

## The Thirty-nine Articles

The Melbourne people have paid a high compliment to Sydney by fetching a man from Sydney to talk to them about the Thirty-nine Articles. I appreciate the compliment and <sup>also</sup> the responsibility all the more because this is not the first time I have ~~lectured~~ lectured from this platform. But it is the first time I have spoken to an audience in this building upon a strictly theological subject.

For the Thirty-nine Articles are a series of mainly theological statements which may be found at the end of almost any copy of the Book of Common Prayer. Yet although they are usually bound up with the Prayerbook they are not, strictly speaking, part of the Prayerbook. At the same time, like the Prayerbook they constitute an official document of the Church of England.

Two things are necessary to the proper study of any document, namely, we must be familiar with its text, the actual statements ~~it~~ set out in it, and we must know its history. If I could hear some of you thinking I daresay I should hear <sup>something to this effect</sup> ~~rather flat, merely~~, well that is very obvious & hardly necessary to point out. My answer is that experience has painfully demonstrated the necessity <sup>of</sup> ~~for~~ taking these apparently simple precautions. We have heard opinions asserted about the Articles which were not justified when the actual facts were investigated. Some of these opinions will come before us in this lecture.

Why should we study the Thirty-nine Articles? One reason has already been given, namely, that they constitute an official document of the Church of England, and that is why they are usually included in our copies of the Prayer-book. They answer the questions, "What is the doctrinal position of the Church of England?" "What does the Church of England stand for?" "What are its declared standards of faith & order?" The Thirty-nine articles are the official confession of faith of the Church of England. That is an amply sufficient reason for



studying them.

Another reason for studying them is the fact that every candidate for the ministry in the Church of England has to make a solemn declaration of assent, ~~to the~~ <sup>to the</sup> Articles, & has to subscribe his name thereto as a necessary condition of his ordination. No person can be admitted into Holy Orders in the Church of England until he has subscribed to the Thirty-nine Articles, this subscription is placed on record.

Now every society has a perfect right to insist on conditions of membership. Every society has the inherent power to draw up an official statement of its aims & principles & to ask for subscription thereto as a condition of membership.

Today only the clergy in the Church of England are required to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles. The Apostles' Creed is the only confession of faith demanded from the laity. But until 1870 all persons who wished to proceed to any degree in the Universities of Oxford & Cambridge had to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles & until 1865 the terms of subscription were very strict. In that year a general assent was declared sufficient. Religious tests for all degrees but those of divinity were abolished in 1870. No small part of the commotion caused by the appearance of Doct 90 was due to the fact that all members of the university, clerical & lay, had to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles. The proposal to celebrate the centenary of the Oxford Movement this year has revived interest in the Thirty-nine Articles which that Movement has made a battleground of bitter controversy. That is why quite a number of peaceably minded people are shy of taking any active part in the proposed celebration. Anyhow the Centenary celebrations have made the Thirty-nine Articles a live subject once more.



A further reason for studying the Articles is of particular importance to us in Australia because we are trying to frame a comprehensive constitution for the Church of England throughout the Commonwealth. There has been considerable discussion on the inclusion or otherwise of the Articles in the proposed new constitution. To ensure legal continuity in the ownership & control of church property it was felt advisable to include them in the constitution. Where the constitution has been put through & is a going concern we may have to face the question of revision, certainly of the Prayerbook, & probably of the Articles. The Canadian Church revised its Prayerbook some years ago & left the Articles as they were. It may be our wisdom to do likewise, but the Articles may easily become a very live issue for us in the not distant future. This is a good reason for knowing something about them, & a little knowledge will most probably be dangerous.

~~A final~~ <sup>Another</sup> reason for studying the Articles is that it is the duty of every member of the Church to be as well informed as he can be about his Church. The Articles are easily accessible as they are <sup>in every copy of the prayerbook.</sup> ~~almost invariably bound~~. I do not say that they are as easily understandable for their statements are frequently couched in the technical theological terminology of the sixteenth century. The general drift of the Articles is, however, easy of comprehension & the meaning of the Articles in the Church, the Sacraments & the Ministry is quite clear to any person of ordinary intelligence.

A final reason for studying the Articles is the variety of the interpretations put upon them. We can distinguish <sup>two</sup> ~~three~~ broad types of interpretation, the Protestant and the Anglo-Catholic. Among Anglo-Catholics we can distinguish three different attitudes towards them.



