of critic, and which access to the Ministry of Preaching might conceivably stimulate,† interferes in any way with a woman's capacity or desire for motherhood.‡ One's own numerous graduate friends show no disposition to avoid marriage, and if married they long for children and are singularly successful and self-sacrificing in caring for them.

The use of *married* women as either preachers or servers raises problems of a familiar kind. Marriage itself would, of course, be no bar for employment of this kind; indeed, in the case of preaching it would be a distinct advantage, as the married woman is rightly regarded as superior to the unmarried in authority and experience, other things being equal. It would be understood that the just claims of a husband and family on a mother's time, receive due consideration.

In the case of expectant motherhood, the physical symptoms will almost inevitably lead to withdrawal from public engagements, but this may safely be left to the initiative of the women

* Where women have been under regular medical supervision, as in Training Colleges, the number is much less than 5 per cent.

† Already at this stage of the movement one meets with girls preparing to enter College with a training in theology definitely in view.

‡ *Vide* Decline of Birth Rate Commission Report, 1916.

concerned, who are more likely to appreciate their duty in the matter than anyone else.

" CEREMONIAL UNCLEANLINESS."

This aspect of the subject is brought under examination with a grave sense of its delicacy and difficulty, but also with a profound and growing conviction of its fundamental importance which is shared by many women of wider experience in this controversy than my own.

To get the matter into focus, it is necessary to refer briefly to the attitude of mind in which modern men and women have come to the leaders of their Church with the demand for " abolition of sex distinctions " among the laity, and also to the manner in which the demand has been met.

The situation caused by the refusal to allow women to speak in Church during the National Mission, has produced increasing bewilderment and distress in men and women who are desirous of seeing the Church come into line with the great secular institutions and professions in availing themselves to the full of women's talents. Thousands had hoped to find that the Church would rejoice to feel that a Catholic custom based on the hardness of men's hearts, might be safely abandoned, and Christian women might be permitted to consecrate any or all the gifts with which their Creator had endowed them to His Service, even as they did when He was on earth. For we find no trace in the Gospels of our Lord prohibiting a woman, or women in general, from doing anything to which they felt called on account of their sex. London, being a purer city than Corinth, would find it possible, one hoped, to allow its women privileges of which St. Paul had to deprive the Corinthians. We soon learnt our error. It appears, on the contrary, that the prohibitions of the early Church are regarded as more sound than the practice of the Founder, and we are to regard a differential treatment between men and women, of which there is no hint in the Gospels, as a fundamental tenet of our Faith.

The assumption that woman is, *by reason of her sex alone*, unfit to raise her voice in a consecrated building, or to pass behind altar rails, must obviously have a purely physical basis. It cannot be founded on lack of spiritual worth, for here admittedly she is man's equal; nor on mental quality, for this may demonstrably be higher in a woman than in certain men whose capacity to participate in the lay Ministries, or even to

receive Ordination, has never been questioned. The difference must therefore be physical.

Now the physical difference between man and woman is just this, that woman is adapted for motherhood and the man for fatherhood. The greatest biologists can do no more than fill in the details of that picture. § But why should the fact that a woman's body is devised for motherhood make her less fit to approach the Altar of her God than the man who is devised for fatherhood? Is motherhood in any way less spiritual, more animal than fatherhood? The very question seems preposterous, almost blasphemous, when one remembers that human motherhood was sanctified by the birth of our Lord in a way that human fatherhood was not. Yet we are up against the hard fact that the Church of Christ regards potential maternity as a definite disability for participation in its ministries.

In attempting to analyse the reasons which lie at the back of this mental attitude, one finds more and more frequently that one encounters a deep-seated belief that the physical manifestations of potential motherhood do indeed render a woman in some way unclean, unfit to approach the Holy Mysteries. When expressed in articulate form, the belief takes one of two forms:—

1. That a woman is only unclean at certain periods;
2. That her liability to periodic illness makes her permanently defiled by her sex in a sense that man is not. This view can be found permeating certain of the writings of the early Fathers.

For every instance where these feelings are acknowledged there are undoubtedly hundreds more where they are sub-consciously at work, creating a vague repugnance which the individual clothes with a religious sanction.

This is no isolated phenomenon, finding expression in the religious life only. It is commonly known that from the earliest times there has been a great aura of superstition surrounding a certain phase of woman's peculiar function. In a valuable article published in the *Lancet* in December, 1915, Dr. Raymond Crawford draws attention to the astonishing volume of such lore, gathered from all ages and countries, and surviving to the present date. He says: "It is a special aspect and special

§ Recent research in physiology and psychology shows that the sex glands have a more important influence than had been supposed on the metabolism of the whole organism. But this is true of men and women alike.

application of the universal primitive blood-horror, founded on the same belief that the spirit of the person resides in his blood and emerges with it for good or harm. In addition, there is something unintelligible about menstruation, something uncanny, and the primitive mind explains it as due to some spiritual agency, which may harm the woman if she does not take certain precautions and may pass from her and harm others if they neglect the prescribed precautions....The ordinances of religion with regard to the segregation of the menstruous woman fall into line with the customs of magic."

Now I can testify that in twentieth-century London almost daily I find mothers handing on fragments of these superstitions to their daughters as precious traditional hygienic teaching. I contend that even so do we find certain modern "ordinances of religion" preserving in all good faith the customs of magic.

Regarded as the survivals of a series of "taboos," the prohibitions limiting the activities of women in the Church suddenly become intelligible.

I beg to submit certain illustrations drawn casually from my own experience.

1. Some years ago I was told on the same day (*a*) by a priest, that "ceremonial uncleanness" was the reason why women could never be servers, and (*b*) by an old woman patient that this period played an important part in the preparation of a love-potion, for which she had a high local reputation. "A woman," she explained, "is magick'd then."

2. During the war I was shown a sugar refinery in France, where women are never allowed to enter in case they were in "such a state that the sugar would turn black in their presence."

A few days later I met a priest who gave me this as the reason why a woman could not speak in a consecrated building, "especially where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed."

I beg most earnestly to urge that the holding of such gross views by priests of the Church, or even by the supposedly instructed laity, is a grave matter and is symptomatic of a very deep-seated misunderstanding of the relative position of the sexes.

If an authoritative pronouncement could be made that ceremonial uncleanness is no Christian doctrine but a dangerous pagan survival, I believe that a great part of the opposition to the proposed changes would vanish. The ground would, at any rate, be cleared for the discussion of this (and other

questions in which the same principles are probably involved) on a reasonable basis.

* One other point I venture to bring forward. The suggestion has been made that women should be given sanction to speak in Church to congregations of women or women and children only. Why? If the speaker proposes to deal with sex questions, perhaps—even as men speak to “men only”; but if on general subjects, what explanation can be advanced which does not involve that mischievous notion of woman’s inferiority which is at the back of so much moral wrong. Those of us who are dealing with questions of social relationships, either from the educational or health point of view, regard this suggestion with great alarm.

* This paragraph was written in July, 1920.

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WOMEN AND THE CHURCH.

L.C.M. Leaflet, No. 10.



Women Clerics.*

By **HOLFORD KNIGHT**

(*Barrister-at-Law*).

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THESE times continually remind us of that famous description employed by the Psalmist—"a confused noise." To the clatter of the conflict of things is added the tumult in the mind which bewilderment brings as we watch uneasily the clash between the old and the new. The catchwords uttered glibly by politicians to induce the multitude to support their designs are recurring with an insistence that demands their fulfilment. The people are set upon making "the world safe for democracy," and their disquieted prompters fumble nervously "to make democracy safe for the world." We are doomed to live through this conflict, and its issue is charged with a fatefulness we try in vain to fathom.

Let us, then, be sensible of our situation. We cannot rely upon the past to give us anchor in our difficulties; we cannot be certain of the drift along which we speed towards the future. The appeal to authority is not final in any direction. We can no longer silence claims by ignoring them. At best, we can with humbleness realise our opportunities to aid in supplying the world's need, and bend our highest energies to compose the world's distress.

I have struck this opening note with deliberation, as, greatly daring, I enter upon a theme which is destined to shake society to its foundations. Indeed, the essential mission of

* Reprinted, with special permission, from Mr. Holford Knight's book, "Advancing Woman." (Publishers, Daniel O'Connor, 90 Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, W.C.1. 3s. 6d. 1920).

religion is to create a new Heaven and a new Earth. In our rebuilding of civilisation (and it is idle to pretend our task is any less) we have got to construct upon a religious principle. The absence of such an operative principle, and the weakness of the witness its supporters exhibited in the national and international orders which collapsed with the coming of the War, led to our undoing.

As we start afresh, we cannot be in doubt of what is our vital need. In this place, I am not concerned with the various forms this religious principle may assume, nor is this the quarter in which such discriminations would be desired or advisable. Their common denominator will be a conception of the Non-Self, repudiating the received corruptions of the early Gospel which a material civilisation bound up with the unchecked pursuit of self-interest led inevitably to war, and elevating the good of others into a golden rule which alone will bind the world into a comity of peoples at peace.

SEX DISCRIMINATION.

This enormous task of reversing the practice of mankind in accordance with a religious principle which destiny has lighted up in a terrible conflagration, will require the energies of every human being who can be inspired by its hopes. From that point of view I want to ask this question: "Does any principle appear on which we are warranted in setting up a sex discrimination in the choice of persons to minister to society's enlarged and vital need of religion? I have purposely stated this question in terms which have no special application to a particular church or religious organisation. In my view of the matter, this question will be asked in turn of every religious body which is projected into the new order. It goes to the root of the religious principle as understood in Christian communities. Primitive Christianity rejected sex discrimination in the operations of the Holy Spirit, which was acclaimed as knowing neither male nor female. In the administration of the Church, persons were appointed as the exigencies of the time approved, but the vital principle which linked all believers in a common relationship to the divine, partook in no sense of a sex character. We must discriminate between the principle which sanctified the divine relationship and the arrangements made to superintend its operation. The former is inherent and eternal, the latter occasional and temporary.

It is well to ponder these things just now, because they must be present in the consciousness of all who reflect upon the work of the great Conference of Bishops which is about to re-assemble at Lambeth Palace. The terrible events which have supervened since the last Lambeth Conference show the fateful changes in the world which the Bishops must strive to bring within the influence of religion. Unless religion is made into an actual emotion which constrains the acts of men and nations, Christianity will not enter into the councils of the world. Hence, consideration of the place which woman must occupy in the reorganisation of religious institutions is a vital matter, and has got to be undertaken in the light, not of the injunctions of the past, but of the needs of the present. The practical question, is: "Can woman, merely as woman, be any longer excluded from the Christian ministry, and, if so, on what principle is that exclusion to be maintained?"

At Lambeth, the question comes up in a minor form on a memorial from a band of earnest Church workers,† who claim the opening of lay service in the Anglican Church to women on the same terms as to men. The larger question of admission to the priesthood is not raised, but the principle under discussion is relevant to both demands. I suppose that, outside a small number who are always to be found supporting the established order on the narrowest ground of its mere existence, none will venture to question the validity of the Christian principle that, in the operations of the Holy Spirit, sex does not prevail.

THE DUTY OF REVISION.

The difficulty will come when the big task is approached of reviewing old customs in the light of new needs. In the legal profession we have recently undergone this experience, and on the whole it was not surprising to discover that the occasion was not relished. It is commonly thought that the lawyers at all times have exhibited (and, indeed, continue to show) a disinclination for change, which has caused the prolongation of restrictions and prepossessions beyond a reasonable span. I am not sure that the clerics have not exceeded the lawyers in this disposition. Curiously enough, the clerics have not been slow to chide the lawyers upon their attachment to old habits which have exhausted their usefulness. They have advised their

† The League of the Church Militant.

secular brethren to leave the old ways and enter with prayer upon the new. Unfortunately, this advice has not, as yet, received a personal application. With a cynicism which (I fear) their calling sometimes engenders, the lawyers have remarked this discrepancy between preaching and practice among the clerics, and have anticipated the day when a proper concurrence would be expected. That day has come.

Meanwhile, it will be serviceable to glance at the major reasons adduced by the clergy for the non-application to their own order of the liberal principle they have advocated for the acceptance of the legal profession. It is not astonishing to find that the grounds of opposition in each profession to the admission of women appear to be common in character to both.

The cleric exclaims against the entrance of women into the ministry as being contrary to Catholic Order. The lawyer adopted the same attitude. He declared that the admission of women to the legal profession was not in accordance with precedent. The lawyer's contention was disallowed by public opinion as not being consistent with the just claims of modern woman or the needs of society. He had this, however, to support his argument. The law of England had never regarded woman as equal to man, and this sex discrimination in some respects is still continued. Hence, no hiatus between principle and practice was presented by woman's exclusion from the ranks of the legal profession. The barrier was removed because it had ceased to win general approval. Moreover, the removal has preceded the full adoption of the principle of sex equality it illustrated, which is still to be achieved.

THE APPEAL TO TRADITION.

The counterpart to this experience of the lawyers which the cleric's case presents is somewhat remarkable, not only on account of its inclusions, but because of its exclusions. The cleric relies upon tradition to justify the non-admission of woman to the offices of the ministry, and any change may be required with reason to be shown to be in accord with new needs. But the cleric is estopped from making the claim the lawyer could make. The inequality between the sexes on which the old law of England insists, and is in part founded, has no place among the principles of the Christian Church. Sex is irrelevant to spirit, and spirit alone is the vital force of Christianity. So that the cleric cannot appeal to principle to enforce the exclusion of women from the

ministry. Such an appeal is inconsistent with the basic principle of religion, the relationship between sex-less spirit and God, and would be a derogation from essentials. The lawyer, with his traditional exclusiveness, based upon a sex discrimination founded upon and sanctioned by law, could claim to be acting in accordance with a principle of the law he served. The cleric, a servant of a gospel which knows neither male nor female, is debarred from this appeal by the essential nature of his profession. Hence, the emphasis in clerical quarters upon the requirements of Catholic Order. As to that, I must confess the appeal to tradition, irrespective of experience, has never impressed me. Tradition, to my mind, is valid only as the repository of experience. As experience enlarges, so tradition expands and forms a rule which directs until it becomes merged into a fresh injunction fashioned by new conditions.

History is familiar with the occurrence of absolute injunctions which time has dissolved. Men have been accustomed to invest their opposition to new practices with high-sounding names which, for a time, have restrained mankind until their usefulness ceased to appear. The Balance of Power was a diplomatic formula of this character. It was invoked by persons who deplored any departure from the *status quo*. The "balance" invariably consisted of the disposition of interests they desired at the moment to prevail. In that particular case, mankind has learnt a sharp lesson. We now know from bitter experience that the Balance of Power was an empty formula which enshrined no principle but the merest self-interest of diplomatic powers, and was used to prevent its hollowness from being discovered to the world's ultimate sorrow.

No such fate awaits the tradition of Catholic Order. It is a great rule of mankind which has played an enormous part in the history of religion. But its very greatness, I suggest with all respect, should incline its followers to be slow in taking any action which may contract its usefulness or undermine its validity in the minds of men. No absolute ecclesiastical rule will command the approval of mankind. Its continuance as an operative influence upon society depends upon its adjustment to new conditions, so that its sanction may be extended as the needs of mankind develop. At such a time as the present, when the foundations of all human arrangements are coming under review, the conceptions attributed to Catholic Order cannot be excluded

from the investigation of thoughtful men and women. For myself, I see nothing to be feared in the extension of Catholic Order to cover the admission of duly qualified women to the service of the Christian ministry.

THE APPEAL TO INFIRMITY.

The second major objection to opening ministerial office to women bears a marked resemblance to the primary ground on which her admission to the legal profession was opposed. The lawyers entertained a strong suspicion that there was something in the nature of woman which justified her exclusion from the practice of the law. Mr. Asquith, it will be recalled, opposed the extension of the suffrage to women because of some "bar in nature" which he did not give us the satisfaction of defining. Similarly the lawyers, whose prepossessions Mr. Asquith always reflected in a remarkable degree, thought they had discovered some radical defect of mind and disposition in woman which made her participation in the work of justice a menace to society, and an interference with the proper dispensation of the world.

In this, again, the lawyer found some support in the system of justice he represented. On the other hand, the cleric can find no such satisfaction. The law of England may (and does) entertain a depressing view as to the nature of woman and some evidence can be adduced in corroboration. But no such view accords with the principles of the Christian religion. Beliefs as to the integrity and supremacy of the soul and of conscience have no reference to sex.

The practical difficulty which confronts those who desire to continue the exclusion of women from ministerial office in the Church is to discover some principle on which that exclusion can be justified. The principles of Christianity have no relevance to sex, while the practice of the churches is not and cannot be limited by any derogatory view of the nature of woman. It cannot be contended that history affords no justification for opening the clerical profession to women. Readers are aware that some of the highest examples of religious genius have been women, while the devotion of women to religious exercises is greater in the main, I conclude, than among men.

THE APPEAL TO EXPERIENCE.

The experience of mankind has shown that women can exemplify the finest traits of the religious spirit, and the need of enlisting this special type of woman in the service of organised

religion is increasingly acute. Without trenching upon controversial ground, it may be said that the strengthening of religious influences upon a world sick with fever is a duty which should link all religious organisations in a common service to humanity. I do not envy the responsibility of those who, for any reason, would weaken this critical service to the world by excluding from its operation the proffered aid of devout women.

I must not be taken as representing that this enlargement of the ministerial office, just and needful as I believe it to be, will be accomplished without serious difficulty. Such is the waywardness of the heart that a temporary whim may come to be mistaken for a settled disposition of mind and spirit. My observation is that persons have been admitted to the ranks of the clergy who were out of place in such a service, and the character of their work has shown only too painfully what an error was their choice of a profession. It would be deplorable if these defects were increased by the admission of unsuitable women to the ranks of the clergy. I do not see why this result should be anticipated. On the contrary, the more careful scrutiny of candidates for religious orders, which must be ensured if a better service is to be obtained, should suffice to prevent the acceptance of unsuitable persons of either sex.

Much has to be done before the general mind of organised religion will approve the extension of these larger opportunities of service to women. My task has been to glance at the practical difficulties which a refusal to consider old exclusions will entail.

We rejoice in the greater opportunities which open up before woman to aid in recasting a broken world. In the secular state, her gifts will find full employment. In the service of religion, where her spirit may find its highest exercise, will come chances of contributing to the healing of the world which will be her greatest praise.

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WOMEN AND THE CHURCH.

L.C.M. Leaflet, No. 11.



* The Functions of Women as Lay Members of the Church.

By the Rev. F. M. GREEN, B.D.

IN recent years a claim has been emphatically made on behalf of women, and not by women alone, that they should be admitted to the exercise of all duties and the enjoyment of all privileges which already belong to laymen in Christ's Church; and furthermore, that in any extension of the sphere of the laity no distinction should be made between men and women. The validity of the claim has already been recognised by the Church in England so far as electoral and representative rights are concerned. There the Pauline principle of "no difference" has been fully honoured. But the share which women should have in lay ministrations generally, and more especially in lay preaching, is still, despite the Lambeth Report and Resolutions, a matter of vehement controversy. It seems desirable therefore to examine this claim with some fulness; to inquire whether it is compatible with the teaching of Holy Scripture and the guidance of the Holy Spirit as expressed in the ordered life of the Church; and to estimate the weight of those general considerations which are urged as a ground for its acceptance.

HOLY SCRIPTURE.

No one, presumably, will be disposed to ignore or belittle the transformation in the position of women brought about by Christianity. It is sufficient to compare the covenant rites of Judaism, which had regard to males only, with the Sacraments of the Gospel, open to both sexes without distinction, in order to see that in the Christian Church women were accorded a position totally different from that assigned to them under the Mosaic dispensation. And this difference in external position was but the formal expression of that judgment upon the worth

* This article, first printed in the *Church Militant* November, 1918 has been revised and is re-published by request.

of womanhood, or rather upon the worth of humanity as such, which leaps to view again and again in the recorded words and deeds of our Lord. In the early days of His ministry His disciples marvelled that, in defiance of Rabbinical custom, he talked with a woman; but they found that He admitted women to His closest intimacy, imparted to them some of the most profound truths of His gospel, pointed to them as examples of faith, devotion, and splendid liberality, and, not content with the honour which He had bestowed upon womanhood in that He was born of the Virgin Mary, chose another Mary to be the herald of His resurrection triumph—"an apostle to the Apostles." And when we pass beyond the limits of the gospel narrative, and examine the life of the early Church as it is recorded in the Acts and Epistles, we find ourselves confronted with the picture of a society in which the old contempt for womanhood is fading away. Men and women assemble together for prayer in the Upper Room; on both alike the gifts of the Holy Spirit are bestowed; a Sapphira answers in her own person for her own sin against the divine society; a Priscilla shares in the labours of her husband; the ministries of women—deaconesses, widows, and others—are in frequent evidence; in short we are in the presence of a society which has as its glorious charter "Neither Jew nor Gentile, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, all one in Christ Jesus."

If then there is to be any restriction upon the functions of women as members of the laity, it rests with those who would impose or maintain such restriction to show, if they can, that they have warrant for doing so in the teaching of the New Testament. Such warrant there may be; it is a matter for inquiry; but it must be admitted at the outset that the general tendency of New Testament teaching looks in quite another direction.

So far as the recorded teaching of our Lord is concerned, whether expressed in words or in deeds, we shall look in vain for such restriction. On two occasions only does our Lord seem to differentiate between men and women—in His choice of Apostles and in the company He gathered round Him for the institution of Holy Communion—and neither of these is relevant to the question now under consideration. Both would call for careful examination if discussion centred on the admission of women to the priesthood. But the fact that Christ did not call women to the Apostolic office and did not entrust to women the high privilege of celebrating Holy Communion cannot be urged in limitation of their place as lay members of His Church.

When we turn to Apostolic teaching and more especially to the teaching of St. Paul, matters are somewhat different. It appears to the present writer impossible to deny that St. Paul regarded women as definitely subordinate to men, and based upon his conception of the relation of the sexes certain re-

strictions upon the functions of women as members of the Church; and yet it is to St. Paul that we owe the pregnant utterance which sweeps away all distinctions of race or class or sex in the Church of Christ. How is this discrepancy to be explained?

Surely by recognising frankly that there is only one Infallible Teacher and that the inspiration of the Apostle did not wholly free him from the prejudices and conventions of his age. He lived in a world in which slavery and the subordinate position of women were accepted facts of social life. In a moment of glowing inspiration he recognised that in God's sight the slave is as the master, the woman as the man. But in his practical directions for conduct he bade the slave and the woman accept the position assigned to them in the social order. The runaway slave must return to his master, even though the Apostle affectionately begs that he be received as a brother beloved. The whole Epistle to Philemon proceeds on the assumption that Philemon had an unquestionable right in the person of Onesimus. The woman must be in subjection, as also saith the law.

The question which really concerns us is not what St. Paul thought meet for the women of Corinth in the first century, but what St. Paul would think meet for the women of England in the twentieth century if he were with us now. Can we doubt what would be the true answer to that question? "Neither Jew nor Gentile, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female"—there is the great principle of the equal worth of humanity in the sight of God. Taught by the Spirit he enunciated that principle in its fulness. Taught by the Spirit also, we do not question, he concentrated all his efforts on giving practical effect to the first element in that principle, and under God we owe it chiefly to St. Paul that the Christian Church to-day is not a Jewish sect. It was not till generations later that the Christian conscience learned to recognise the incompatibility of slavery with the affirmation of the worth and dignity of every man as made in the image of God. It is not until almost to-day that we are learning that to regard woman as subordinate to man is to deny her true relationship to God. And it is the same uncatholic spirit which in the first century inspired the Judaising party which to-day animates those who would deny to Christian women the exercise of those functions for which men are eligible on no other title than that of membership in the Holy Catholic Church. Can we doubt where St. Paul, the champion of catholicity, would take his stand if he were with us to-day?

The letter killeth; and those who advocate the claims of womanhood in our modern world are ready to make their opponents a present of the letter of Pauline teaching. The spirit giveth life; and the spirit of Pauline teaching is not to be found in the regulations respecting public worship at Corinth in the first century but in the great charter of the Catholic Church,

CATHOLIC CUSTOM.

It may be said, however, that, even if there is nothing in Scripture rightly interpreted to negative the claim advanced on behalf of women to-day, the usage of the Church for nineteen centuries must be deemed sufficient ground for its rejection; that the past affords no precedent for the exercise by women of those ministerial functions to which they now ask admittance. That the past affords *no* precedent is simply not true, as all students of primitive and mediæval Church history are well aware; but the value of such precedents has sometimes been misconceived by those who have sought to rest their case upon them. To affirm that catholic custom endorses the claim of women to exercise the prophetic ministry because there are sporadic instances of the exercise of that ministry by women from the days of the four daughters of Philip the Evangelist onwards is manifestly absurd. What these precedents do show is this, that the general trend of catholic usage has not been due to any essential incapacity on the part of woman as such for the exercise of these functions, has not been due to any fundamental principle admitting of no exception, but has simply expressed the mind of the Church in past ages that, under the conditions then prevalent, it was expedient that the exercise of such functions should normally be restricted to men. It is reverence for antiquity run mad which would make the general judgment of the past on such a question into a rigid rule fettering the liberty of the Church to-day, under conditions wholly different from those known in earlier ages.

It is urged, however, that even if catholic usage in relation to such a question may need modification in view of the changed conditions of modern life, it is not within the competence of the Church of England to take action without the concurrent sanction of the whole of Christendom. For answer it is surely sufficient to point to the action of the Church of England in the past. In the sixteenth century the Church of England permitted its clergy to marry after ordination, thereby departing not only from its own past usage, but from the usage both of Western and Eastern Christendom for more than a thousand years, and that action of the Church of England in the sixteenth century has been endorsed by the theory and practice of its clergy ever since, though both in the Church of Rome and in the East the clergy are forbidden such marriage to this day. It seems absurd to suggest that, if a national Church was competent to effect such a profound change, in the face of a definite prohibition which the whole of Christendom had agreed to acknowledge, it cannot modify the functions of its women members to meet the changed conditions of modern life.

But if neither Holy Scripture nor catholic custom negatives the claim, there are, it is believed, most urgent positive reasons why it should forthwith be granted.

THE SPIRITUAL EQUALITY OF THE SEXES.

Until it is granted the Church is failing to witness in its ordered life to the spiritual equality of the sexes, which is on all hands acknowledged as an indisputable principle of Christianity. It is sometimes said that equality is not inconsistent with differentiation of function, and this is obviously true as a general statement. Thus the functions of fatherhood and motherhood are diverse, but this diversity does not constitute a superior and inferior parent. There are, however, functions which are in their very nature inconsistent with the thought of equality, such as the functions of governance and obedience respectively, which from their very nature imply a superior and inferior. Now if the duties of the public teaching, so far as they belong to the laity, are to be reserved exclusively for men whilst to women is assigned the duty of receiving instruction, can it be for one moment maintained that such arrangements are compatible with, still less witness to, the equality of men and women as lay members of the Church of Christ.

It is too little realised that the doctrine of sex-equality is a great spiritual truth; that any obscuring of it must be fraught with disastrous moral consequences. "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control" are the prerequisites for any worthy life. Self-reverence stands first; and self-reverence is not easy to come by for those who live in an atmosphere of thinly-veiled contempt. It would be fantastic to assert that the streets of our great cities are crowded with prostitutes because the churches of our great cities forbid women to sing in their choirs. It would be fantastic; and yet it would contain an element of truth. The thought "only a woman" has much for which to answer. It has undermined man's chivalry and woman's self-respect; it has made easier in countless ways the exploitation of women by what claimed to be, and in fact proved itself to be, the dominant sex. And it is a thought which has been encouraged directly though not intentionally by the approved existence amongst us of functions which require no grace of orders, to which any layman in Christ's Church is encouraged to aspire if he possesses the needful mental and spiritual equipment for their fulfilment, but from which woman as woman is deliberately shut out.

WOMAN'S POINT OF VIEW.

Moreover, if the teaching office of the Church is to be exercised by any save the clergy, would not wisdom require that women should be the first to be summoned to supplement the work of the ordained ministry. It is deemed wise that laymen should from time to time occupy our pulpits in order that the experience of the layman may find expression for the common good. Yet every clergyman was once a layman, and many have had wide experience in secular work before being called to holy orders. But there are regions of human experience which no man, lay or clerical, has ever explored, joys which he

has not tasted, sorrows which he has not borne, temptations he has never needed to resist. Every argument which makes for the extension of the teaching office to laymen makes with tenfold force for its extension to women.

SILENCING THE HOLY SPIRIT.

And there is really more involved than the utilisation of the natural faculties and special experience of women. For women are part of the Spirit-bearing body, and to silence them is to deprive the Church of part of the divine provision for its guidance and enrichment. We live in the days of which the prophet spoke of old—"I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy...and on My handmaiden in those days will I pour forth of My Spirit." Can it be that we are determined by petty exclusions to frustrate, so far as in us lies, the divine purpose and render so far nugatory the divine gift? It is a truism to say that the Church must fail to manifest in its fulness the glory of its Supreme Head until all nations are gathered within its fold, until the mysticism of the East supplements the practical energy of the West and every race has opportunity to make its contribution to the common life. Is it less true to say that any artificial restriction upon the contributions which women have it in their power to make is not only an invasion of their right but is a dwarfing and distortion of the glory of the invisible God, a maiming of the Body of Christ?

THE ALIENATION OF WOMEN.

And do we sufficiently weigh the consequences already apparent of the attitude which the Church has hitherto adopted towards the aspirations of modern women, consequences which are certainly destined to become still more apparent unless that attitude is speedily altered? Do we recognise that women are gradually slipping away from the Church? Our congregations are still largely composed of women. But are they the younger women, the women of foremost intellectual gifts, the women who will be the leaders of thought in the days that lie ahead? Ask the authorities at the University. Talk to the women who are qualifying for the learned professions; to the women whose names are known to the world as foremost in social enterprise and service. How often will you find that whilst they are vitally interested in the ethical side of Christianity, filled with a splendid enthusiasm for humanity, earnest in many cases to retain their hold of the great primal elements of religion, their belief in God, in Christ, in prayer, in immortality, they are yet hopelessly alienated from a Church which seems to them arbitrarily to restrict their opportunities and to despise their gifts? If in the future as in the past women are to contribute their gifts and services without stint for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, the Church must free itself from the suspicion, of holding women as of small account; must declare without hesitation or limitation that it welcomes

women to every dignity and duty which is proper to the laity in the Body of Christ; must make it plain that its attitude hitherto has been an inheritance from by-gone days when wholly different conditions prevailed.

WOMEN IN MODERN LIFE.

For that is the secret of the whole matter—the times have changed and we have not changed with them. We are clinging to the conventions of early Victorian days in a world which has cast them to the winds. Consider the position of women in modern life—their higher education; their position in the medical profession; the part they play in the commercial and industrial life of our time; their civic services; their recent enfranchisement; their membership of royal commissions, and the like; their splendid response to the nation's appeal for help during the recent war. In what department of life are not women pressing eagerly forward? This is the era of women's liberation from the prison-house of a dead past, and we in the Church of England are anxiously debating whether we may with safety mitigate the rigours of their confinement. It is nothing less than tragic that we who all down the centuries have proclaimed the principles upon which freedom rests should be the last to apply them in our own ordered life; that the Church called to be the nursing-mother of liberty should prove the last stronghold of sex-domination. For that is what it comes to. If we could say to women: "You are inferior to men in spiritual and intellectual gifts, you are ill-educated and without experience of life; therefore we will not have you meddle with matters too high for you" that were something. Then women might hope in time to raise themselves somewhat nearer to the masculine level. But that we cannot say; that we do not attempt to say. We recognise their abilities, we reverence their spiritual gifts; and then we turn to them and say "We refuse to you the exercise of these functions not because you are incapable—some of you are more capable than many men to whom we gladly entrust them—but because you are women." God only knows how any woman stands it.

COMPROMISE.

This is a matter in which half measures will be almost worse than useless. As things are it is possible to regard the disabilities of women as an ill heritage from the past which has been allowed to survive long after the judgment of the Church was ready for its removal. But if any survival of those disabilities is further tolerated it will be manifest that the sex-barrier is maintained deliberately, after full discussion, in the face of urgent remonstrance, as an expression of the present judgment of the Church.

May God forbid that a view so alien from the mind of Christ, so false to the essential meaning of catholicity, so out of harmony with all the best tendencies of our age, so dishonouring to women, so pregnant with harm and loss for the future, should receive any further countenance amongst us.

at this point, it is necessary to state that the League is not a political party, and its object is not to secure the triumph of any particular political party or party of parties. It is a religious and social movement, and its object is to secure the triumph of the Kingdom of God on earth.

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The Functions of Women as Lay Members of the Church.

BY

The Rev. F. M. GREEN, B.D.

(Vicar of St. Mark, Tollington Park, N).

WITH A FOREWORD BY

THE BISHOP OF STEPNEY.

(Reprinted from "THE CHURCH MILITANT.")

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FOREWORD.

I AM sure this little pamphlet deserves attention. It seems to me a very clear and moderate statement of aims and aspirations which we are bound to reckon with ; and I am sure that its main contention is amply justified. The matter is one that calls for swift reform if justice is to be done, and if the disasters spoken of in this pamphlet are to be avoided.

H. L. STEPNEY.

*26 Clapton Common,
London, N.E.*

The Functions of Women as Lay Members of the Church.

BY THE REV. F. M. GREEN, B.D.

IN recent years a claim has been emphatically made on behalf of women, and not by women alone, that they should be admitted to the exercise of all duties and the enjoyment of all privileges which already belong to laymen in Christ's Church ; and furthermore, that in any extension of the sphere of the laity no distinction should be made between men and women. If this claim were granted women would be eligible for all lay ministries and would be entitled to exercise their influence both as electors to, and as representatives in, all assemblies to which the laity are or may be admitted. It seems desirable to examine this claim with some fulness ; to inquire whether it is compatible with the teaching of Holy Scripture and the guidance of the Holy Spirit as expressed in the ordered life of the Church ; to estimate the weight of those general considerations which are urged as a ground for its acceptance ; and finally to consider it in relation to the special position which confronts the Church in England at the present time.

HOLY SCRIPTURE.

No one, presumably, will be disposed to ignore or belittle the transformation in the position of women brought about by Christianity. It is sufficient to compare the covenant rites of Judaism, which had regard to males only, with the Sacraments of the Gospel, open to both sexes without distinction, in order to see that in the Christian Church women were accorded a position totally different from that assigned to them under the Mosaic dispensation. And this difference in external position was but the formal expression of that judgment upon the worth of womanhood, or rather upon the worth of humanity as such, which leaps to view again and again in the recorded words and deeds of our Lord. In the early days of His ministry His disciples marvelled that, in defiance of Rabbinical custom, he talked with a woman ; but they found that He admitted women to His closest intimacy, imparted to them some of the most profound truths of His gospel, pointed to them as examples of faith, devotion, and splendid liberality, and, not content with the honour which He had bestowed upon womanhood in that He was born of the Virgin Mary, chose another Mary to be the

herald of His resurrection triumph—"an apostle to the Apostles." And when we pass beyond the limits of the gospel narrative, and examine the life of the early Church as it is recorded in the Acts and Epistles, we find ourselves confronted with the picture of a society in which the old contempt for womanhood is fading away. Men and women assemble together for prayer in the Upper Room; on both alike the gifts of the Holy Spirit are bestowed; a Sapphira answers in her own person for her own sin against the divine society; a Priscilla shares in the labours of her husband; the ministries of women—deaconesses, widows, and others—are in frequent evidence; in short we are in the presence of a society which has as its glorious charter "Neither Jew nor Gentile, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, all one in Christ Jesus."

If then there is to be any restriction upon the functions of women as members of the laity, it rests with those who would impose or maintain such restriction to show, if they can, that they have warrant for doing so in the teaching of the New Testament. Such warrant there may be; it is a matter for inquiry; but it must be admitted at the outset that the general tendency of New Testament teaching looks in quite another direction.

So far as the recorded teaching of our Lord is concerned, whether expressed in words or in deeds, we shall look in vain for such restriction. On two occasions only does our Lord seem to differentiate between men and women—in His choice of Apostles and in the company He gathered round Him for the institution of Holy Communion—and neither of these is relevant to the question now under consideration. Both would call for careful examination if the admission of women to the priesthood were in question. But the fact that Christ did not call women to the Apostolic office and did not entrust to women the high privilege of celebrating Holy Communion cannot be urged in limitation of their place as lay members of His Church.

When we turn to Apostolic teaching and more especially to the teaching of St. Paul, matters are somewhat different. It appears to the present writer impossible to deny that St. Paul regarded women as definitely subordinate to men, and based upon his conception of the relation of the sexes certain restrictions upon the functions of women as members of the Church; and yet it is to St. Paul that we owe the pregnant utterance which sweeps away all distinctions of race or class or sex in the Church of Christ. How is this discrepancy to be explained?

Surely by recognising frankly that there is only one Infallible Teacher and that the inspiration of the Apostle did not wholly free him from the prejudices and conventions of his age. He lived in a world in which slavery and the subordinate position of women were accepted facts of social life. In a moment of glowing inspiration he recognised that in God's sight the slave is as the master, the woman as the man. But in his practical directions

for conduct he bade the slave and the woman accept the position assigned to them in the social order. The runaway slave must return to his master, even though the Apostle affectionately begs that he be received as a brother beloved. The whole Epistle to Philemon proceeds on the assumption that Philemon had an unquestionable right in the person of Onesimus. The woman must be in subjection, as also saith the law.

The question which really concerns us is not what St. Paul thought meet for the women of Corinth in the first century, but what St. Paul would think meet for the women of England in the twentieth century if he were with us now. Can we doubt what would be the true answer to that question? "Neither Jew nor Gentile, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female"—there is the great principle of the equal worth of humanity in the sight of God. Taught by the Spirit he enunciated that principle in its fulness. Taught by the Spirit also, we do not question, he concentrated all his efforts on giving practical effect to the first element in that principle, and under God we owe it chiefly to St. Paul that the Christian Church to-day is not a Jewish sect. It was not till generations later that the Christian conscience learned to recognise the incompatibility of slavery with the affirmation of the worth and dignity of every man as made in the image of God. It is not until almost to-day that we are learning that to regard woman as subordinate to man is to deny her true relationship to God. And it is the same uncatholic spirit which in the first century inspired the Judaising party which to-day animates those who would deny to Christian women the exercise of those functions for which men are eligible on no other title than that of membership in the Holy Catholic Church. Can we doubt where St. Paul, the champion of catholicity, would take his stand if he were with us to-day?

The letter killeth; and those who advocate the claims of womanhood in our modern world are ready to make their opponents a present of the letter of Pauline teaching. The spirit giveth life; and the spirit of Pauline teaching is not to be found in the regulations respecting public worship at Corinth in the first century but in the great charter of the Catholic Church.

CATHOLIC CUSTOM.