It will be convenient here to give a brief general description of these interpretations & attitudes & to study them in more detail after a survey of the text & history, especially the history, for the differences are due to the different estimates of the course of events.

The Protestant interpretation was that which was generally accepted before the Oxford movement. ~~Here~~ The Thirty-nine Articles were regarded as defining the Protestant character of the Church of England, & their value today in the eyes of a very large proportion of Church people is that they form a safeguard of that Protestant character of the Church. It is for this reason that they have been retained by the Church in Ireland & in Canada, & that their retention is desired by the larger part of the laity and a considerable proportion of the clergy in Australia.

The Anglo-Catholic attitude is expressed by the familiar description of "forty stripes save one." Quite a number of Anglo-Catholics desire their abolition & thereby in a negative way confirm the Protestant valuation of the Articles. These Anglo-Catholics want to get rid of the Articles because they are so definitely Protestant. The Church of South Africa has taken this step, I have been informed, but I cannot at present verify that information. We may call this the attitude of open & uncompromising hostility. And we find this attitude among those who regard the Protestant Reformation as a great mistake, & the Articles as a prominent feature of the mistake. They wish to restore the pre-Reformation character of the Church of England & accordingly the Articles must go.

This attitude <sup>of hostility</sup> to the English Reformation begins to appear



among the Tractarians & caused a division among them. Some wished to repudiate the Reformation altogether & others wished to retain some at least of its results. But both sections saw that the time was not ~~to~~ ripe to launch an attempt to set aside the articles. The prevailing temper even of High Churchmen was still too strongly Protestant, as after events revealed.

So an effort was made to explain away the Protestantism of the Articles on the principle that if an obstacle is too great to be removed it is necessary to find a way round it. Newman tried to do this in *Tract 90* and received a rude shock. Some of the severest criticism came from High Churchmen like Bishop Philpott of Exeter who had up to this point shown much favour to the Tractarians. The Bishop of Oxford who had also befriended them showed such disapproval that no further Tracts were published. But the idea that the Thirty-nine Articles were patently Protestant called a "Catholic" interpretation & application has survived and this second attitude towards the Thirty-nine articles is that of many Anglo-Catholics today.

A third attitude is that which regards the Thirty-nine articles as a compromise, an *evincion* or *renovation* between the two <sup>sides, namely</sup> ~~extremes~~ <sup>those who wished England to be definitely</sup> <sup>in doctrine & practice</sup> Protestant and those who would have been content with the removal of certain superstitious ideas & practical abuses. <sup>repudiation &</sup> It is quite fashionable to assert that the Elizabethan church settlement was a compromise and that the Articles are to be interpreted accordingly.

I have briefly described these interpretations & attitudes because in that way we can mark out the ground that must be covered if we are to reach a satisfactory estimate of the Articles.



The first step is to look at the Articles. We must have the actual text before us if we are to deal fairly with them. For purposes of convenience I must presume a certain familiarity with them on your part, & will simply remind you of their contents by a brief general survey.

The first five are a restatement of the the historic creeds of Christendom, at any rate of Western Christendom. Substantially they present articles of belief which are held alike by both Evangelicals & Anglo Catholics & as I am expected to deal with the Articles in relation to the Oxford Movement I need do no more at present than call attention to this fact. With the possible exception of one phrase at the end of the second article they could be subscribed by Roman Catholics.

Articles 6, 7 & 8 deal with the rule of faith & with them we enter into the area of controversy. Article 6 brings us at once to the heart of the Protestant position. It declares the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for salvation, & defines the limits of Scripture. In connection with this article we must read the statements in subsequent articles which affirm Holy Scripture to be the sole & supreme authority in matters of faith. This principle is <sup>implied</sup> ~~more clearly stated~~ in Article 19, "of the church" where there is a reference to the "pure Word of God", <sup>it is</sup> & <sup>more</sup> explicitly stated in Art. 20 <sup>which says</sup> ~~where it is said~~ "It is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's Word <sup>written</sup>... & the relation of Church & Bible is thus described <sup>although</sup> "The Church be a witness & a keeper of Holy Writ", & the principle of Art. 6 is again affirmed.

The sufficiency & supremacy of Holy Scripture is a cardinal principle of the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century.