It may be said, however, that, even if there is nothing in Scripture rightly interpreted to negative the claim advanced on behalf of women to-day, the usage of the Church for nineteen centuries must be deemed sufficient ground for its rejection; that the past affords no precedent for the exercise by women of those ministerial, consultative, and legislative functions to which they now ask admittance. That the past affords no precedent is simply not true, as all students of primitive and mediæval Church history are well aware; but the value of such precedents has sometimes been misconceived by those who have sought to rest their case upon them. To affirm that catholic custom endorses the claim of women to exercise the prophetic

ministry because there are sporadic instances of the exercise of that ministry by women from the days of the four daughters of Philip the Evangelist onwards is only less absurd than to find in the presence of Abbess Hilda at the Synod of Whitby catholic warrant for the admission of women to sit in the representative councils of the Church. What these precedents do show is this, that the general trend of catholic usage has not been due to any essential incapacity on the part of woman as such for the exercise of these functions, has not been due to any fundamental principle admitting of no exception, but has simply expressed the mind of the Church in past ages that, under the conditions then prevalent, it was expedient that the exercise of such functions should normally be restricted to men. It is reverence for antiquity run mad which would make the general judgment of the past on such a question into a rigid rule fettering the liberty of the Church to-day, under conditions wholly different from those known in earlier ages.

It is urged, however, that even if catholic usage in relation to such a question may need modification in view of the changed conditions of modern life, it is not within the competence of the Church of England to take action without the concurrent sanction of the whole of Christendom. For answer it is surely sufficient to point to the action of the Church of England in the past. In the sixteenth century the Church of England permitted its clergy to marry after ordination, thereby departing not only from its own past usage, but from the usage both of Western and Eastern Christendom for more than a thousand years, and that action of the Church of England in the sixteenth century has been endorsed by the theory and practice of its clergy ever since, though both in the Church of Rome and in the East the clergy are forbidden such marriage to this day. It seems absurd to suggest that, if a national Church was competent to effect such a profound change, in the face of a definite prohibition which the whole of Christendom had agreed to acknowledge, it cannot modify the functions of its women members to meet the changed conditions of modern life.

But if neither Holy Scripture nor catholic custom negatives the claim, there are, it is believed, most urgent positive reasons why it should forthwith be granted.

THE SPIRITUAL EQUALITY OF THE SEXES.

Until it is granted the Church is failing to witness in its ordered life to the spiritual equality of the sexes, which is on all hands acknowledged as an indisputable principle of Christianity. It is sometimes said that equality is not inconsistent with differentiation of function, and this is obviously true as a general statement. Thus the functions of fatherhood and motherhood are diverse, but this diversity does not constitute a superior and inferior parent. There are, however, functions which are in their very nature inconsistent with the thought of equality, such as the functions of governance and obedience respectively,

which from their very nature imply a superior and inferior. Now if the duties of public teaching, of discussion, and, as many hope, of legislation on Church questions, so far as they belong to the laity, are to be reserved exclusively for men whilst women are assigned the duties of receiving instruction, of praying for guidance for the men who legislate for the Church, and of submitting themselves to what the wisdom of the latter shall determine, can it be for one moment maintained that such arrangements are compatible with, still less witness to, the equality of men and women as lay members of the Church of Christ.

It is too little realised that the doctrine of sex-equality is a great spiritual truth; that any obscuring of it must be fraught with disastrous moral consequences. "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control" are the prerequisites for any worthy life. Self-reverence stands first; and self-reverence is not easy to come by for those who live in an atmosphere of thinly-veiled contempt. It would be fantastic to assert that the streets of our great cities are crowded with prostitutes because the churches of our great cities forbid women to sing in their choirs. It would be fantastic; and yet it would contain an element of truth. The thought "only a woman" has much for which to answer. It has undermined man's chivalry and woman's self-respect; it has made easier in countless ways the exploitation of women by what claimed to be, and in fact proved itself to be, the dominant sex. And it is a thought which has been encouraged directly though not intentionally by the approved existence amongst us of functions which require no grace of orders, to which any layman in Christ's Church is encouraged to aspire if he possesses the needful mental and spiritual equipment for their fulfilment, but from which woman as woman is deliberately shut out.

WOMAN'S POINT OF VIEW.

Furthermore it hardly needs to be argued that, if women are to be debarred from making their voices heard in the councils of the Church and from such share in the teaching office of the Church as may rightly be entrusted to the laity, the Church will be deprived of much expert knowledge. Does any one doubt that there are branches of the work of the Church with respect to which the advice of women is a first necessity for efficient endeavour? Can we hope to deal effectively with the social evil if we approach it solely from the masculine standpoint? Will the pronouncements of the Church on such questions as Housing and Temperance lose nothing in weight or wisdom if women have no part in formulating them? Is it fitting that the Church should discuss the problems of foreign missions and that women who have borne such an honourable share in the labours of the foreign field should be excluded from the council chamber? It is absurd to speak as though women alone were qualified to discuss the religious training of children, but is this a subject upon which the Church can afford to dispense with their ex-

perienced counsel? Moreover, if the teaching office of the Church is to be exercised by any save the clergy, would not wisdom require that women should be the first to be summoned to supplement the work of the ordained ministry. It is deemed wise that laymen should from time to time occupy our pulpits in order that the experience of the layman may find expression for the common good. Yet every clergyman was once a layman, and many have had wide experience in secular work before being called to holy orders. But there are regions of human experience which no man, lay or clerical, has ever explored, joys which he has not tasted, sorrows which he has not borne, temptations he has never needed to resist. Every argument which makes for the extension of the teaching office to laymen makes with tenfold force for its extension to women.

SILENCING THE HOLY SPIRIT.

And there is really more involved than the utilisation of the natural faculties and special experience of women. For women are part of the Spirit-bearing body, and to silence them is to deprive the Church of part of the divine provision for its guidance and enrichment. We live in the days of which the prophet spoke of old—"I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy...and on My handmaidens in those days will I pour forth of My Spirit." Can it be that we are determined by petty exclusions to frustrate, so far as in us lies, the divine purpose and render so far nugatory the divine gift? It is a truism to say that the Church must fail to manifest in its fulness the glory of its Supreme Head until all nations are gathered within its fold, until the mysticism of the East supplements the practical energy of the West and every race has opportunity to make its contribution to the common life. Is it less true to say that any artificial restriction upon the contributions which women have it in their power to make is not only an invasion of their right but is a dwarfing and distortion of the glory of the invisible God, a maiming of the Body of Christ?

THE ALIENATION OF WOMEN.

And do we sufficiently weigh the consequences already apparent of the attitude which the Church has hitherto adopted towards the aspirations of modern women, consequences which are certainly destined to become still more apparent unless that attitude is speedily altered? Do we recognise that women are gradually slipping away from the Church? Our congregations are still largely composed of women. But are they the younger women, the women of foremost intellectual gifts, the women who will be the leaders of thought in the days that lie ahead? Ask the authorities at the University. Talk to the women who are qualifying for the learned professions; to the women whose names are known to the world as foremost in social enterprise and service. How often will you find that whilst they are vitally interested in the ethical side of Christianity, filled with a splendid enthusiasm for humanity, earnest in many

cases to retain their hold of the great primal elements of religion, their belief in God, in Christ, in prayer, in immortality, they are yet hopelessly alienated from a Church which seems to them arbitrarily to restrict their opportunities and to despise their gifts? If in the future as in the past women are to contribute their gifts and services without stint for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, the Church must free itself from the suspicion, of holding women as of small account; must declare without hesitation or limitation that it welcomes women to every dignity and duty which is proper to the laity in the Body of Christ; must make it plain that its attitude hitherto has been an inheritance from by-gone days when wholly different conditions prevailed.

WOMEN IN MODERN LIFE.

For that is the secret of the whole matter—the times have changed and we have not changed with them. We are clinging to the conventions of early Victorian days in a world which has cast them to the winds. Consider the position of women in modern life—their higher education; their position in the medical profession; the part they play in the commercial and industrial life of our time; their civic services; their recent enfranchisement; their membership of royal commissions, and the like; their splendid response to the nation's appeal for help during the present war. In what department of life are not women pressing eagerly forward? This is the era of women's liberation from the prison-house of a dead past, and we in the Church of England are anxiously debating whether we may with safety mitigate the rigours of their confinement. Let them speak in Mission Halls, but at all costs keep them out of the pulpits. Give them leave to sit on the Parochial Council, if they are very clamorous admit them even to the Diocesan Conference; but the Representative Church Council—*Procul este, profanae*. After all, they are not allowed to sit in Parliament. No, but they soon will be. And must the Church always follow and never lead, must it prove the last stronghold of sex-domination? For that is what it comes to. If we could say to women: "You are inferior to men in spiritual and intellectual gifts, you are ill-educated and without experience of life; therefore we will not have you meddle with matters too high for you" that were something. Then women might hope in time to raise themselves somewhat nearer to the masculine level. But that we cannot say; that we do not attempt to say. We recognise their abilities, we reverence their spiritual gifts; and then we turn to them and say "We refuse to you the exercise of these functions not because you are incapable—some of you are more capable than many men to whom we gladly entrust them—but because you are women." God only knows how any woman stands it!

SELF-GOVERNMENT FOR THE CHURCH.

The granting of the claim put forward on behalf of women is urgent not merely because of the position they have won for

themselves in modern life, but by reason of the demand, which grows in volume and earnestness every hour, that the Church shall be accorded the right to legislate for its own domestic affairs subject to the veto of the Crown. The best way to secure freedom for the Church in England may still be a matter for discussion. The crying need for freedom cannot be called in question. If our hopes are realised we shall see a parliament of the Church regulating its affairs—reconstituting its dioceses, reorganising its parochial system, redistributing its endowments, revising its formularies and rubrics—in a word, taking action which must intimately affect the spiritual welfare of all its children. And are women to be denied any direct voice in this process of reconstruction? In the past the clergy have been practically the autocrats of the Church within the limits imposed by State control. Now the laity are to be given a voice, an effective voice, in regulating Church life. Women submitted to the rule of the clergy. They recognised that if the power of the clergy was despotic, at least it was exercised by those whose lives were consecrated to spiritual work, who had been specially, if, alas! often inadequately, trained for handling the questions with which they had to deal, who had been called of God and endued with the grace of orders for their high office. But does any one suppose that women will be content tamely to submit to the decrees of a Council in which laymen have a determining voice, but from which they, by reason of their sex, are excluded? So long as the Representative Church Council was simply a debating society its constitution was comparatively a minor matter. Even then women felt the stigma of exclusion. Even then the Council forfeited the wisdom which women might have brought to its discussions. But, if the Representative Church Council be replaced by an assembly empowered to give effect to its decisions, is it not vital to the tranquility and progress of the Church that the most numerous, and certainly not the least devout, section of the laity shall have its full share in giving expression to that judgment of the laity which is to play so important a part in fashioning the Church of the future?

COMPROMISE.

This is a matter in which half measures will be almost worse than useless. The voice of compromise will no doubt be heard. It will be suggested that though the whole claim cannot be conceded something should be done, *e.g.*, that women, though not admitted to the Legislative Council which it is hoped to set up, might yet be given a place in the lesser councils of the Church. That will not satisfy women. It will in a sense make matters worse. As things are it is possible to regard the disabilities of women as an ill heritage from the past which has been allowed to survive long after the judgment of the Church was ready for its removal. But if any survival of those disabilities is tolerated in the new constitution for the laity it will be manifest that the

sex-barrier is maintained deliberately, after full discussion, in the face of urgent remonstrance, as an expression of the present judgment of the Church.

May God forbid that a decision so alien from the mind of Christ, so false to the essential meaning of catholicity, so out of harmony with all the best tendencies of our age, so dishonouring to women, so pregnant with harm and loss for the future, should result from the deliberations which must shortly take place.

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THE PROPHETIC MINISTRY OF WOMEN. 21557

On December 13th, 1918, I received a letter from Edward Lee Hicks, D.D., then Bishop of Lincoln, giving me permission, and express direction, to invite Miss E. Picton-Turbervill to preach in the Parish Church of North Somercotes, in the "afternoon and evening" of June 22nd, 1919, the occasion being the Patronal Festival. The parochial officers, without one single exception, expressed enthusiastic approval. I was subsequently informed by a Church Authority that a protest had been sent to him, but I know that this represents some detached individual, who probably nurses some imagined grievance.

On the day arranged the Church was filled with reverent and worshipful congregations. Miss Turbervill, robed in cassock and surplice, with a seemly silk cap, walked side by side with the Vicar from the Vestry to the Chancel. She read the "Lessons" with feeling and quiet power. The Sermons were remarkable. I knew Miss E. Picton-Turbervill to be a Scholar, theologian, and capable speaker. But apart from all this, I looked for and found something else, which a spiritually minded woman could give, and which a man could never give—the feminine lightness of touch, and the vein of motherly love. I am often asked, "When are we to have Miss Picton-Turbervill again?"

In the diocese there was opposition, of course, but this proceeded from clerical sources. The Clergy organised a protest to be sent to the beloved Bishop, who then lay dying, but, his lamented death too rapidly ensuing, I believe the petition never came before him. He would not have been surprised or perturbed. The laity all welcomed the "Ministry of Women."

What is the ground of clerical opposition? Tradition and Canon Law. The traditional opposition begins with some statements of St. Paul, in 1 Cor. v. and 1 Timothy ii. None of these apply to such a case as the one under consideration, and it is easy to see that the circumstances before the writer are purely temporary and isolated, and peculiar to oriental thought of woman, as being inferior to man. And even these passages are at variance with St. Paul at his best, as witness 1 Cor. xiii. Tradition, while keeping the letter of this pedantry, has always been nobler in spirit. The "Ministry of Women" has never been silent, but has been exercised in the Mission Field, in the School, in the Church, and the Monastery. To save herself from the reactionary she has been compelled to keep the preaching to irregular hours and non-statutory services, but who can admire such a proceeding?

Canon Law is partly obsolete, and is not expressive of the mind of the Church to-day. But even this only requires a Bishop liberal enough to license a woman as he licenses a man. The Archbishop of Dublin permitted, and directed, Miss Turbervill to preach at Statutory Services in Dublin in February. A democratic system would speedily place the woman side by side with the male prophet.

S. PROUDFOOT.

Women and the Priesthood.

It is the conviction of the members of the League of the Church Militant that the time has come when it is necessary to do more than say that, apart from the apparent witness of catholic custom, they can discern no reason why women should be excluded from the priesthood. They believe it to be incumbent upon them to urge that what threatens to be the last remaining sex disability should be removed, and that the Church should call to its sacred ministry those women as well as men who believe they are inwardly moved to undertake the priestly office, under such disciplinary regulations as it may judge best for the edification of its members.

They feel that as matters now stand the Church is perpetuating at the very innermost shrine of its ordered life a tradition, partly Jewish, partly pagan, which the rest of the world has in theory abandoned or is on the eve of abandoning, a tradition which is the fruitful source of much which is amiss in sex relationships, which is wholly inconsistent with the Catholic faith—the tradition of the inferiority of women. One of our Bishops has recently told us, whilst repudiating the thought that women are inferior in nature to men, that women are subordinate to men, that to man belongs a permanent and essential headship, and that this truth has been embodied in the refusal of the Church to call women to the priesthood. Very well. We repudiate "subordination" just as earnestly as we repudiate "inferiority"; we deny that upon man there is conferred according to the divine intention a permanent and essential headship. Can it be a matter of wonder that we feel bound to call in question a restriction which is openly set forth as witnessing in the ordered life of the Church to a principle which with all our hearts we believe to be a hoary falsehood, fraught with pernicious consequences to the society which accepts it and necessarily antagonistic to the foundation principles of the Catholic faith.

For that we take to be the essence of the whole matter. If "the priesthood for men only" were a claim advanced solely on grounds of practical convenience, if it had all along been admitted that women were capable of the priesthood and their exclusion from it had been justified on grounds of expediency alone, then, though we should have denied the expediency and felt that the Church was rejecting much needed service and that women were being improperly debarred from work to which they believed the Holy Spirit was calling them, we should have admitted that there was much to be said on both sides, and our challenge to the Church to reconsider its ways would have been made in milder tones than it is to-day. For to-day we have no care to dissemble our indignation that one of the most liberal-minded prelates in England should stand forth as the exponent of views which involve acceptance of the doctrine of male domination (but perhaps "headship" no more involves "domination" than essential and permanent "subordination"

A CHURCH-WOMAN'S THREE REASONS in favour of absolute equality of opportunity and responsibility for men and women within the Church.

I—Because in every department of life and every form of activity in the religious life, the best results can only be obtained when men and women work together in equality.

II—Because in religious matters we are failing to follow the whole spirit of our Lord's teaching, and in fact, disobedient to Him, until we give this equality.

III—Because the highly desirable that women who have now equal opportunities with men share effectively with them in the social education of the young, should be given equality of opportunity and equality of authority, that they may be able to share effectively with men in the religious education of the young.

W. J. Adams (his handwriting, G.P.D.S. Trust).

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implies "inferiority"!) and that the voice of authority on all sides should be loud in asserting that there are fundamental reasons which render women unfit to minister at the altar.

But though we are indignant we are not disloyal. We shall promote no schism. We shall not counsel our members to withdraw from altars at which they are forbidden to minister nor urge them to refuse to contribute to the maintenance of a ministry in which they may not share. We shall not seek to organise parliamentary pressure to further the cause we have at heart. We shall make our appeal to the Church. We shall rely on the truth and the truth will prevail.

And though indignant we are not unreasonable. We are perfectly aware that no Bishop can rightly ordain women to the priesthood on his own individual responsibility. If any are disposed to argue that not even the whole Anglican Communion could rightly decide on such a step without the concurrent assent of the rest of Christendom, we shall give attentive hearing to such arguments even if we should ultimately come to reject them as inadequate. We are conscious that there are many difficult questions which must be determined before any woman can be ordained a priest. Is a vocation to the ministry compatible in the case of a woman with a vocation to matrimony? If not, must women priests be vowed to celibacy, and, if so, at what age should such vows be accepted? These are only some of the problems which will call for solution, which would make precipitate action unthinkable. But we do desire a speedy acknowledgment on the part of the Church that woman is capable of the priesthood and that any hesitation about throwing open the priesthood to women is due to reasons of oecumenical statesmanship or domestic convenience, not to reasons of principle. When that has been explicitly affirmed and accepted we should hope to be able to show that the practical difficulties were not insuperable.

There are those who believe that women are capable of the priesthood and desire that they should serve in the priesthood, but are yet persuaded that the time is not ripe for such a change. In a sense we agree with them. The time will not be ripe for such a change until our Church as a whole feels that it is guided to make it by the Spirit of God, and at present our Church is conscious of no such guidance. But the guidance of the Holy Spirit is rarely if ever vouchsafed in the first instance to the Church as a whole. One here, one there, becomes conscious of a new aspect of divine truth and proclaims what his eyes have seen. At first his words seem as idle tales, his vision is ridiculed; but the very opposition he encounters makes his testimony more insistent, and by and by all perceive the truth and wonder that it was ever hidden from them. In the spiritual world the dawn will never come if the heralds of the dawn hold their peace.

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P.T.O.

THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION.

By The Rt. Rev. CHARLES GORE, D.D., Lord Bishop
of Oxford.

*Preached at St. Martin-in-the-Fields on Thursday evening,
February 6th, 1919, the first anniversary of the extension
of the Parliamentary franchise to women.*

*"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your
moderation be known unto all men."—PHIL. iv. 4-5.*

I AM very glad that no words of mine have inter-
vened to interrupt the first expression of your
heartfelt thankfulness in commemoration of what
happened exactly a year ago. Then the nation
did a tardy but necessary act of justice and opened to women
the great opportunity and responsibility of the political
suffrage. It happened wonderfully enough. You remember
the situation before the war, how impossible it seemed.
It was true that most people said, "Oh, I suppose it will
happen some day." But the antagonism and the acrimonies
of the conflict had produced a situation from which the
wisest did not seem to see the way of issue. And then the
war came, and for a moment diverted people's attention,
and the spectacle of the service of women in all sorts of
departments of human life, and the independence and the
capacity which they exhibited gave even to the most un-
believing an excuse for withdrawing their opposition, and
so a year ago the Act was passed. I spoke of it just now
as a great act of justice. So it is. St. Paul tells us that
the powers that be are ordained of God. In St. Paul's days
the powers that were were the powers of a nominal republic
that was in fact becoming more and more unmistakably
and overtly a despotism. Nowadays, the powers that be,
whether under the forms of a Republic or under the forms
of a Constitutional Monarchy, are democratic. If you

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believe in a movement of God in history then the movement of God to-day is towards democracy, and you know what democracy means. It means government of the people, for the people, by the people. That is the splendid phrase which Lincoln borrowed from an earlier writer and made for ever to ring in the ears of men upon the plains of Gettysburg. Government of the people, that belongs to all; government for the people, that belongs to all; government by the people, that means all must take their part. The government of the people, for the people, by the people, that is democracy. It is a great ideal which neither in America nor in England is yet real. It means many things if it is to be successful. It means a widespread extension of interests, education, and service. But amongst other things that democracy means it undoubtedly means the admission of women to political privileges, partly because they are like men, persons; and democracy means the spiritual equality of opportunity for all persons, partly because they are unlike men—because there are many things with which the government of a State and legislation must concern itself with regard to which women have a far wider and deeper experience, and a far juster view and a far deeper insight than men. Therefore, because they are like and because they are unlike men, any State which in any real sense claims to be democratic must add its women to its subjects, to its political opportunities. Because it needs the mind of all; that is the point of a democracy. It needs the point of view of all; of all classes, of all kinds, of both sexes, of all individuals, brought to bear on the constitution of that common whole which is to be the united effort and expression of the life of the nation and the State. It is justice to women.

A Father of the Christian Church, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, nearly 1600 years ago, looking at the legislation of the then Roman Empire with regard to the relations of the sexes and to marriage said: "The laws have been made by men, therefore they have been unjust to women." You feel that, I dare say, but it inheres almost in the nature of things that the point of view which is not represented is overlooked. It belongs to democracy that because no one should be overlooked, therefore everyone and every point of view should be represented. That is justice, and with this great enlargement of women's opportunity there has come, by a more gradual process an almost unlimited extension of the opportunities of service for women. There are very few pieces of literature that fascinate me more than

Miss Austen's novels. To read them is delightful for many reasons, one being that they give you an almost infinite sense of what can be accomplished in the way of progress in particular directions. You cannot conceive a social state as regards men, and ten times more so as regards women, more totally different from anything that we should conceive to be tolerable than the society depicted by Miss Austen.

The extension of opportunity to women for which you have come to give thanks to-day, quite apart from the granting of the suffrage, is marvellous. Doubtless there is more to come. The Church is a very conservative body. In some things it is right to be conservative. I do not believe that it would ever be right for the Church to add women to the priesthood. I believe that rests on a principle which will never alter. But I feel no doubt also that there is a very wide opening for the ministry of women of which as yet little advantage has been taken. In the beginning there was a diaconate for women as for men, and I would see it not only incidentally but formally restored as an order of the ministry, and as a symbol of all the manifold forms of social service; preaching, prophesying, teaching, are not confined to men. "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy," that was the forecast, and it is a forecast which admits of far more abundant realisation than it has had. Who can doubt that there is a gift as manifest among women as among men, as teachers, as exhorters, as superiors, as guides? I do not see that there is any principle which can prohibit to women any function which can be assigned to laymen. That may admit of a great extension, and I am not without hopes that order may be taken not in one diocese, nor in another diocese, but in all dioceses corporately which shall give recognition to such a principle.

*Serrin d
He ceter*

And so I desire to join heartily in your thanksgiving both for that which was accomplished a year ago and for all that it represents and involves and is accompanied by.

St. Paul says "Rejoice in the Lord." That is why you are here in the House of God, and it makes, you know, a great difference. No one can take part in any great cause and then see it come to victory without a great joy. There is nothing in the world so great a joy as to succeed after a hard fight. But it is not necessarily rejoicing in the Lord. The joy of the victor may be a joy sullied with bitterness and revenge and the spirit of self-triumph. Possession may bring reaction. We are to rejoice "in the Lord," that is, in the constant and full view that it is God who is the Author of progress and that the purpose of progress is His, and that

the conditions of real progress lie always in conformity with Him; that there is no real progress by wickedness. "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." So it is that St. Paul adds: "Rejoice in the Lord: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men." Moderation? Perhaps when we think of moderate people it does not altogether please us. The picture is not satisfying. We know the person so well—turning to scorn with lips divine the falsehood of extremes. But he is apt to be the kind of person who does nothing; who never surrenders himself to any great enthusiasm; who never fights for any great cause. If it is an intellectual person then he is so occupied with balancing the considerations on one side and the other that he never arrives at a clear conviction or reaches a clear decision. If it is a person not specially gifted with intellectual powers, then the practical reasons on one side and the other are carefully weighed. He becomes in life a spectator, interested or secluded, but not an actor not an enthusiast, not a zealous man, not one who can be ever reckoned upon for clear vision or strong support or powerful action. He is a bad comrade. He is not a fighter at all. So we think of the moderate man, and he chills us a little to the bone, and we are told: "Let your moderation be known unto all men." But that is certainly not the character of our Lord. That is not what is meant to be the character of the Christian. No, certainly not. We think of our Lord as the great warrior who rode out because of the word of truth and meekness and righteousness at the head of the armies of heaven, His eyes as a flame of fire, and out of His mouth proceeded a two-edged sword; and indeed He wages a great war and He treads the winepress in the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. There is no fighter like Jesus Christ. He is the prince of all those who go into the world for Christian causes. There is no indignation like the wrath of the Lamb, and there is no judgment for trenchency and severity like His, and no uncompromising decision which has ever appeared in the history of man like the decision of the Son of Man. No, no, it is not the moderate person of the ordinary estimate who can be a follower of Jesus Christ. And indeed the word which is translated from the Greek, "Let your moderation be known unto all men," is a very interesting word which is not adequately represented by "moderate." It occurs in some other places in the New Testament and it is translated by gentle, or gentleness; as when St. Paul exhorts his disciples by the meekness and gentleness of Christ he uses the same word;

or when St. James describes the wisdom which is from above as first pure, then peaceable, then gentle. Yet neither gentle nor moderate quite describes what it means. It is a very meaningful word and for its meaning you want I think, to think especially of the English word "fairness." It is opposed to the idea of making excessive demands. The partisan or the fanatic knows what he wants, and having a clear mind as to what he wants to get he is not over scrupulous about his means of getting it. He does not want to trouble his head with the reasons of the other party. He would rather not know too much. He will have his pound of flesh, that is why he is there. It is to this conception that the word St. Paul uses is opposed. It describes the person as fair-minded, consistent, who wants to know the whole truth; who wants to look all round and take a fair estimate of everyone's claim, and where necessary to withdraw his own. Consistent, fair, that is what it means, this word which in our New Testament is translated "moderate." Now when you come to think about it that is an extremely important quality. There is a certain fascination about the fanatic, about the enthusiast who is so concentrated on his object that he refuses to know too much, and there are those who say it is only by fanatics that anything is really accomplished. It does not do to be too impartial; you get nothing done. So people sometimes say. And there is a measure of historical truth about that saying. But it is also true to say of history that fanaticism and partisanship, where it gets its way, almost always gets its way with such violation of justice, and leaves such wounds as breed sores and provide reaction. The triumphs of fanaticism are marked by reaction. No, for real progress you want moderation, or the quality that St. Paul describes in the word so translated: fairness.

At this moment in the world are we not all in great anxiety? We have fought for justice against Germany and won. Now we are tremendously conscious that it is not only in Germany that the passion for your neighbour's territory exists. It is a widespread disease. We are alarmed; we want to know how the temper of international rivalry can be so subdued as that really we may have permanent peace. The nations are almost resolved, I trust they will be wholly resolved, to form a League of Nations such as shall accept a super-national authority to suppress the partisanship of nations. If we are to have that, if we are to save our civilisation, if we are to maintain a world peace, what is it we want? We want the spirit of fairness. There is nothing else that can avail us, in the world of international

fellowship. In our nation we are in great anxiety. Is there not a danger that the passion of class may become a war of Capital and Labour? And though we may conjecture which would win the victory, yet we know how much of all that is built up into civilisation would therein perish. As I say, the victories of fanaticism and one-sidedness breed reaction. What we want is fairness in the soul of the fighter, which is a harder thing.

Are we going to save the Anglican Communion to fulfil its vocation, or is it going to be rent asunder? There are its tendencies heading right away from one another, and the great central body largely desires to be neutral and remain intact. That is not the spirit which can save the Church. It is not the impartiality of the neutral that we want but the impartiality of the committed man who, while he enters into the fight with all his might is also fair, moderate, and gentle. There is nothing but fairness can save the world from revolution and reaction. Fairness is the very spirit of solid and substantial and orderly progress. You say, it is all very well, but it is impossible. It is the way of the world to assume that as our characters naturally run, so they must be allowed to run, and there is no doubt that our characters are naturally one-sided. There are people who are naturally moderate who want to be spectators; and there are people who are naturally enthusiastic and their souls rise to the battle. The one become neutral, and the other become fanatical. Are we to acquiesce in that nature if we are Christians? That is the meaning of "in the Lord," because the characteristic of our Lord Jesus Christ is that combination of opposites; He was as self-assertive as any one ever was in the name of the Father who sent Him, in the truth of His own being. He made a claim greater than any man ever made upon his brethren, and withal He was meek and lowly of heart; He was strong and yet He was gentle. And I, miserable I, with my weakness and my short life and my infirmities and grievous sins, shall I ever attain unto that all-round character? shall I ever be strong and gentle? shall I ever be a fighter and fair? Never alone, but God loves us, and can use us not as we are but as we are trying to become. It makes such a difference what you are trying to be. Are you naturally enthusiastic and zealous and easily enlisting yourselves for a great cause? Then never be satisfied until you are fair and moderate, until your moderation is known unto all men as much as your zeal. Are you naturally appreciative of fairness? Then never rest until the fire of enthusiasm and the spirit of the fighter enters into

your soul and dominates your life. In nature the two temperaments naturally easily excite one another to quarrels and dislikes, and they become worse in one another's presence and one becomes all the more fanatical because the other is so offensively moderate. But that is not Christian, nor is it the way of reason. God would not have us one whit less enthusiastic, less strenuous fighters than the most strenuous; He would have us be fair, moderate, gentle, strong with gentleness.

My brethren, Nietzsche was utterly wrong when he said those specifically Christian qualities, humility, gentleness, meekness, fairness, are enfeebling qualities. They are the qualities wherein lies that real and persistent strength in which the Spirit of God urges from one end of all things to the other. And you know how that is to be done. It is by rejoicing in the Lord. That brings you constantly into memory of Him in whom we live and move and have our being, and of Him whose will is one day to be supreme, whose will accommodates itself always to our weaknesses but never to our wilfulnesses, whose will one day all the world will see to be supreme. The Lord is at hand. Therefore in Him let us persistently abide. Be anxious about nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall guard your thoughts and hearts in Jesus Christ.

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THE FUTURE OF WOMEN IN INDUSTRY.

By MISS A. MAUDE ROYDEN.

Delivered at Whitefield's Men's Own, on Sunday afternoon,
June 22nd, 1919.

If you go away this afternoon with mental indigestion, will you reflect that you have given me just one afternoon in which to deal with a subject which in industry is perhaps the sorest point of all. In the near future probably the question of cheap labour given to us by other races may be one of the stormy centres of industry in white countries. But at the moment the cheap labour of women is perhaps the sorest point in the industrial problem at home. Because of this I want to lay down four or five general principles.

It is because religious people and social and political reformers have so often ignored general principles, or in the backs of their minds cherish the belief that truths of human nature will suddenly cease operating when it is convenient to us that they should do so, that they suffer from a sense almost of paralysis, in face of the tremendous complications of modern life. Scientists have a field of knowledge infinitely greater than that surveyed by the social reformer, but as soon as they began to lay down general principles, to formulate the laws under which this universe operates, to realise that a law never fails, they gained that extraordinary sense of power which makes us feel to-day as if there is almost nothing that we cannot believe science will do in the material world. On the other hand, in the social and religious worlds we seem still so hampered by the feeling that everything is chaotic, that we cannot trust any great statement of truth as the scientists can trust theirs. And so the individual feels almost paralysed in front of the vast problems which we individuals have created.

I want to begin by making half-a-dozen affirmations of faith. The first is that it is not the worker but the idler who is a burden on the community. Now that is an axiom to you, and for yourselves; but you will find that when you come to apply it to women, you are apt to think it is not true. I want to affirm also that it is best for the community that the individual shall do the best work that he is capable of, and that that is also best in the long run for the individual; that the two interests coincide; that it is to the advantage of the community that work shall be done not by the less competent people, but always by those people who can do it best. Further, so few of us are competent to judge in our own case that it is almost best to judge that none of us is capable. Again, women are not all alike, and ought not to be all alike. Not only is every woman not born by Divine fiat a domestic servant, but it is even better that all women should not be born domestic servants. All women do not naturally understand or love children. That is a hard saying even for women to believe, because the great

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majority of women do care for and understand children, but not every woman does. When a woman differs from the standard that society has set up for her, it may be that she has exceptional gifts in other directions. It does not mean, although we have so often taken for granted that it does, that a woman who does not like domestic work or does not shine in the management of children, is a wrong sort of woman. It merely means that there are more varieties in human nature than it has always been found convenient for society to allow for.

I suggest that when women differ as a sex from you—and there are certain broad differences running between the sexes—it does not seem possible that our bodies should be so different and our outlook on life be exactly the same—where those differences exist it is a mistake to assume that they always imply an inferiority on our side. For instance, if I may take an example, it has been found—I do not say finally and definitely proved; but a great many people believe it—that in certain kinds of work women are quicker than men, but that they exhaust themselves sooner; and therefore they ought to work shorter shifts and their time should be arranged in rather a different way. Now, the moment we say to a woman, You cannot work as long a shift as a man because you work quicker, she immediately thinks it is because she lags behind you in some way. That is not necessary. It may be an inferiority, but it is not necessarily so; and when we begin to organise the work of women in the future, let us realise that it may be necessary for women to work under rather different conditions without necessarily implying inferiority. It may simply mean difference, not inferiority.

I think it follows that women ought to have the same freedom of choice in their work as men have. I go further and say that to every child coming into the world there ought to be a much greater freedom of choice than there is. Certainly women should not be hampered beforehand by being told that if, for instance, they choose an unmarried life, if they choose to work in the world rather than in the home, that is because there is something wrong with them. That sort of judgment cramps women almost as much as legislative or trade union restrictions. Girls should be brought up with at least as much freedom as boys to choose their own work. The girl who has to do work she does not like, even if she thinks she ought to like it, does not make a really good worker. One of the cleverest women I know has been in this world—I hope she may be more fortunate in another—a singularly unsuccessful charwoman, because she had no turn for that kind of work; but she never had a chance of doing anything else. Yet I fancy she would have made a brilliant speaker, for she is a woman of real brains. But her whole character has been warped by the fact that she is always doing work she does not like, and consequently she does it badly. The community suffers when it has unwilling workers, because unwilling work is nearly always inefficient work. Women have always been taught two things. If they

belong to the richer class they are told they ought not to work. I myself, for instance, when I had been at college, was always given by my people to understand that it would be an unscrupulous thing of me to take a paid post of any kind, because it would mean that I was taking away work from somebody else. That is very plausible on the face of it, but behind it there runs this vicious assumption, that the idler may be doing a service to the community that the worker is not, that it was really good for the community that I should be idle, and if I wanted to do work which happened to be paid work, it would be an injustice to somebody else. On the other hand, if a woman belongs to the poorer classes, she has not to argue whether she will work or not, she has got to work; but she does it on this understanding, that she has got to do the work you, gentlemen, don't want to do. If not, she is just as freely told, as I was told, that I ought not to work, that she is taking away a man's job, and that she ought to do the work you do not want to do. She replies, perhaps: "But I don't want to do it either." And you reply: "Then you ought to want to do it." And that feeling—which I am certain is in the minds of an enormous proportion of my audience—that a woman ought to like certain kinds of work, is a vicious assumption that women are far more alike, or ought to be more alike, than they are. Yet it is true that women and men are different physically. Women are muscularly less strong; their power of endurance is probably as great, but in actual muscular power for work that requires great strength they are inferior. There are other differences in the way their lives are lived, which I am certain, in the long run, while leaving a certain amount of work common to both, will, if given free play, sort out to the sexes the work they can do best, and that would happen which I believe to be best both for the individual and the community.

You, gentlemen, have hitherto judged what sort of work women ought to do, and, on the whole, you have not judged extraordinarily well. The report of the War Cabinet Committee on Women in Industry contains the following: "The pre-war unregulated relation of men's and women's wages excluded the woman from trades in which the war has enabled her to show her efficiency, while allowing her to work in processes now regarded as unsuitable." Before the war society excluded women from work that they were perfectly competent to do, while leaving her to do work which is now decided to be unsuitable. That is to say, the process of judgment has not been altogether successful. I do not mean to maintain for a moment that it has always been mistaken, or that there are not certain broad aspects on which it has not been correct. But, still it has worked clumsily and badly on the whole, and women have been doing work for which they were unsuited and excluded from work for which they were fitted, until the war came along and broke down by force of sheer necessity standards and barriers erected before it broke out. Women have, by the work they have done during the war, shown that they have more brains

than was commonly supposed—I think more than many women would have supposed, as well as men; they have shown that they had more public spirit, that they were more willing to respond to a great public need, than people imagined; and in leaving home and taking up a new line of life, have shown more adaptability and initiative than was expected. They have proved that light sedentary work is by no means always so healthful to them as heavier work out-of-doors. Have you noticed how very rarely girl omnibus conductors use the seats provided for them? I have asked one or two why they did not use them more frequently. To my surprise they have often replied that they would just as soon stand, that they were not tired. I do not mean to say that women can stand, with benefit to themselves, as long as men; but I do suggest that so long as they have a good deal of fresh air and good food, they are able to endure harder conditions of work than we had expected. Women have been, at any rate during the greater part of the war, much better fed than before, because they had better conditions and more regular appetite, and they have responded to it. The old superstition that women really exist most beautifully on a cup of tea and a bun has perished during the war. Neither do women exist to the best under these conditions of feeding nor do they really like them. They get better food when they can, and they have shown under better conditions a very remarkable degree of sheer physical and muscular strength.

Again, it has been shown that women can sometimes do the work of men, perhaps even as well as men, so long as conditions are made a little different. In Manchester, when women were put on to the trams, the hours during which they worked, the points at which the shift was broken, and even such details as the shape of the bags in which the takings were carried and the way the straps by which they were suspended from the shoulder were fixed—all these things were decided after consultation with a woman doctor; with the result that the women on the Manchester trams broke down less frequently and improved more in health than those in almost any other city. The amount of work they did was the same as the men's, but they required to do it under rather different conditions. During the war we could not afford to waste labour, and during peace we cannot afford it either. The most incredible power of expanding industry revealed to us during the war should be used now not to destroy life but to enrich it, to dignify it and, above all, to give it leisure. We want production to increase in such a way that the workers—who should be the whole community—may be able to do their work with zest and with the pleasure that comes from work done when one's powers are at their best and not over-strained or over-tired; and we want production on such a scale that the hours of leisure may be greater than they have been in the past.