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The mediaeval church was much more familiar with legends & traditions than with the text of Holy Scripture. The Revival of Learning in the fifteenth century <sup>made scholars familiar with</sup> ~~the invention of printing~~ the New Testament in the original Greek, & to a lesser extent the Old Testament in the original Hebrew. The invention of printing in that century & the translation & circulation of the Scriptures in the language of the people placed in their hands a powerful weapon of criticism of mediaeval beliefs & practices. There is truth in Chillingworth's remark that "The Bible, the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants." The mediaevalists tried two answers to this. They did their best to suppress the <sup>free</sup> circulation of the Scriptures, & they exalted tradition to the same level <sup>of authority</sup> as the text of Scripture. If they could not prevent the people from reading the Bible for themselves they would provide an authoritative interpretation so that the people would see the Bible as it were through the eyes of the Church.

Now all parties, except certain Anabaptists, agreed that the Scriptures were the final authority in matters of faith. The main difference lay in the means & method of interpretation. The Protestants were generally content to let the Scriptures speak for themselves. They stood ~~up~~ for the open Bible & the free access of the people thereto. The Council of Trent in a decree published in 1546 & therefore before the compilers of Art. 6, speaks of the "truth & discipline.... contained in the written books, or in the unwritten traditions, which, received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the Apostles themselves... have come down to us." The inference to be drawn was that those who claimed to be the direct successors of the Apostles had charge of this tradition & the authority to declare it. The supreme authority in the Church had also supreme authority in the



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interpretation of the Scriptures. The logical consequence was the decree which asserted the infallibility of the Pope in 1870. The authority of the Bible was really made subservient to the authority of the Church, & this authority was expressed & exercised through the official ministry of the Church who were trustees also of the traditions of the Church.

None can frankly admit that even among Protestants, the authority of superior scholarship, the authority of superior knowledge of the Bible, & superior ability in expounding it, naturally carries great weight, but this authority has to justify itself by the agreement of its teaching with the freely accessible text of Scripture. But there is all the difference between an authority which has to justify its pronouncements, & an authority which claims infallibility for them, & practically says to the people, "you must either take them or leave them" but you do so at your peril.

With regard to tradition there is its notorious uncertainty & tendency to variation, whereas the written word remains unchanged. The appeal to tradition strengthens the appeal to authority, the authority of those who claim to possess the true tradition. That resolves itself into an appeal to the visible organisation which claims & uses authority.

One of the leading ideas of the Oxford Movement was to reassert the authority of the Church as exercised through the ministry. Great importance was attached to tradition and recourse was had to the Fathers, the early Christian writers in whose works the lines of Catholic tradition could be seen taking shape and direction. One of the positive results of the Oxford Movement was the issue of a new edition of the Fathers, in itself a useful enterprise, especially to scholars interested in early



Church history the one drawback being the insufficient attention paid to textual & literary criticism. The Tractarians were however more concerned to bring the Fathers before church people as authorities for Christian faith & practice & in this way they managed to put tradition practically on a level with Scripture ~~to~~ <sup>in</sup> determining questions of doctrine & order. In this way the Tractarians departed from the principle of art. 6, & art. 20 where the sufficiency of Scripture is plainly asserted without any mention of tradition, & the authority of the Church is strictly limited by reference to Scripture as the supreme rule of faith.

Art. 6 brings out another feature of the Protestant Reformation when it ~~it limits the Old Testament Canon to~~ <sup>accepts the Hebrew canon of the Old Testament</sup> whereas the Council of Trent includes also the books we describe as the Apocrypha. The article quotes Jerome, the greatest biblical scholar of the early church as ~~its~~ supporting its limitation of the Canon to the Hebrew books.

Art. 7 asserts the value of the Old Testament against <sup>of the extremists lumped together as Anabaptists.</sup> two opposite errors. There were some who declared that the Old Testament ought to be rejected, & that the illumination of the Holy Spirit dispensed them from observing even the moral law contained therein. Others asserted that Christians were bound not only by the moral but also by the ceremonial law & the civil precepts also. The first group repeated the error of the ancient Gnostics & the second group the error of the Judaizing Christians who gave so much trouble to St. Paul.

Art. 8 recognizes the authority of the <sup>ancient</sup> ~~historical~~ Creeds of Christendom, & assigns as a reason for doing so, "that they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy Scripture", another assertion of the Bible as the supreme rule of faith.