By what means is it proposed to achieve this? The first measure that is presented to us is what is called the Restoration of Pre-War Practices Bill. That bill is simply a measure of

justice. It means that the barriers, the restrictions, the regulations created by the united efforts of organised working-men before the war and abandoned by them during the war for patriotic reasons, shall be restored, and that in the re-organisation of industry we must begin from the point where we were when the war broke out and not at the point to which the war has brought us. But if that Bill is passed as it stands an enormous number of women will inevitably be turned out of their work. The Bill applies chiefly to engineering works, to chemical works and allied trades, glass works, &c. Now, during the war, women have done extraordinarily well in engineering. They have done work which no one, with the exception of a few "fanatics" here and there, believed before the war they were capable of; and in doing it they have learned their own powers. Nearly 800,000 women will be turned out of their employment under the operation of the Bill. Of these 450,000 did definitely replace men, and of course understood they would have to give up their places if, and when, the men came back. But in addition to these 342,000 came in owing to the enormous expansion of the industries and the creation of the great aircraft factories. During the war an enormous number of women went into that great industry. These women have learned a trade; but they have also learned their own powers. If you now forbid them to do this kind of work it is because you do not want their competition, not because they are not capable of doing it. It was always rather paradoxical to forbid a person to do what she could not do.

What are you going to do? This Bill is before the House of Commons. It includes the new as well as the old industries. Are you going to send the women home, telling them not to work? Or will you tell them to get married, which was always woman's employment? Will you face the fact that a very large number of them will not be able to marry, not through their own fault but owing to the war? And will you remember that, not only is it natural to the normal, average man and woman to be married, but it is often to a woman her sphere of work as well, and that, when you make marriage impossible to her, you are very often, not always, cutting off from her that channel into which naturally she would have poured her creative forces, her energy as a human being, the powers that God has endowed her with; whereas, when a man does not marry, he still has a channel into which his work goes, has still the creative force every human being possesses. When you deny marriage to a woman, unless she has exceptional gifts and exceptional spirit, you are cutting off from her that into which the whole force of her being would naturally be poured. So that no one in the world needs work more than the woman who does not marry. She wants something to pour herself into. Every human being desires to create, and the atrophy of the creative impulse is one of the worst charges that can be brought against our industrial system. Your energy, your power, can be put into something; but to cut a woman off from marriage, as the war has cut many off, and

at the same time to deny her interesting, hard work, is to leave her a maimed and discontented being. It is just that every man who has given up a post to go to the war should be restored to his work, as far as is possible; if it is impossible, then surely something better. But it is not just legislatively to close the door permanently against women who have come into a new industry, and proved their capacity for it.

How then shall we get over the sore struggle between the expensive man and the cheap labour of women? I should like to rely upon what, I suppose, if I were a scientist, I should call natural selection. To legislate against women being allowed in a certain industry—yes, or through your Trade Unions to refuse their admission—is to create in their minds an intolerable soreness, the feeling that you are simply afraid of their competition, that you won't have them there, although you know they can do the work, because you don't desire they shall compete with you, and you are prepared to use your power to keep them out. But if you use that power to insist that every woman who in any industry is the equal of a man in productive capacity shall receive an equal rate of pay, you give free play to the process of natural selection by which the right people will go into the right work. Before the war, an employer was, on the one hand, bribed to employ women by being able to give them a lower rate than they were worth; and, on the other hand, he was terrorised into not employing them by the threats of the Union, if it was a well organised industry. Strikes have actually taken place on this point of the admission of women. That has happened, for instance, more than once in the printing industry. In Edinburgh women compositors were introduced, and given permanent work, composing being one of the things for which women are well suited.

Throughout the evidence given before the War Cabinet Committee there runs the almost unvarying statement that in really heavy work a woman is not the equal of a man. Obviously you cannot arrange, as some people guilelessly suggest, that all the heaviest part of the work should be done by men and all the lighter by women. You must take the worker as an all-round factor in his industry. But if you rule out this factor of the difference between the wage of the two, you will, I believe, very generally get the employer to employ a man, because on the whole the man is more adequate to work entailing the heavier kinds of labour, and at the same time get out of the minds of the women the sense of injustice which is done when they are shut off from work, not because they are inefficient but simply because they are women.

The objections to this rather drastic proposal are, I suppose, roughly two: first, that the woman will thereby be as effectively driven out as if she were legislated against; secondly, that it would be an injustice to the man, because he, as a general rule, has a wife and family to support, and the woman who, under this proposal would get the same rate of pay, is not so situated. On these two points let me say first, that the proposal would,

in fact, drive out the women just as effectively as if they were legislated against. I don't think any woman is more desirous than I am of seeing women doing every kind of work for which they are fitted; but I am persuaded that if, when you pay men and women alike, women are driven out, it will be because the work is really better done by men, and in that case it is for the advantage both of men and women, that is for the whole community, that the men should do it. It is because I believe in a certain difference between men and women and their doing the work they can do best that I advocate absolutely equal rates of pay. There are certain broad lines of distinction. We do not do certain things as well as you; you do not do certain things as well as we. There is no great competition on the part of men to become sick-nurses; but we do not demand legislation to keep you out of it. We know, indeed, that there are certain cases in which a male nurse is a necessity. It seems to me that the process of natural selection by which the gifts required for sick-nursing are more often found in women is perfectly sufficient to regulate the number of men and the number of women in it. The same thing applies to the teaching profession. With very little children and with girls alone, the woman is better; for classes of boys a male teacher is usually, not always, the more efficient. Although the principle of equal pay for equal work may operate harshly in certain instances, I am persuaded this is the only sound line along which to advance. The second objection to the proposal I have cited is that it would be an injustice to men who have a wife and family to support. I do not believe anything will meet that difficulty except some scheme of the nature of the endowment of motherhood; and I believe that is coming. Already the Labour Party have endorsed the payment of pensions to women whose husbands are dead or been permanently disabled; in order that they may be able to bring up their children. And the War Cabinet, I notice, reports that there should be a payment in connection with the continuance of the race, in other words, the payment of children's allowances to *married men!* Really, gentlemen, who is it that does that particular bit of work? It seems to me we are going back to the state of affairs in some remote island in the South Seas where the custom was observed under which, when a woman had a child, her husband went to bed and received the visits of his friends. On the same principle, in this country, a little while ago, when a woman had a baby, her husband received thirty shillings. Well, you have to correct that. Let the person who does the work get the recognition of the State for the value of her work; and you will then not only equalise the men and women in the labour market, making of marriage a real partnership in very sense of the word, the man bringing to the home what he has earned and the woman bringing what she has earned; but you will also remove some soreness. If a woman wants any kind of economic independence, wants to have any money of her own, she is forced to go out and earn it. Can't you make it possible to give a married woman in the

home an equal economic independence? Why should the one doing the most important work in the world be the one penalised? Ought it not to be recognised that this is a "service rendered to the State in connection with the continuance of the race," and that this burden does fall, on the whole, more on the woman in the home than on the man?

None of these problems can ever be solved in a spirit of sex antagonism or bitterness or suspicion. May I appeal to you to realise that the people whom you are dealing with are not only or solely tiresome, difficult blacklegs in the industrial market, but human beings, with all the desire for independence, the variety of temperament, the interest in life, the creative power, that belong to human beings? May I remind you that one of the most striking remarks in the report which I quoted is as follows: "Among the trade unions represented were many that included women in their membership, but there were no women representatives, and in the whole course of the discussions no questions were raised from the woman's point of view." Isn't that a very severe indictment against the tribunal which decided the conditions under which women should work during the war? There was represented on the one side the Treasury and on the other side the men of the Trades Unions, the consultations extended over days and weeks; and in the end this War Cabinet Committee reports that in the whole course of the discussions no questions were raised from the women's point of view! It is with the desire that the thing should be considered from the woman's point of view on all sides interested, the desire to treat these things with loyalty, with honesty, with justice—justice that will remove bitterness—that I plead. For, believe me, the women will not be slow, indeed have not been slow, to make any sacrifice required for the good of the community: perhaps because they have the little community, the children, in their hands, they find it very easy to care for the kind of world we are going to build hereafter. Appeal to them on grounds of justice, of the good of the community as a whole. I believe they will not be slow to respond. But do not let it be said in the future, when we look back on the way these questions were settled, that, in the whole course of the discussions, no questions were raised from the point of view of women.

Next week: "Workers' Control," by Mr. Frank Hodges, M.P.

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WOMEN AND THE PRIESTHOOD

This is a print of the Papers on Women and the Priesthood referred to in the published correspondence between the Archbishop of Canterbury and Mr. Athelstan Riley. No alterations have been made except the deletion of the name and address of the writer of the first letter, and the addition of a note concerning Miss Maude Royden, otherwise the matter is printed just as it was received.

July 26th, 1916.

The Church Printing Company,
11, Burleigh Street, Strand, W.C.

WOMEN AND THE PRIESTHOOD

— RECTORY,

(PRIVATE.)

March 26th, 1914.

DEAR MADAM,

Your name has been suggested to me as that of a Churchwoman who might possibly be sympathetic towards an attempt which I am making to organize an informal Conference to discuss the question of the ordination of women to the priesthood. I have written to about 150 people, and have received favourable replies from between thirty and forty. Miss Maude Royden,* Dr. Jane Walker, and Miss Elizabeth Sturge have consented, among others, to read papers. The Conference will probably be held on September 18th in London. It is hoped that in coming together for prayer and discussion we may be shown more clearly what is the will of God in this matter.

Our feeling is that priesthood is a human office, not at all a sexual one, and that since women are human beings it is unreasonable to refuse them an opportunity of holding it merely because they are women. I know at least one woman who feels that she has the vocation; and this woman would have made, so far as one can see, an almost ideal priest. The

* Paragraph from the *Morning Post* of Thursday, March 11th, 1915:—

“A meeting of the Church League for Women's Suffrage was held at the Church House, Westminster, last evening, the Rev. F. M. Green in the chair. Miss A. Maude Royden gave an address in which she protested against the exclusion of women from the Ruridecanal and Diocesan Conferences, the Houses of Laymen, and the Representative Church Council. Speaking for herself, she suggested that there was nothing in the priesthood any more than in Church Councils that would in the future justify the exclusion of women. The Chairman remarked that the League intended to send a petition to the Representative Church Council asking that women communicants should be made eligible for election to all assemblies now open to male communicants.”

weight of custom seems to us to be quenching the spirit of God. The loss to the Church appears to us lamentable.

I enclose a summary of the answers which I have received. I shall be very glad to hear from you if you are interested.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) MRS. —

DEAR MADAM,

I had hoped to have completed long before this the enclosed classification and summary of the answers to my letter referring to the ordination of women to the priesthood. Circumstances, however, have combined to make the delay inevitable. I think that the response has been, on the whole, encouraging, and I hope that it may be possible to hold the proposed Conference in the coming autumn. I think that there is no doubt as to London being the most convenient centre.

I will now try to find a date which will suit those who have promised to read papers. As soon as this has been settled I will send you a provisional Agenda, with particulars as to place and date of the Conference.

Meanwhile, I shall be very glad to receive any comments that you may care to make on the summary of the answers, and also to hear your opinion on the following questions:—

(1) Should women exclusively be invited to attend the Conference?

(2) Should Churchpeople only be invited?

I think myself that there is a good deal to be said for confining this preliminary Conference to Churchpeople on the ground that our aim at so early a stage should be to find as wide as possible a basis of common agreement, which aim can obviously be more easily obtained if those of us who meet together may assume that we are already agreed as to certain fundamentals. (If this preliminary Conference leaves us with a determination to persist in the work which we have begun, it will, I think, be very helpful to hear, on a subsequent

occasion, the views of those who, while they are in agreement with us as to the need for the ministry of women, are, for one reason or another, outside the Church of England.)

If, however, the opposite point of view is that of a majority of those interested, then men or women who are not Churchpeople will, of course, be welcomed. I have no wish to press unduly my own opinion.

I have not felt at liberty to mention in the enclosed papers the names of sympathizers, but it would be convenient to do so in future, and, unless I hear to the contrary, I shall assume that you will have no objection to your name being included in a list to be enclosed with the provisional Agenda. (It would perhaps be well to enter, besides the names on such a list, the numbers by which they are designated in the accompanying summary. This would enable anyone interested to identify the letter of any writer. The number would, of course, be omitted in the case of anyone who preferred her letter to remain anonymous.)

The following list of books may perhaps prove useful to those who wish to study the question previous to the Conference:—

1. "The Ministry of Deaconesses" (Cecilia Robinson).
2. "The Ministry of Grace" (Bishop Wordsworth).
3. "The Diaconate of Women" (Howson).
4. "Der Dienst der Frau in dem ersten Jahrhundert den Christlichen Kirche" (Zscharnack).
5. "Priesthood and Sacrifice" (edited by Sanday).
6. "Ministerial Priesthood" (Moberly).
7. "The Church and the Ministry" (Gore).
8. "The Christian Ministry" (T. M. Lindsay).
9. "History of the Christian Church" (Schaff).
10. "Histoire ancienne de l'église" (Duchesne).

Yours faithfully,

(Signature cut out).

SUMMARY OF ANSWERS TO CIRCULAR LETTER.

CLASS A.

UNFAVOURABLE.

1. Is very strongly opposed to the putting forward of the claim, thinking it premature and calculated to alienate many who are now sympathetic towards the Suffrage movement. To enfranchised women other openings would come naturally. Women should take their place as an active part of the laity. Freedom to enter the ministry would have no effect on "Freethinking women."

2. Thinks the limitation not an accidental but an essential part of the Catholic Faith.

3. Says that Priesthood is a vocation and an absolutely arbitrary act of God. Only some men are called, and if it is a hardship for a woman not to be called, it is an even greater hardship for the men who are not called, for women have their own great vocation. But it is no hardship—we are all ordained priests at our Confirmation and receive then the power to offer the Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ. Ordained or official priests must be men because they must be ready to celebrate Holy Communion at any moment. Women cannot because of their potential motherhood. The Church is wise to keep the sexes apart in connection with the most holy things because of the weakness of human nature and the appalling scandals which might arise. Finally, only an Œcumenical Council could authorize such a change, and an Œcumenical Council is out of the question for hundreds of years.

4. Objects that "there was no woman among the Apostles."

5. Says "Our Lord never contemplated it; it would do much harm to the Church."

6. Says "the first principle of Catholicism is submission to authority. I have never coveted priesthood for myself nor have I ever met any woman whom I could for one moment have tolerated in such an office."

7. Says "the time is not ripe. We had better work for the increase of the order of deaconesses and concentrate our energies upon Church Councils."

8. Says "from time immemorial the emotional side of a woman's nature has been zealously and artificially cultivated and chiefly through the medium of religion. Therefore it would be as well not to place a woman yet in a position where too much fervour is needed with a purely emotional basis. Balance and judgment are more needed which the strenuous (?) professions offer. Priesthood is one of the badly paid professions of men—open rather the well paid walks of life to women. . . . To be really in earnest a woman must study the doctrines of the Church. Could she take this position on a basis of common sense, or would it be merely a doctrine of 'Faith' and emotion? The Church does not want the weakness of some women but the stronger thinkers. And would she get them? I think *not*."

9. Says "the time is not ripe. . . . It would hinder suffragism. Work is needed in regard to Church Councils."

10. Says "the Priesthood was intended by Our Lord for men alone."

The remaining seven give no reasons for their opposition.

CLASS B.

INTERESTED BUT NOT CONVINCED.

1. "The order of deaconesses furnishes ample scope for the energies of those who are able to consecrate their lives entirely to the service of the Church. What we want far more is an accredited order of *lay* women to whom the religious education of children and of older girls, including the preparation for Confirmation, might be entrusted, without their being made to feel that they are doing such work under the supervision of an inexperienced curate."

2. "I feel that the idea of removing the sex barrier to the priesthood is enormously revolutionary. At the same time, as an enthusiastic believer in the Women's Movement, I cannot shut my eyes to the idea that that is one of the logical outcomes of it."

3. "I have a prejudice or conviction in favour of a celibate clergy. Some such feeling as this in favour of a reform of existing conditions prevents me from wishing to consider in its practical aspects the admission of women to the priesthood. From an ideal standpoint I am in sympathy with the aims of your letter, but the practical difficulties just now obscure for me the ideal standpoint."

4. "I see no logical reason against it ; but I do see very grave practical objections to a mixed priesthood of men and women in the present state of society."

5. "Our Lord was not a woman, and therefore it is not necessary for a woman to be everything that a man may be. His Mother was a woman, and motherhood is the supreme vocation of women—possibly the priesthood is the supreme vocation of man. There was no woman Apostle. . . . 2,000 years of history count for something. . . . Surely there are reasons behind these things?"

6. "I think people who leave the Church on account of this sex limitation cannot have a very deep love or understanding of the Church, for where else can they go? If any step at all should be taken, surely it would first be to apply for women to be lay preachers."

7. "I cannot answer any other questions in the affirmative except C."

8. "I am afraid there is too much prejudice against women entering the ministry at present for the movement to succeed, and it may retard the enfranchisement question. If only women were recognized as citizens, I think their entering into fuller professional life would follow in time and more naturally. The Clergy, too, are upholding a better standard of good living and self-denial than any other class of men, that (*sic*) I am afraid popular feeling would be very strong against women wanting to share their duties at present."

9. "My sentiments are against it ; but my reason makes me think it ought to be."

10. "I should much like to attend a Conference, for my own ideas on the subject are very hazy."

11. "I should like to attend a Conference."

12. "I do not know of any inherent bar that should exclude women from the priesthood for all time, but I am decidedly averse to any movement to that end at the present time, for the following reasons among others:—

"(i.) Such a movement could only be justified if it came in response to a felt need. I do not think that need is at present felt. It must be felt by the Church at large and not only by the women who may desire the privilege ;

"(ii.) It would be, in my mind, an obstacle in the way of reunion with the Eastern Church (not to say the Roman), of which there is at least a vision ;

"(iii.) It would hinder the progress of the deaconess movement within the Church if it were thought that the diaconate of women was to be a stepping-stone to the priesthood. We have not yet overcome the prejudice of many, clergy and others, to the ordination of women to the diaconate. I am certain that if the priesthood for women were openly talked of it would raise an opposition to the ordination of women which would put back the deaconess movement many years, and imperil what we already have. The practical suggestion I would make is that everything possible should be done to strengthen the diaconate of women by influencing women of education and ability to become deaconesses, and by securing wider recognition of their ministry, which might be made more distinctive, *e.g.*, in the early Church women deacons administered the Chalice. In the Mission Field it might be of very real use if deaconesses were permitted to do this, and perhaps administer the reserved Sacrament."

CLASS C.

FAVOURABLE, BUT WILL TAKE NO ACTION.

The fifteen who make up this class feel that they must refrain from action until the Parliamentary vote is won. One writer adds: "I am by no means certain that we should really gain in influence or help the Church by attempting to become 'clergy.' My own impression is that the most hopeful religious movements of the present day are those which are mainly lay."

CLASS D.

FAVOURABLE, BUT NOT CHURCHWOMEN.

The eleven members of this class are either Agnostics, Quakers, Romans, or Nonconformists.

CLASS E.

FAVOURABLE.

1. "I believe that any feeling I have against it is merely due to unreasonable prejudice against anything so revolutionary."

2. "I think the more the secession of valuable women from the Church is brought home to the leaders the better. . . .

My own idea as to the admission of women to offices of deacon and priest are perfectly clear. I would have them neither deacon nor priest, but ordained to hold a position in the Church which would be a modification of the office of deacon and priest, and which could best be described as that of a deaconess. They would be qualified to hold services and to preach, but because it is necessary that the Church hold fast to the doctrine of the Apostolic succession passing through a male priesthood, it is not fitting that the deaconesses should administer any of the sacraments. This is the only thing to which in my opinion sex is a bar. I am perfectly convinced that the introduction of women into the Church and its services publicly in this capacity would do untold good."