Of the three documents named, the Nicene Creed is the most widely acknowledged. The other two are not recognized by the Greek Orthodox Church. Incidentally the "Creed of St. Athanasius" is not strictly a creed, & St. Athanasius is not its author. It is a purely Western document & is really a hymn. It has been retained as the best exposition of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Articles 9 to 18 form a third group dealing mainly with questions of personal religion. They are very technical in their terminology & a whole series of lectures would be necessary to elucidate the points raised by them. I must content myself with one or two outstanding ~~questions~~ <sup>issues which</sup> subjects of hot controversy at the time of the Reformation & afterwards.

Article 9 was aimed at the Pelagian heresy revived by certain of the Anabaptists. It also had in view the semi-pelagian tendency that can be traced in Latin theology. Article 10 really follows up a point raised by art. 9, & asserts the absolute need of God's grace to live according to God's will.

Article 11 enunciates one of the key principles of the Protestant Reformation (indeed of Evangelical religion). It really follows on from the two preceding articles and leads on to ~~these~~ <sup>the</sup> three that come after it. Justification by Faith was the truth that changed Luther's whole life, but he was not the first to discover it. Indeed he was put on the track of it by Staupitz, the head of the order to which he belonged, significantly named Augustinian. Augustine of Hippo firmly held to this doctrine & he got it, as Luther did, from St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Christ has done for us what we could not do for ourselves. All we have to do to get right with God is to accept & use the inestimable gift that Christ has made freely available for us. The doctrine



was not defined by our Lord in theological terms, but the heart of it is in His matchless parable of the Prodigal Son. we cannot earn salvation we certainly cannot put ourselves in a position to deserve it, we can only accept it as God's free gift. The father accepted the prodigal son as he was. He offered him free forgiveness & reconciliation & restoration to the status of sonship. He did not ask the erring son to do anything more than accept his offer, an act of personal trust. Personal trust in God is the only possible basis of a right relation with God. It was the rediscovery of this truth that was the moving power of the Great Reformation.

This was one of the fundamental differences between Protestantism, I prefer to say Evangelical religion, and Romanism. The decrees of the Council of Trent on the subject are too long to quote. We may conveniently sum up the matter thus:- Rome teaches Forgiveness through Sanctification, whereas the Articles, in accordance with Scripture, teach Sanctification through Forgiveness. A right relation with God must be secured before the grace of God can work in us. Sanctification follows justification and is the practical proof of it.

On this point again the Tractarians moved away from the position taken up by our church at the Reformation. <sup>numerous</sup> remarks in Tract 90 on Article 13 "of Works before justification" are an indication of this departure and there are similar indications in his sermons. Later writers of the Tractarian school, & not of that school only, display a confusion between justification & sanctification but that is a subject which cannot be pursued further at present. I only wish to point out that these Articles dealing with the doctrine of personal salvation state the Protestant position as distinguished from the Roman. This is most conspicuous in the



14 which says that "works of Supererogation cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety".

Before leaving this group of Articles I should like to remove a common mistake which credits John Calvin with the sole responsibility for the doctrine of Predestination. Luther is most emphatic on this doctrine, but he is not a bit more emphatic than Augustine of Hippo who in turn influenced Thomas Aquinas. Dr. J. H. Simpson in his book "Fact & Faith" gives quotations from Thomas Aquinas which are ~~at~~ some people would call very Calvinistic, much more so than our Article 17 which is really non-committal merely affirming the idea without elaborating it. In 1595 Archbishop Whitgift who was no Puritan ~~but did~~ made a strong effort to include the famous Lambeth Articles in the 39 but we may be thankful that he failed. Soon after the Arminian theology was taught by the new school of High Churchmen who became prominent under the Stuart kings. The Laetarians claimed to be followers of this school & were responsible for the republication of the works of its principal <sup>writers</sup> ~~authors~~. But there is no inherent conflict between Arminianism & Evangelicalism. John Wesley was an Arminian & George Whitefield a Calvinist & this difference caused them to part company. But the majority of the Evangelicals who remained in the Church were Calvinist in theology & that formed a point of difference between them & the Laetarians.