3. "It is an ideal which will have to be dealt with very carefully; it would be quite as possible to alienate Church-people by urging such an ideal in a proud unchristian spirit as it is now by ignoring women's spiritual equality with men."

4. "I am in complete sympathy and agreement."

5. "I am most decidedly in favour of your object, but I feel that it would be wiser to wait a little longer before forming any society."

6. "I wholly agree that the sex bar should be removed, and the sooner the better; otherwise I think there will be no salvation for the Church or the country either."

7 and 8. Answer the questions in the affirmative without comment.

9. "My feeling is that the admission of women would be of incalculable service to the Church. Some women speakers and preachers have a wonderful influence over men, as men have over women. Is it not possible that among other good results, the disproportions between women and men worshippers in our churches might be rectified? I am only doubtful whether this is the tactful moment to begin to agitate. The clergy are coming forward warmly, and often with the disapproval of their parishioners, to champion us in our fight for the vote. Until their support is more widely and strongly established would it be wise to introduce a new demand which might frighten some of them from the Women's Movement altogether? There would, however, be no harm in preliminary study and conferences."

10. "I do not on the whole think that the time has come for the formation of a society to press this. A 'secret' society cannot do much good, and a society which was pressed

publicly would, I think, do a great deal of harm at the present juncture. The only kind of organization which I think would be of use would be one which would promote the study of the position of women in the Church, and of further possibilities, especially in regard to missionary work. The past and present position of deaconesses would of course be a foremost subject of study. It seems to me that progress in the matter can only come on the lines of evolution, and that the surest path of progress is probably along the lines of a development of the diaconate among women. Here the historical basis is so sure and the ground already won so secure that it would not only be the line of least resistance, but the experience gained be of the greatest possible value."

11. "I am entirely with you in your desire to see women priests. But I am a little inclined to think we should get the vote first. . . . I am quite sure that the influence of women would make an enormous difference to the life of the Church."

12. "It is such a tremendous fact that our Lord on each occasion of the most vital importance to our Christian faith chose a woman to be the messenger. Therefore we seem to have His sanction. On the other hand, I have a feeling that the time is not ripe—that at present we should shock many earnest-minded women, more than we should win over. . . . One stumbling block to me is that until the Catholic Church is once more united and we can have our restored Council of the whole undivided Christendom, I don't see where we can get valid orders. . . . I do deplore and recognize that we women are getting dissatisfied with many things in the Church, and if one could see one's way to stop, as you say, the leakage, I should wish to help. But first of all, surely we must get our rights as laity, and at present so far as Church government goes we are outsiders. . . . We Anglicans are a branch of the Catholic Church, and not a sect to do what pleases ourselves, apart from the whole undivided Church, whose Œcumenical Councils were binding on all. If Anglicans had an ordained women priesthood they would be eligible to be Bishops and to ordain in their turn both men and women. Would our orders be considered Apostolic and valid without the sanction of an Œcumenical Council of the undivided Church? . . . The first woman Bishop would be a marked break in the continuity. I am honestly puzzled as to what effect it would have. The Eastern Church is so much nearer to us than Rome; would they accept the validity of our orders under these conditions?"

13. "My feelings is that the time is not ripe for making any kind of claim. The situation is so tense, and the matters involved of so sacred a nature, that to advance any claims at present would be to invite a violent opposition and add one more entanglement to the confused thinking of the public. But I think the time is ripe for study of this question, that we may know exactly what it is we are aiming at."

14. "I am entirely in sympathy with your scheme."

15. "I should like to see priestesses and women bishops in due course; but it seems to me that the first thing to do is to make sure of the diaconate. Since we have working in the English Church a large number of episcopally-ordained deaconesses, ought not the new movement to originate with them, or at least, if possible, with their co-operation? This would give the movement a much sounder basis than it would have if it were founded on a few isolated experiments in training women for the Holy Orders *de novo*. I think that our ordained deaconesses should ascertain whether they have been admitted to the diaconate or not. If there is any doubt about this, they should ask to be re-ordained with the form regularly used for the ordering of deacons. In any case the form used for men and women should surely be the same in future. Then the training of deaconesses should be so modified as to fit them to discharge all the duties of the diaconate, including such preparation as will put them in a position to ask for the priest's orders when the time comes. But obviously if these are our aims, the first thing to be done is to secure the co-operation of the diocesan deaconesses, and specially the head deaconesses who have charge of the training. If *they* could be induced to approach the Bishops, they would, I think, be much more likely to get a hearing than any number of unordained women. I hope very much that you will *from the first* secure the co-operation not only of Churchwomen but also of Churchmen, specially of some priests if possible. The Conference will, it seems to me, be very much more effective and influential if not confined to one sex."

16A and 16B. "As you suggest, there is a strong current setting away from the Church and clericalism in which most, or at any rate a great many, of the thoughtful and progressive women may be found now. It is true that the Church is not now what it would be if the saner and more vital influences of womanhood were directing it. But as it stands at present there is little in or in its philosophy or modes of operation to attract us. At the same time I believe women have first to meet men on their own plane and demonstrate to them their

capacity to 'play the game' in the masculine fashion before they can get the men to accept the changes their womanhood would initiate."

17. "I am quite in favour of women being admitted to the priesthood because I think women have gifts for that work which would supplement and inspire the work of men. As long as women are admitted as deaconesses it seems absurd that the higher office should be denied them. . . . I am not sure whether this step will bring back 'freethinking' women or even serve to make others less bitter. I think the question might very well be linked up with the Spiritual Militancy League. . . . It seems such a pity to scatter our forces. . . . Union is more wanted at this time than anything else, especially among the women's part of our movement. I think we want also to be more loyal to our Church. It will be by living in the Church and fighting prejudice that we shall win."

18. "I am deeply interested in your proposals. But I should be anxious to go exceedingly slowly in the matter. . . . I should like the subject to be studied very carefully before any society to take action is formed. . . . I do think it is time some of us made a beginning about this."

19. "I most warmly approve of all your suggestions."

20. "I think your suggestions are excellent, and I do sincerely feel that unless something is done the Catholic Church will lose its hold for ever upon women."

21. "I am greatly in sympathy with your suggestion."

22. "Your letter appeals to me very strongly. It expresses thoughts and convictions which have become increasingly definite and persistent during the last few years with me; but I have so seldom found anyone to share them that I have been inclined to despair of the possibility of any definite movement for the present."

23. "Your letter interests me extremely. The position of women in the Church is one which I feel very keenly. It is not merely that there is no opportunity for taking part in the ministry, but women do not in any complete sense seem to form part of the laity. The Church has no use for educated women, at any rate so far as my experience has gone. . . . It would certainly have seemed to me that, having regard to the strong clerical opposition which such a proposal must arouse, it might be better to try first to secure recognition as members of the laity. Until it is realized that women

should be represented on Diocesan Conferences, &c., one can hardly hope to be represented in the priesthood."

24. "I certainly agree with you that we should not keep silent on such a matter, but I feel that all our energies should first be given to the winning of the vote. . . . The struggle for entrance into the priesthood will be hard and prolonged. It will be well for us to enter into that fight armed with the weapon of the vote. In the meantime, we can well discuss the subject."

25. "I am indeed in sympathy. . . . I feel the Church has lost a great deal by limiting the priesthood to one sex. I feel that it has a deteriorating effect both on men and women. It tends to increase pride and arrogance on the part of men and false humility on the part of women."

26. "Certainly I am in favour of the admission of women to the priesthood. It comes under the general principles that women should be freed from all artificial restrictions and free to serve God and their generation according to the gifts He bestows on each. . . . But I do not think that the time will be ripe for this momentous change until two generations after the vote has been won and after the Church has been dis-established. This change is to my mind not one to be quarrelled over. I would rather wait till opinion has changed very much, as it will."

27. "I am much interested in your letter and am in sympathy with your scheme."

28. "The really important thing seems to me that it should be a movement from *within* the Church. . . . I have been thinking a great deal about vocation, and that seems to me the key-note of it."

29. "I am sure there are many women who would make excellent priests provided they could get the necessary training. It is absurd that women who are allotted the high-priestly intercessory office should not be officially recognized as members of the priesthood. You have my sincerest sympathy."

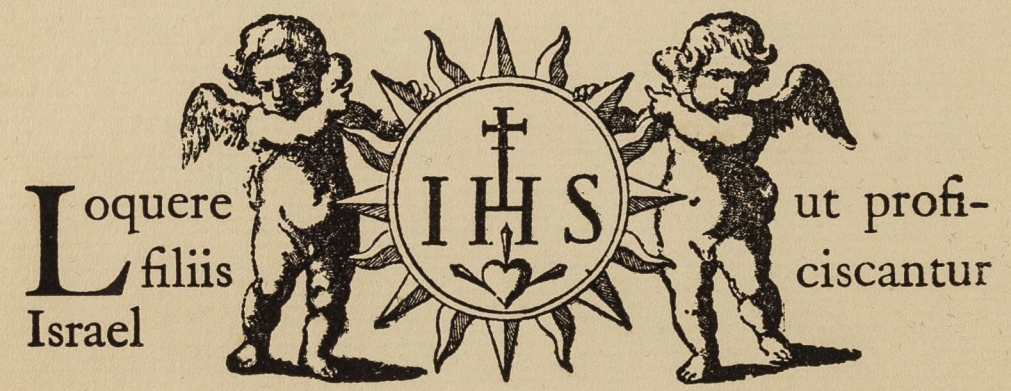
30. "I am very glad you are thinking of stirring about in the matter of the removal of the sex-bar to the priesthood. I think your idea is an excellent one."

(59 to whom the letter was sent returned no answer.)

262.142 (38)

WOMEN AND THE PRIESTHOOD

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Women and the Priesthood



THE question is occasionally asked as to why women cannot be admitted to the sacred ministry of the Catholic Church. At the moment of writing, the question is being debated with considerable warmth, even in church newspapers. It may perhaps, therefore, be just as well to see how one may arrive at an intelligent and reasonable answer to the question.

There is, of course, a priesthood of the laity, which belongs just as much to women as it does to men. All women who are members of the mystical Body of Christ, are kings and priests before God, in just the same sense that men are: and no doubt women might do (and indeed do already) a great deal more in the minor councils of the Church than they did in the past, and perhaps they will do even more in the future. But we are dealing now with the one simple question, as to whether women should or could be admitted to the sacred ministry of the Catholic Church; whether it is a feasible proposition that women should ever be ordained as priests or consecrated as bishops.

It seems that there are four or five fundamental and important facts, which have to be considered

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carefully before it is possible to answer this question in a final and decisive manner. Let us state these facts in order :

1. The nature of the spirit of man, and the likeness and the difference between male and female nature in human experience.

2. The fact that in Holy Scripture God is always spoken of as though he were of the male sex; that masculine descriptive terms are always used by the Holy Ghost in speaking of the Godhead.

3. The fact that, when the Everlasting Son took human nature from the womb of the Blessed Virgin, his Mother, he took *male* human nature.

4. The fact that Our Lord Jesus Christ is shown to have deliberately excluded women from the government of the Church, by and in the fact that he excluded the Mother of God from any such position.

5. The fact of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin St Mary, after her death, to her proper place in heaven.

1. All human beings are essentially and eternally spirits. They belong to the family of God and of the angels. They are so constituted by the Creator as that they also perform the function of souls in the bodies with which, for the time being, they are united. The bodies with which they are united are differentiated by sex; but the eternal and immortal spirit-soul has no necessary relation to or knowledge of sex or sexual differences. It is only submitted to them during the time that it is united to that particular

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body in which it makes its way, slowly and laboriously, in the experience of this world towards the life of perfection.

The spirit-soul moves towards a life which will be a continuation of this one, but which will be perfect from every possible point of view. All the disabilities which cramp and hinder human nature to-day will be finally taken away, and, in the 'body of the resurrection,' sex and sexual difficulties will have entirely and finally disappeared. "In heaven there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, but they are as the angels of God," so Our Lord laid it down when he was questioned on the subject. In that life, we shall live as other spirits live, united with spiritual bodies which will be in all respects suitable to their new environment, and in the enjoyment of the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

The fact that one spirit-soul has to make its way in a male body, and another in a female body, towards the day of deliverance and of perfection, is a fact of the very greatest importance; and any attempt to minimise the necessary difference which this means between one human being and another is both dangerous and wrong. But it is very important also to remember that these conditions of male and female nature are a purely temporal and transitory accommodation to necessity, ordained by God for the present conditions of human life. They involve, of course, primarily, a physical difference: but, so close and intimate is the relation between spirit and body, that the physical difference always carries with it other differences—temperamental, mental, and moral—

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which are as obvious to anybody who takes the trouble to consider them as they are inevitable, and which must always be taken into account in considering questions of this sort.

Now these differences between men and women are closely related to and accord with the purpose which governs the physical difference. The very qualities which you require in a mother are those which belong specially to womanhood, as considered in comparison with manhood. Consequently, however much some people may endeavour to ignore or to deny the fact, there are certain things which women do far better than men, and some things which are only and exclusively to be done by women. On the other hand, there are some things which men do far better than women, and some which are exclusively and rightly to be done only by men. Between these extremes there lies an enormous range of activity, physical and intellectual, which is equally open to men and women alike.

It is admitted that there are such things as 'effeminate' men, but they are very few; and there are such things as 'masculine' women, and they are very few. But whether these be few or many, they are obviously the exception and not the rule; and it remains true that the sexual difference does carry with it a further differentiation of aptitude for certain kinds of work and of disability, or unsuitability, for certain other kinds of work. If this consideration be observed among us, as it ought to be, with wisdom and discretion; if we are willing to see the facts clearly and not to endeavour to ignore or disregard them; then

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the whole necessary work of the world will be far better done than ever it could be if men or women endeavour to intrude upon the sphere which belongs exclusively to the one or the other. Each sex should be content to leave to the other that special work which belongs to it, and gladly, and on equal terms, to share that vast field of activity which is common and equally proper to both.

Now there is nothing derogatory to the dignity of either sex in the observance of this rule and its corollaries and consequences. It does not set the one sex above the other. Indeed, the dignity of each can only be conserved by the observance of these differences in this partnership of men and women, by and through which only the affairs of life can be conducted with any hope of real success, in the material and spiritual spheres alike.

But it must be observed that in this partnership—purely for temporary reasons of convenience—there is given to the male a certain superiority, which will, of course, inevitably disappear, along with all sexual distinctions, in the perfected life of humanity. That is to say, for whatever it is worth, it is only accidental and does not belong essentially to human nature, as such. There will be no 'men' and 'women' in heaven, but only glorified human beings; and all differences which are contingent upon sex will disappear, when these spirits, which for the moment are differentiated by sex as men and women, are liberated from that which is at once a blessing and a hindrance and shall have entered into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

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Perhaps it is wrong to use the word 'superiority,' yet it is difficult to know quite what word to use. Perhaps one should call it, not so much a 'superiority,' as a Priority of Initiative and of Decision, which belongs to the male sex, but does not detract in any kind of way from the essential equality of the one sex with the other in the general conduct of life.

It seems that this priority of initiative and decision is part of the Divine intention in creation. It seems to be closely related to all the physical facts which dominate the case; to carry with it a special responsibility in the partnership of men and women; to involve the endurance and the deliberate acceptance by the male of certain risks, dangers and labours, which women, for obvious reasons, ought not and cannot be called upon to endure. And, further, it seems to carry with it a kind of final responsibility for guidance and decision in difficulties and differences that must inevitably arise in the imperfect conduct of life under present conditions.

The need for something of the kind is illustrated in the private experience of every man and woman who is capable of sufficient self-knowledge and self-analysis to recognise it there. The need of it is illustrated in all history, both in that of the corporate life of the human family and also in the private unwritten history of millions of individual lives. It seems to be nothing less than folly either to attempt to ignore, or to act in contradiction to, the presence and the potency of this fact. But, once again, this priority of initiative and decision does not necessarily carry with it any moral or spiritual, or even intellectual, superiority.

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The man is not necessarily either better, or wiser, because of it. It is a useful accommodation to inevitable circumstances in the practical conduct of daily life, which does not touch the question of the equality of the one sex with the other, any more than the same kind of thing touches the fact of the equality of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, in the life of the Blessed Trinity.

In the life of the Blessed Trinity, which, of course, is the ideal, perfect life, presented to us for our contemplation, you will find the same kind of thing. We believe that, in that undivided unity of the Blessed Trinity, the Father is equal to the Son and the Son is equal to the Father, in the truest sense of the word. Yet it remains that the Father is father, and the Son, son. It remains that there belongs to God the Father, in the Blessed Trinity, just that kind of priority of initiative and of decision in the conduct of the Divine life, which belongs to the male, as differentiated from the female, in the conduct of this human life of ours. That illustrates what is meant when one says that the fact of this priority of initiative and decision, which belongs to men, does not infringe upon or diminish anything from the reality and truth of the equality that subsists, and ought to be recognised as subsisting, between men and women in the conduct of the affairs of life.

2. Now consider the second fact. Why is God always spoken of in Holy Scripture in masculine terms?—have you ever asked yourself that question? God is no more male than he is female, and one would have thought that some neutral term might have been

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used by the Holy Ghost in speaking about God. But it is not so. Always masculine terms are used about God. There is no reason that we know for it, at the first glance, though we shall perhaps see one directly.

3. Again, in this connection one must inevitably ask why the Everlasting Son, who is neither male nor female but pure Spirit, when he took flesh from the womb of the Blessed Virgin and was made Man, did also specifically assume male human nature. There must be some reason why the Incarnate is necessarily and properly of the male sex. Why should not such an one as the Blessed Virgin St Mary, conceived without sin by the intervention and interposition of Divine grace, in her spotless and unsullied purity and with her immeasurable capacity for self-sacrifice and love—why should not such an one as she have bled upon the Cross and risen from the dead, and have been the vehicle for the redemption and salvation of mankind? Why is the Christ necessarily not a woman? There is doubtless an answer to this question, which God knows. Perhaps nobody else can know it yet. We may, however, make some kind of guess at it, on the lines of thought that are laid down in this paper.

But, whatever the reason may have been, we must first recognise and remember that, for God, there are never two ways of doing a thing. To us, with our limited capacity for discrimination, it may seem sometimes that one way is as good as another: but, as a matter of fact, that can never be true. There is only one way of doing a thing which is absolutely the best and absolutely right, and it belongs to the Unity of the Divine nature that God should always take the one

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way which is absolutely best and absolutely right. So then, since God took this way and, in his Divine wisdom, did assume the male sex in the Incarnation, we may be perfectly certain that it was absolutely necessary, and that there were, and still are, the very best of reasons for the adoption of this course.

As has been said, we may not be able to see or understand all the reasons at present. With a little care, we may find one reason, at any rate, which very closely affects the question which is before us. God, of course, has no sex—he is neither male nor female, but pure Spirit. It follows, then, that the sex of the Incarnate and the deliberate application to himself, by God, of masculine descriptive terms, while they imply nothing at all about the essential nature of God, do, nevertheless, imply that there is something very important in the fundamental difference which God, in creation, has caused to be in the nature of men and women and in their relations with one another.

When God would reveal something about himself to men, it is necessary that he should do so in the terms of human language, life and experience. These terms will never be adequate to express the absolute truth of the transcendental facts of the Divine nature, but they can be used analogously so as to give an approximately right impression of truth about God. In order to give to the minds of men an approximately right impression of himself in his dominant relation to the whole universe in general, and to the human family in particular, God must find something in human nature which is in some degree a counterpart of the absolute transcendental fact—he must use terms

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of human life, language and experience. Now the fact in humanity, and the only fact that we know of, which can possibly govern this use of masculine language and this deliberate adoption of the male sex by the Incarnate, is that very thing of which we have been speaking, namely, the endowment in creation of the male sex with this priority of initiative and decision which, by the Divine decree, governs the relations of male and female for purposes of the practical conduct of life in time. It appears then that a right conception of the true relation of God to the Universe and of the Incarnate to the human family is conveyed to the mind of man by the use of masculine descriptive terms applied to God, and by the adoption of the male sex by the Incarnate. And this both verifies the idea that a Priority of Initiative and Decision does belong to the male sex and by this Divine recognition of it emphasises and confirms its importance.

4. On these considerations, it will not be altogether a matter for surprise to find that, in his provision for the work of the Church in the world, Our Lord Jesus Christ placed the government in the hands and under the control of men, as such; and that for the same reason he deliberately excluded women from the priesthood of his Church. It may be doubted whether one is justified in using so strong a phrase, as to say that he deliberately excluded women from this position; but let us remember that Our Lord was perfectly free to choose and to do as he thought right and wise. If he had thought fit to open the priesthood to women, he had, what would seem to us, an exceptionally good opportunity. No one could have

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been more considerate of or have set a higher value upon the spiritual powers and the love and devotion of women than he. Nevertheless, with the choice open to him, and valuing as he did the services of women, he deliberately excluded from the government of his Church the one woman who, of all others, would, one imagines, have been best capable of such service, had it been at all desirable in the will and wisdom of God that any woman should be called upon to undertake that responsibility and to do that particular kind of work.

It is perfectly justifiable to say that Our Lord deliberately excluded women, by his action in regard to his Blessed Mother; and this fact has practically closed the question, so far as the Catholic Church is concerned. Taught by the Holy Ghost, the Church has always recognised that this was a deliberate decision of Divine wisdom, which cannot err. This decision has been carefully and consistently sustained, endorsed and confirmed by the Holy Ghost in the experience, action and life of the mystical Body of Christ, for centuries.

5. If anyone were to suggest that this deliberate exclusion of women from one particular kind of work and activity in Christ's Church implies, or could imply, anything disparaging to womanhood, he would be suggesting an idea that is quite impossible of acceptance. When one remembers the love and consideration that the Perfect Son, even in his last hour of agony, always manifested towards his Perfect Mother, it is impossible to suppose that he would have done, or allowed to be done, anything which would be derogatory to the

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dignity of womanhood in her. But, further, there are two considerations which must be taken into account, and which more than counterbalance the fact of the exclusion of women from the priesthood. There is, first of all, the extraordinary honour which is conferred upon womanhood by the fact that Blessed Mary is, for all eternity, Mother of God; and, secondly, the fact of her elevation to the highest place that heaven affords to any member of the human family, under the Incarnate himself.

But the fact remains; and, however much irresponsible and ill-instructed persons may choose to speculate about it, to us Catholics, under the authority of the Church and in the light of the knowledge of human nature afforded to us, the question is answered before it is asked, and yet not in an arbitrary or inconsiderate fashion. Though the ultimate reasons may be, and probably are, inscrutable to us for the present, it is answered in a manner which is reasonable enough in consideration of these five incontrovertible facts, on which the argument in this paper is based.

When one takes into account the nature of the human spirit-soul, and the purely temporary character of sex differentiation in this life: the fact that masculine terms are always used in order to describe to the minds of men the nature of God in his relations to the universe: the fact that the Incarnate assumed male human nature: the fact of his deliberate exclusion of women from the government of the Church, in the person of the Mother of God: and, lastly, the fact of the glorious Assumption of the Blessed Virgin St Mary, Mother of God, to that place where she is

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exalted above all priests, bishops and archbishops, above all saints, martyrs, doctors and confessors, above every creature that belongs to the human family, save her glorious Son himself, in the Throne of the Most High—it is possible to understand something of the reason why it pleased Almighty God to exclude women from the government of the Church; and, on the other hand, impossible to understand how this fact can ever be regarded as in the least degree derogatory to the dignity of womanhood.

“I saw,” says St John, “a woman clothed with the sun, and with the moon under her feet”—and she had for glory in her crown, not jewels of earthly value, brilliance or beauty, but twelve great blazing stars out of the firmament of God.



282.150942 (39)

YOUNGER WOMEN AND the CHURCH of ENGLAND

*Being a Report of the Girls' Special
Committee of the Central Committee
of Women's Church Work (founded
as a Continuation Committee of the
Pan - Anglican Congress, 1908)*

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

London : 68 Haymarket

1916

YOUNGER WOMEN AND
the CHURCH of ENGLAND

Being a Report of the Girls' Special
Committee of the Central Committee
of Women's Church Work (formed
as a continuation of the
Pan-Anglican League, 1907)

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE
London: 28, Abchurch Lane
1915

IN June 1915 the Central Committee of Women's Church Work appointed a Girls' Special Committee to make an inquiry, of which this Report is the result. The President, Vice-President, and Honorary Secretary of the Central Committee (Mrs. Randall Davidson, Mrs. Creighton, Mrs. Montgomery) were *ex-officio* Members; Mrs. Kempthorne, Miss C. S. Gregory, Miss M. C. Gollock (Convener), and the following younger women who have been mainly responsible for drafting the Report constituted the Special Committee:

<i>Mrs. Walter Fletcher.</i>	<i>Miss Gwendolen Saye.</i>
<i>Miss Margaret Gilmour.</i>	<i>Miss Lettice Shann, B.Sc.</i>
<i>Miss Evelyn Harbord.</i>	<i>Miss Lavinia Talbot.</i>
<i>Miss Henrietta Livingstone.</i>	<i>Miss Rhoda Williams.</i>
<i>Miss Maud Pelham.</i>	<i>Miss Beatrice Bewley</i> <i>(Honorary Secretary).</i>

Introduction

THE events of the war have brought rapidly into prominence many important questions with regard to the lives of girls and younger women. It was obvious that the Central Committee of Women's Church Work, founded as a Continuation Committee of the Pan-Anglican Congress of 1908, watching all movements among women within the Church, should turn with sympathy and hope to the part which younger women were taking in national life, in order to ascertain what could be learned from the earnestness of their service and the freshness of their outlook. Accordingly a Girls' Special Committee was formed to inquire into the subject, consisting of ten younger women and three senior members of the Central Committee, together with its President, Vice-President, and Honorary Secretary. Ten months were spent in ascertaining the mind of girls and younger women, individually and collectively given in response to a set of questions, and in drawing up this Report based upon the replies. Inquiry was also made of a certain number of representative women in Church life and of certain women educationalists. Answers to the questions were received from twenty-two dioceses: in some cases girls came together and answered the questions in conference, in some cases the answers give the individual experience of leaders in work among girls. Answers were also received from fifteen associations of girls of various kinds, and in some instances from girls at present on active service in connection with the war. The ages of those who replied ranged from twenty to thirty-five. The inquiry was

limited intentionally to educated girls of the upper and middle classes who are in touch with the life of the Church of England, and does not necessarily represent the point of view of the College girl or those whose life is chiefly spent in fashionable society. While it cannot be claimed that the subject has been exhaustively examined, yet the Report is now presented as being representative in the main of the thought, the purpose, and the beliefs of those younger women whose desire to serve the Church to which they belong is strong, and who have a sense of indebtedness for all the benefits they derive from their membership in it. It may prove to be not without value as a contribution to the work of the National Mission of Repentance and Hope.

Younger Women and the Church of England

In drawing up the Report on the answers received, it was found that the material fell into four sections :

- I. *The Spirit of Service,*
- II. *Conventional Standards in Religion and Morals,*
- III. *Girls and Parish Work,*
- IV. *Preparation and Instruction given by the Clergy.*

This order has accordingly been followed and the questions relating to the subject have been introduced at the beginning of each section.

I

The Spirit of Service

QUESTIONS

HOW far do you think a real spirit of service underlies the numerous activities of to-day, and what has prevented girls from offering their services before the war?

If this spirit of service exists, how do you think we can keep it awake?

How far are girls who have had responsibility (Red Cross, etc.) during the war likely to be satisfied with resuming home duties and to find scope there for their awakened energies?

How far has the objection of many parents to their daughters undertaking definite work outside the home been permanently removed by the war?

GENERAL.—A spirit of service has been roused and the only chance of keeping it alive will be to sanctify it, to turn the strong war motive into the motive of the love of God based on a strong personal faith; in some the spirit is sleeping, in others it is awaking, but will sleep again after the war unless a spiritual call arouses it to renewed vigour.

There is a wide gulf between the spirit of restless activity and the spirit of real service; both are present to-day, and both are showing themselves more and more in their real colours as the war lengthens out. One paper sums up the situation by saying:

‘There are, generally speaking, three kinds of girls engaged in the numerous activities of to-day: those who have realised that Christianity implies service for others; those in whom patriotism has kindled a desire to serve their country; those who do things either because they want to be in the running or because their usual occupations are taken away.’

With regard to the third class, it is pointed out that it represents probably the motive of a number of girls engaged in war work whose great idea is to make it a form of amusement and excitement, and with this view select the most thrilling work they can find; they make it the nearest approach possible to the social life they would be leading but for the war, and enter into it with the same spirit that they would have put into the other, thereby lowering the whole of the war service of women.

The following extracts support this contention:

‘There are those who can only do things because there is amusement to be obtained in the doing, or because it is the craze of the hour.’ ‘Some are attracted by the glamour of nursing soldiers

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and seem to work rather for their own satisfaction than from any motive of patriotism.’ ‘They rush into doing something exciting—or what they hope will prove such—probably it proves monotonous and then is dropped, or something more exciting is undertaken.’ ‘The love of pleasure has swamped all desire for anything higher.’

The writers hold, however, that it is equally true that there are many girls throughout the country to whom real patriotism and love of humanity have appealed enormously. The call for their service has been clearer and more insistent than ever before, and they have responded nobly, proving thereby what can be given to the country by girls caught by the joy of service.

‘The patriotic motive is strong, and if properly handled it should grow into the real motive for service, *i.e.* the Higher Patriotism of the Kingdom of God.’ ‘There is a spirit of real service inspired by love of country, and by longing to do something and give something to the men who are doing and giving everything, even themselves.’ ‘The patriotic motive is tremendously strong, and all long to express their patriotism in action.’

While the majority of papers hold this view, there are also many who affirm that all life must be service, and all true work must be done for Christ and His Church, and that those who so believe have the power to bring to others the enlarged ideal of willing service and increasing surrender, working it out in details of life at home and in work done away from home.

‘If one really surrenders one’s life to do the will of God, whatever that may be, there is not much chance of that spirit of service dying; one lives in it from day to day. It is not always an outward and active life that God requires, but the development of the inward.’

In speaking of the service now being given for England they say:

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'We must supply the only sufficient motive—the love of God, by transferring their enthusiasm from England to the Kingdom of God.' 'Our aim should be to bring all girls to the knowledge of the love of God and the Higher Patriotism which makes as real and more real a claim on our service.' 'A real spirit of service only follows a deep conviction of sin, and can only exist in characters which possess a strong religious instinct—the deep teaching that results in a conviction of sin, followed by a life lived by faith in God, is what is really needed to bring girls to offer their whole lives to His service.'

The underlying note in this range of answers is the need of a simpler faith in the nearness of Christ, and the consciousness that each girl must realise this for herself.

'We need a far closer relationship with the personality of Christ. Only those can effectively invite others to submit to the restraints of the service of Jesus Christ who are themselves (through becoming His slaves) beginning to experience the Christian liberty of Love—and such joyful disciples will always gain respect for their high standard by the sincerity of their efforts to follow it, and love for it by the generosity and humility of their characters.'

Another says, 'In the end it is only personal striving and personal knowledge of God that will ever satisfy any soul.' They all know that the great need to-day is 'to deepen the spiritual life of England,' making the 'great motive' 'the love of God,' or as one of them sums it up :

'I suppose that a love of our Lord and a wish to save souls for Him, however feeble and poor our attempts are, are the only real incentives to do Church work. So few have grasped the simplest rudiments of a personal faith. . . . There must be a motive power, the personal Saviour.'

In general it is to be gathered that the younger and more thoughtful women see work now as a duty and not as an indulgent privilege allowed to a few exceptional women, and that they wish their services to be an integral not a

supplemental part of national life, and that some of the reasons why such service was not offered before are the objection of parents, lack of training, lack of a clear call to service, lack of discipline and love of ease and pleasure, and the prejudiced opinion of a girl's set.

HOME LIFE.—The spirit of service in home life following the war has been handled with considerable discrimination. In a general sense it is considered that in resuming home life after the war girls will breathe the air of wider service, and will, by their training, raise the life to a higher level, bringing into it regularity and punctuality, and also that the self-discipline of war work will be a great help in the difficult task of 'settling down.' Only a very small minority will be content to drift back into the aimless life lived before the war; most say that they will find it impossible to resume home life unless they can do some definite work while living at home.

'Home life alone will not satisfy, and the Church must be the first in the field to show the real need for workers, and the consecration of all service.' 'Home duty is duty, and if we in the Church are keen enough, the girl at home will find abundant scope for service in the Church in her town or village, and also in the other activities outside her own home.'

It is clearly recognised that such work should cost real effort and be done with the zeal now thrown into war work. The answers show that the writers have realised that prayer is the foundation of all work, and one asserts strongly that it 'is a real piece of definite work for the Church,' and that this should be recognised as giving those who have close home ties 'a place in the army of workers.'

The opinion and attitude of parents have been sanely considered in the answers made, some recognising that many parents have always wished their daughters to do definite work, others that some parents will be governed

by what is 'the conventional thing' for girls to do when war conditions cease to exist, others that parents cannot be expected to continue the sacrifices which they made during the war when 'they lent their daughters to the State,' and again others that daughters will be needed at home for house work under the altered financial conditions arising from the war. If, however, the daughters have the true spirit of service they will be able to meet the wishes of their parents, giving them such time as is essential to the working of an ideal home, and yet serving also the Church and State as they are able.

It is urged, moreover, that it is not any use to put the real need for service outside the home before the daughters unless it is also put before the parents, who frequently feel—it is asserted—that unless the call is very urgent they would rather not 'run the risk of their daughters breaking down in health through leading a semi-professional, bachelor life, and losing all the joys of that home life which is essential to the life of the nation.'

The following passage contributed corporately by three correspondents will serve as the conclusion of this part of the Report :

'Surely, just because it is on the home life of England that the blow of war has fallen most hardly, it must be the spot where the richest outcome of fruit and love and service must be seen? If only the girls of to-day and their younger sisters can be caught by the wonderful beauty and heritage that is ours (hallowed now more than ever by the gaps that are there), they would thank God for every family circle on earth that they were allowed to enter. The amazing sacramental aspect of it would grip them, and they would see (and help all who came near to see) that home life is a sure and certain pledge—a real sacrament—that God loves us still, has not forgotten us, is giving us little glimpses into His own family life, is making existence here a more perfect image of life in Heaven.'

COMMENTS.—Distinction should be clearly drawn between 'girls' of, say, from eighteen to twenty-five, and

unmarried 'women' of, say, from twenty-five to thirty-five. We feel strongly that the training and discipline of home are invaluable in the formation of character, and help to keep domesticity alive for future generations. The present activity on the part of all young girls arising from the war is quite as likely to have a detrimental as a beneficial effect. This generation of girls will always miss a certain salutary foundation of training which comes from an apparently useless home life. But the common bond of a great anxiety has drawn parents and girls together, and a real change is taking place in the minds of many who before the war chafed at home restrictions. On the other hand, while there should certainly be one daughter to help at home and do local work if possible, no unmarried women should be expected to sit at home in numbers leading fairly idle lives while there is so much to be done everywhere. Parents who would spare their daughters for marriage should equally spare them to complete their lives in other ways.

We are of opinion that the Church needs to capture, even before the end of the war, the enthusiasm and ardour of the girls who are so ably serving humanity and the State, and to give them a real motive for further service. High demands should be made on them, not on their hearts only, but on their brains and awakened thought; practical common sense should be appealed to. They need to serve God now, in hospital, canteens, munition factory, so that whatever is demanded of them later on will be but a continuation of their present service.

We would also like to see the fact that prayer is the only true and firm foundation of all work far more forcibly emphasised by every one who has touch with those now offering their willing service. If this were more widely acknowledged, it would matter less what actual outward form service took.

Conventional Standards in Religion and Morals

QUESTIONS

Why are so many of the younger generation dissatisfied with conventional standards in religion and morals?

In what way can they be helped to a solution of their moral and religious problems?

The Spirit of Inquiry in Religion

It is affirmed or implied throughout the answers that the spirit of inquiry which is manifest among girls to-day is a sign of life and of real inspiration, and that it should therefore be disciplined but must not be quenched. The position is put in the following way: The spirit, which is characteristic of the age, is not confined to girls, although in their case it is shown more forcibly owing to the sudden opening of life to women. Women are now expected to occupy a position in life for which their training and education have given them no adequate preparation, and opinions are expected from them on subjects of which up till now they were supposed to be ignorant. They are being called on more and more to come forward and share work with men in the service of the Church and country, and it is almost inevitable that the ordinary conventional standards of religion and morality should be called in question.

The answers, however, prove that the spirit of inquiry is not universal; that there are still large numbers of

girls who are quite content to take what they are given, and leave unanswered any questionings which may arise; that others dabble in difficulties partly because they want to pose as being clever, partly because they crave for change and wish to cast off the old religion that seems to them so irksome, and to take on an easier system more or less of their own making. The twentieth century standard of ease, the desire to make things as comfortable as possible, the lack of discipline and the abhorrence of duty for duty's sake, are held also to make some girls say that they are dissatisfied with conventional religion.

It is further stated by some correspondents that the desire for reality and simplicity is a fundamental characteristic of the age and that religion must be presented as all inclusive and sufficient for the whole of complex human nature. Some girls are longing to come into vital touch with a living, human, all-loving Person who will call forth all the ardour, adventure and romance that they know they are capable of expressing; but, instead of realising that the Church is Christ's Body here on earth, they look upon it as a sort of cold cathedral of creeds and conventions remote from normal life.

It is apparent from a small number of the correspondents that some girls cannot believe the miraculous, and that they are not content to believe with the heart unless head and reason are satisfied also; it appears to them that they are 'asked to believe blindly,' and that the standards of reason and logic which they learn to apply in modern education to all other branches of knowledge are not applied to the dogmas of Christianity and its creeds. Many of the writers of the papers say that to them the Church appears to have failed, and for proof thereof they point out that the conventional standards of religion have not availed to avert the war. Religion is 'too cut and dried,' 'too narrow and rigid,' and seems to be 'isolated from the rest of life.'

'They feel as they realise the poverty and evil in the world that religion has surely failed, they hear nothing, for the most part, from their religious teachers in sermons and addresses which will help them in this difficulty. . . . The Church to them seems to have nothing to do with the big movements or difficulties in the world, and the members of it with whom they come in contact seem, far too frequently, to be blind to the needs of others.' 'The Church is content with palliatives, and leaves it to those outside her official circles to go down to the root of the evils facing us.'

Many of the papers say that 'the Church seems to accept barriers and does not try to break them down,' and the feeling of fellowship and brotherhood which is so strong to-day in other circles makes them wonder at the seeming exclusiveness of the Church. Also it is said that 'its teaching is so unlike Christ Who established no mere code of morals to which all must blindly adhere, but founded a universal religion in all its simplicity and freedom'; and 'that people who return now to the simplicity of the Gospel and who try to live in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount are looked on as cranks, and we sit down contented with the second best.' It is obvious that such girls hesitate to cling to convention if it is only the husk which holds no grain, and therefore often give up adherence to principles not understood by them.

COMMENTS.—Many girls come to women a little older than themselves to be steadied and helped and shown how to fight things out. If only elder women, especially the mothers, and clergy realised this more they would teach growing girls so that they might have a firm standpoint, and the clergy would see that the women of their congregations were instructed themselves so as to be able to give a reason for the faith that is in them. The girls of to-day do not want to be so trained and instructed that they can only think what they are told to think, but rather to become self-reliant women who possess a strong vital faith and a real love and devotion to Christ

and His Church. More stress needs to be laid on the necessity of the surrender of the soul to Christ. We are convinced that girls often 'keep back part of the price,' and at the same time expect the Holy Spirit (or the Church, which to them is the symbol of religion) to draw them into deeper fellowship with Christ. This attitude makes them eager to catch at any straw that will shift responsibility from themselves.

A summary of the replies seems to show that in all the dissatisfaction and difficulties girls to-day are longing for more instruction in their Faith, and more room for expressing themselves naturally and freely as they are encouraged to do in other directions, and that if only, as they wander in the maze of problems, often quite unnecessary and self-made, they could be met sympathetically and seriously by those who hold office in the Church and who are large minded and ripe in the experience which only life can give, they could easily be helped to find their way and walk along the path which leads to Him Who is the Truth.

The Spirit of Inquiry in Morals

The question sent out was not worded in such a way as to bring out what is in girls' minds, so that not many of the papers dealt with the subject directly. But of those papers that did so, practically all ask that there should be more definite teaching of the truth on moral questions, and 'explanation of the facts of life.' 'Girls can be helped by being taught more, and more fearlessly.' Moreover, girls are becoming aware, as some of the papers show, of the inconsistencies of our moral code. The Church, they see, condemns divorce, but is by no means equally outspoken in condemnation of the utterly careless lives of those whom it allows to be married within its walls without

a protest—and it appears to offer little condemnation of the double standard in morals for men and women.

We are of opinion that more help could be given to young women and girls if the temptations that come to them were more openly recognised, and we consider the whole question of grave importance, and much desire that further guidance may be given and received.

III

Girls and Parish Work

QUESTION

Why is there such a common objection among girls to what is called Church work?

The following is a classification of the answers sent in by girls and by others who have experience of girls to the question, 'Why is there such a common objection among girls to what is called Church work?' Therefore, though for the purpose of this inquiry stress must be laid on these objections, it must not be thought that the writers or those undertaking the inquiry are in ignorance of the great amount of good and useful work which is being done directly for the Church by very many girls. That this is so is recognised in the papers. But just because Church work, as done by girls who have the real spirit of service and the ability for work, has proved of such immense value, no effort should be spared to remove real difficulties from their way. Certain confusion is apparent in the answers for which the Committee must take responsibility, in so far as they did not give any definition of what they meant by 'Church work' when setting the question.

There is a definite desire traceable in the papers that the Church should recognise as Church work all callings in

which its faithful members are engaged. The loose interpretation of the term indicates the desirability, in days when social work is prominent, of finding some definition of what is, and what is not, Church work.

The objections stated by correspondents can be classified as dealing with the worker and the work.

THE WORKER.—The woman Church worker comes in for a large amount of criticism, partly, no doubt, due to superficial and occasionally callow judgment. Almost all the replies speak of the Church worker, both traditional and actual, as the chief stumbling-block in Church work; the dread of becoming like her by association, the dislike of contact with those who, by their views, real or supposed, and their appearance present a dull, depressing and joyless aspect. The impression of joylessness and depression, though expressed in different ways, is apparently derived not only from the appearance, but from the opinions and attitude of the stereotyped Church worker. She does not visibly approach her work with the hopefulness and enthusiasm which can alone enlist the sympathy of the onlooker. Her clothes are so constantly alluded to as deterring girls from Church work that the criticism, though apparently superficial, cannot be ignored. The following quotations taken from the papers represent the views expressed by the larger number:

'What girls do object to is to be classed with the Church worker because, although I know she is often a saint, she is often a frump'; and 'the Church worker wears such hopeless hats.' 'Church work is indelibly associated with old maids, dull lives, ugly clothes, and general depression.' 'I know I am voicing the opinion of hundreds of girls who would willingly take up some Church work were it not for the strong prejudice against a great unknown enveloped in a heavy gloom, which is there, because it is reflected in the face of the workers.' 'A girl wants her religion to make her joyful—joy, after all, is second only to love in the fruit of the Spirit—but judging by the representatives of conventional religion, she is not likely to find

it there. *Sans joie* in those who seem to be religious is the greatest danger there is at present to the religion of the younger generation.'

Such quotations might be multiplied many times. On the other hand, one writer definitely expresses a view implied in many of the papers that this Church worker is a traditional type existing in the mind, but dying out.

The correspondents who have stated most ably the reasons why Church work does not appeal to their friends among the modern girls, quite frankly go to the root of the matter, and own that 'religion has not gripped their whole lives,' that there is 'want of a strong religious motive,' and that 'you cannot give what you have not got, and to many religion has only been a matter of formal duty.' 'It is not likely that unless they have been brought to Christ they will want to take up Church work.'

It is pointed out, in the first place, that an objection of importance among girls in taking up Church work is the fear of being thought good; it is suggested that this is even a stronger element than it appears; that there is the fear of ridicule, and also, from more worthy motives, the fear of appearing better than they are.

'However good a girl may wish to be, she hates to be called so because of the things she does.' 'They think the Church commits them to being better than they want to be obliged to be.' 'One of the greatest hindrances to service lies in the very common attitude in religious matters . . . sitting on the fence.' 'The natural reticence in speaking about spiritual and religious matters. They are afraid to say what they feel, and afraid, too, of saying more than they feel and becoming hypocritical.' 'Afraid of being thought religious and goody-goody . . . and of being chaffed by their friends.'

In this connection it is also affirmed that a large number shrink from doing Church work, and often choose social work because they are not certain or definite in their beliefs, and that this attitude also applies to some who are

very real Christians, but are not keen Churchwomen. For instance, one writer says: 'Girls who might undertake parish work are generally extremely vague about their own Churchmanship.'

In the next place, ignorance is assigned as an obstacle to Church work—ignorance of what the Church is, what Church work is, and what is expected of the girls; this ignorance is attributed to lack of teaching at home, at school, at Confirmation and in sermons. We quote as follows:

'Girls do not quite realise what Church work means: to them it conveys the idea of mother's meetings and clubs; they do not realise that there is adventure in it.' 'Girls so often after their Confirmation receive no more religious instruction, no definite advice or help is given them as to the necessity of doing definite Church work.' 'People in general do not seem to realise that to be an active member of the Church one must give as well as receive.' 'Girls have their minds and reasoning powers carefully cultivated nowadays in all other subjects, but religion they are too often expected to take for granted as a subject requiring no effort, and no training.' 'Most schools provide no adequate instruction, and, though the home atmosphere may be all right, there is rarely definite and consecutive teaching provided as a matter of course. Except for a few weeks before Confirmation it can rarely be secured, even by those who seek it.'

Again, selfishness, love of pleasure and amusements are held to be contributory to the neglect of Church work, as the following extracts show:

'Our innate selfishness and desire for pleasure.' 'This is largely due among the leisured classes to the prevailing disregard of religion, and to the pursuit of money and other pleasures which naturally affects girls as completely as any other class.' 'The world is more attractive and a thousand things seem more interesting than religion.'

While some writers believe that too much in the way of work is expected—it is too hard, too much of a tie—others

believe too little is expected of girls. The fact that in some cases no training is required of them deters them from it. It is recognised that this applies less to Sunday School teaching, which latterly has been placed on a different footing; more training is expected and given in preparation for it than for any other form of parish work. The benefit can already be seen. But it remains true that work is very often given to those who have no qualifications for it, generally because of the scarcity of workers. For almost any other kind of work, training would be demanded, and would be available. It is evident that this low standard lessens the value and importance of Church work in the eyes of educated girls. The following represents a very common attitude of girls to Church work:

‘If there is a little Church work you can occasionally do, so long as it is not irksome to you, do it. . . .’ ‘It seems to be held that a little experience is better than a great deal of general education and training, a most pernicious doctrine. Hence, the status of a Church worker is too low.’ ‘Church work is so footling. People muddle away at it whether they are capable or not, in a way that would not be dreamed of in any other work.’

Another attributes the objections to Church work to the total want of discipline and good management in most Church work, and adds, ‘were parish organisations run like a hospital, and disobedience punishable by dismissal they would be more successful and more interesting.’

Though dealt with in the next section of this Report reference must be made here to the responsibility attaching to the clergy regarding Church work by girls. The tone of respect for the priest’s office is manifest, but to the clergy are attributed failure to teach, neglect of the educated girl, tactlessness and interference in work, and lack of enthusiasm and slackness with regard to the work. For instance:

‘The clergy realise the importance of Church work themselves . . . but in many cases they do not inspire their workers with its importance.’ ‘The attitude of the clergy has often been found unsatisfactory. The Vicar is often either interfering or patronising. We have heard of cases where very highly-educated women have objected to their work being supervised by young and incompetent curates.’

COMMENTS.—We wish to emphasise what was apparent in the papers, though hardly clearly expressed, that before girls can be expected to work for the Church, the responsibility as well as the privilege of membership in the Body of Christ must become a reality—without the constraining love of Christ, Church work must be very dull and meaningless; it is because this necessity has not, through lack of workers, been insisted upon, that it is so often true ‘these have no root in themselves, who for a while endure, and in time of temptation fall away.’

We would also like from our contact with girls to endorse most strongly their view as to the real hindrance that the apparent joylessness in workers causes to girls. Happiness is natural to human beings as God made them and meant them to be, and when girls see enthusiasm and zeal they are captured by it, but so often workers appear to be fighting in a tremendous cause against overwhelming odds, and ‘the spirit of triumphant conflict’ and Catholic joy seem to be quenched.

We are of opinion that it would be a great aid to clergy and girls if some woman in the congregation of a large parish could be made responsible for the girls who wish to work. The papers convey the impression that the average parish priest does not understand or know the leisured girls of his congregation. Square pegs are fitted into round holes with little regard for the pegs or the holes. A girl really wishes to work and the usual paths are suggested to her. But, as one of them writes, ‘to try to make all into

Sunday School teachers or district visitors is fatal, and kills the desire to work for the Church in many a girl.' A girl may have a vocation for the Mission field or a talent for work among boys. Or she may have literary capacity, and be quite useful in some parishes in editing the parish magazine. Could not her bent be discovered, so that she is not sent to collect club money when she should be training for work in India? If the work of the girls in a parish, and also a good deal of the work amongst them, were delegated by the Vicar to a responsible woman, many of the difficulties would be removed, and more girls would come forward, as it would obviate the stupid misunderstandings which still arise when girls do parish work where there are unmarried clergy. We are obliged to acknowledge that this unpleasantness does exist; it is due largely to a certain class of women who 'run after' the clergy; the girls with whom this Report is dealing cannot tolerate this, and therefore hold aloof.

The papers by no means ignore the movements such as Community Sisters, Diocesan Deaconesses, Grey Ladies and Students in Theology, or all the many settlements and training agencies for study or social work. The writers are dealing rather with the difficulty of creating the appetite for what these movements offer, and with the causes which lead to the neglect or ignorance of these means. Many papers advocate (a) a Church Training College to which girls could go for a two-year course—the College should be very wide in its course, and should have Hostels attached to it in which the students could have their ordered religious life side by side with their student life: (b) Training centres in Church work—where girls could go for a short period of training, and to which they could return for rest and renewal. In such a house the devotional side of a girl should be trained, and she should be shown how to study, and be allowed to specialise in the work she intends to undertake.

Lastly, we wish to emphasise the point which so many papers imply, that all work for the Kingdom of God should be recognised as work for the Church, and that 'parochial' or 'parish' work should be the distinguishing term employed for much that is now spoken of as 'Church' work.

IV

*Preparation and Instruction given
by the Clergy*

QUESTIONS

In what way can girls be helped to a solution of their moral and religious problems?

How far are the clergy in a position to help them in their difficulties?

GENERAL.—In preparing this section of the Report one thing has stood out clearly as underlying the criticisms and opinions contained in it: the desire among girls for reality in religion.

Girls of the present day have a keen desire for a religion which shall help them to realise a communion with God, and also give them living contact with a personal Christ. They are impatient of unreality in any form, whether in the presentation of truth and of the moral law, or in the teaching and life of the Church.

It is further held that to awaken and capture enthusiasm there must be the sense of a great cause, and a conception of the Church as the Body of Christ, which claims the loyalty of its members and their readiness for high service and adventure. The heroic demand is constantly made in national life; girls do not feel that this is the case in the ordinary course of Church service and sermons.

As a general rule the clergy have somehow failed to present the cause of Christ in such a way as to capture the imagination of the girls of their congregations. Some of these seem to look upon the Church 'merely as an institution carried on by the clergy as a kind of moral and philanthropic Association, of which they are the Governing Board.' Religion as clothed in the garb of the Church of England appears to them dull and unheroic, and the inner life of joy is obscured to them by what is conventional and stereotyped.

A change of attitude is apparent in this generation towards all questions of religion and morals, and towards the Church as represented by the clergy; this change is largely owing to the questioning and independence of thought as a result of education, and the scientific method and temper pervading the whole of life; according to the statements received, the opinion is that the clergy as a body seem to have failed to adapt themselves to these new conditions, girls complain that they do not recognise or understand their difficulties in these and other respects.

'I think that girls are nearly always more serious and more hungry than many of the clergy realise.' 'Clergy could help us most by reforming their own attitude towards women, treating them more as intellectual equals, actual or potential.' 'In this as in other ways towards women clergy show an old-fashioned point of view.' 'I think they sometimes spoil their chances of helping by appearing to talk down to girls or to give them watered down truths.'

Want of courage in dealing with present-day problems on the part of the clergy produces, our correspondents consider, an impresson of unreality and lack of intellectual honesty, and shows how many clergy fail to realise the mental environment of those whom they address. This has been shown in their dealings with modern biblical research, upon which few have spoken with any certain voice. A demand is made for definite instruction in the

Faith, and for the honest facing of difficult questions in sermons, which could be used much more than they are for teaching, both biblical and doctrinal. Classes, as supplemental to sermons, and as affording opportunities for free discussion when girls could talk over their difficulties, are suggested. Difficulties which might be quite trivial in themselves rankle in the mind, and very often lead to a real unsettlement of faith and drifting away from outward fellowship and observances. It is pointed out, however, that there is a constant fear that the clergy will be shocked by new opinions and by views which are often crudely expressed.

THE CLERGY AND CONFIRMATION.—Regret is expressed in numbers of replies that the clergy do not use the period of Confirmation more advantageously, and some suggest that the clergy would profit greatly if they would consent to accept the help of competent women to deal with girls where they are unable. This should only be as extra help, and in no way to take the place of the Priest's instruction. In support of this we quote:

'The preparation for Confirmation should be far more thorough than it is as a rule in England; we were told at the last Pan-Anglican Conference by one Bishop after the other that Confirmation is the Layman's ordination. Nor is every parish priest at all fitted to cope with an ardent, eager girl's mind. Only a woman, if possible living in the same kind of circle as the girl herself, so that she can appreciate the special difficulties, can give her the help and guidance she needs as regards the practical application of spiritual ideals. It should surely be possible, in addition to the three months spiritual training by a parish priest as at present, to give to all educated girls nine months' practical religious education by a woman appointed by the Bishop of the Diocese.'

It is urged that the cessation of definite Church teaching after Confirmation constitutes a serious danger to the Church's hold on the younger generation. One suggestive statement runs as follows:

'Some system by which girls when confirmed at school could be handed over to their clergy at home would be a real help in conserving the good resolutions and high ideals of this time. At this moment the groups of girls of sixteen, seventeen and eighteen who cannot expect to 'come out' would willingly turn to more serious matters, if someone would help them. Some of the valuable time and energy spent by the clergy in trying to instil knowledge into the uneducated boys and girls of their congregation might be devoted to teaching the educated girls, who, in their turn, could teach—better possibly than the Vicar—their less educated sisters. The help of educated women and the energies of such societies as the Girls' Diocesan Association might well be turned to account.'

CLERGY AND THE ORDERING OF SPIRITUAL LIFE.—The recurrence of the desire for help in the spiritual life is notable. The following passage is typical of the general feeling among girls :

'Girls are hungry for vital religion. But they are for the most part profoundly ignorant as to how to order their spiritual life. They say their prayers, but are not taught to pray; their prayers are often the same as in their childhood. In most cases there has been little or no guidance and teaching about method in prayer, nor the most elementary knowledge on these points, and the clergy have not taught them. When there is an opportunity for learning, girls welcome it eagerly. The same applies to devotion at Holy Communion, both in preparation and thanksgiving, and private devotion at the service itself.'

A good number of the papers say that the clergy comparatively seldom seem to be true 'Fathers' to their people, and appear to have lost the sense of this aspect of their calling, so that it is hardly surprising that people do not think of their office apart from the man. Many ask earnestly for more help from the clergy, readier access to them—at present it is considered strange and peculiar to seek this; girls feel that too many of the clergy 'are not trained to deal with souls.' And it is affirmed that at present clergy are too often aloof in mind and inaccessible,

and that they are the very last people girls would think of consulting.

The wider use of the practice of Confession is advocated by several writers on the ground that 'stern self-examination' would be a help to some, that in confession girls find a 'sure cure for morbidness and introspection,' and that the 'clergy miss the directest and simplest way of helping by not teaching Confession more naturally.'

COMMENTS.—We wish to draw attention to the remarks which we believe to be absolutely true on the meagre help educated girls receive normally in their private devotional life. Many a girl who has long since left her childhood behind is content to pray on in the words learnt almost at her mother's knee.

Also, the slurring over of sin, the ignorance of the sinfulness of sin, and the absolute lack of recognition of it in their own lives leads many of the girls to eliminate the Atonement, and to find that to them indeed the Cross is 'a stumbling-block' or 'foolishness.' In our work among girls we have difficulty in naming men holding the priestly office to whom we could advise girls to go for help and counsel. We therefore most prayerfully hope that there may be raised up in the Church more men who will so cultivate their God-given gifts of sympathy, tact, and insight that they may deal faithfully, in wisdom and understanding, with the deep mysteries of the soul which lie hidden in girls, often beneath an apparent flippancy or self-consciousness or extreme shyness. We also feel that the clergy would help girls much more if they could find time to read, or at any rate know about, modern books, so that there would be more common ground in mind between them and the young element of their congregations; if they would make a point in the parish magazine of recommending current or standard theological works, or would occasionally refer to one by name in a sermon

for reference or further study, girls would follow the lead and profit greatly even from this almost casual help.

We would draw the attention of the clergy to the desire expressed by these educated girls themselves for :

(a) A more vital religion—a working Christianity.

(b) More definite instruction on the Message and Doctrine of the Church.

(c) More definite instruction in the ordering of the spiritual life, and of devotion at the Holy Communion.

(d) Continued instruction after Confirmation.

(e) Readier access to the clergy for counsel.

(f) More sermons dealing with the relation of the Church to human life; its struggle with social and moral problems.

(g) More courses for Bible Study, and Bible Circles; and advice from their own knowledge of the best current and standard theological works.

We realise that the clergy may well have expected more from the laity of the Church in their work as 'prophets and witnesses.' They could have shown girls more the beauty and strength of 'our glorious heritage,' they could have told the clergy more fully of the teaching for which they knew girls were hungering. We can only say that the younger women of the Church acknowledge this, and will gladly and humbly co-operate with the clergy, and will also themselves try to strengthen them by their prayers, and exhort others to do the same.

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