Articles 19 & 36 deal with the Church, the Sacraments & the Ministry. It is here that the cleavage was most apparent between the Reformers & the Romanists, & it is on the questions raised by these Articles that the Laetarians were most



Newman in Tract 90  
said that art 19 was  
a description but not a  
definition of the church.

severely criticised. One or two points will suffice by way of illustration. The notes of the Church described in Art. 19 were regarded as deficient because they did not include any reference to episcopacy or the Apostolical Succession as they understood it. Some of them tried to read an allusion to these matters in the phrase "The Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same," but the phrase leaves the question entirely open. Article 21 also to them seemed to impugn the infallibility of the Church & so to weaken its authority. And yet Newman in Tract 90 actually says "St. Gregory Nazianzen well illustrates the consistency of this Article (No. 21) with a belief in the infallibility of Ecumenical Councils, by his own language on different occasions". Newman's discussion of the article is characteristically vague but he ingeniously tries to convey the idea of the infallibility of the Church & suggests that General Councils may be one means of expressing it.

As regards Article 22 Newman in Tract 90 tried to explain away the apparently definite Protestantism of its statements by two main arguments (1) that there was a distinction between the Romish doctrine and the Tridentine decree on these subjects, more especially Purgatory & (2) that this Article was drawn up before the decree of the Council of Trent. He goes on to say, "What is opposed is the received doctrine (his emphasis) of the day, & unhappily of this day too, or the doctrine of the Roman Schools; a conclusion which is still more clear, by considering that there are portions in the Tridentine statements on these subjects, which the Article, far from condemning, by anticipation approves, as far as they go".

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It was Newman's treatment of this Article that raised the storm of criticism that burst upon him & precipitated what Dean Church in his "History of the Oxford Movement" calls the Catastrophe. It brought out a division that ~~had~~ been growing in the Movement, one section looking & moving towards Rome & the other section preferring to remain within the Anglican fold. <sup>But</sup> the Anglican section neither disowned nor repudiated the arguments of Tract 90, at any rate not publicly. Newman's attempt to minimise the difference, the absolute contradiction ~~it was~~ <sup>according to</sup> Anglican tradition since the Reformation, between the official doctrinal standards of the Anglican & of the Roman Church, has been continued by Anglo-Catholics from ~~his time~~ <sup>that day</sup> to this.

The assertion however that the Thirty-nine Articles had in view the ideas & practices that were popularly held & practised but were not necessarily ~~are~~ in conformity with the official declarations of the Council of Trent, & that therefore the Articles were not directly aimed at the decrees of that Council, in fine, that the differences between official Anglican & official Roman doctrine were not so very great & could be reconciled, this assertion has been repeated & is still being repeated. Again & again Newman repeats that the Thirty-nine articles appeared before the decrees of the Council of Trent. The articles were agreed upon by Convocation in 1562 & the Council of Trent concluded its proceedings in 1563. Hence, says Newman, the Thirty-nine Articles are not to be regarded as an answer to a criticism upon the decrees of the Council of Trent.

This inference, made by Newman, rests upon ignorance, or maltreatment of historical facts. Let us look at these facts.

In the first place the Council of Trent <sup>met in three periods, that is</sup> during the years 1545 to 1547, <sup>has ignored the</sup> ~~in discussing~~ fact that the Roman  
 ② 1551, 1552, & ③ 1562, 3. Newman



doctrines on Holy Scripture, Justification, the Sacraments, Baptism, Confirmation were defined during the first period, that is, by 1547. During the second period, 1551, 2, the doctrine of Transubstantiation was affirmed (it first became an article de fide in 1215), & the Roman doctrines & discipline concerning Penance & Extreme Unction were defined & enforced with anathemas. In the third period, 1562, 3, the Roman doctrines of reception in one kind, of the Mass, of Holy Orders of Marriage, of Purgatory, of Invocation, of Images & of Relics were defined & enjoined. Newman's statement is doubtless true as regards Article 22. But it is not the whole truth & a partial truth may easily prove a worse deception than a direct lie. Newman, & those who have imitated him have ignored the fact that the Articles did not reach their final form in 1562, & their final authorization was not made until 1571, eight years after the Council of Trent had closed & seven years after Pius IV had issued his Creed (1564) embodying the decisions of the Council of Trent. The Thirty-nine Articles were therefore finally published & authorized long after the decrees of the Council of Trent had become public property.

Again, Newman's distinction between "Romish" & "Roman" won't work. It is true that the Council of Trent tried to remove some of the worst abuses connected with Purgatory, Pardons &c., but it retained the things that caused the abuses. And in any case Newman has conveniently ignored the statement in the Article that the things were condemned because they were unscriptural.

Article 23 "Of ministering in the Congregation" was aimed at those who either denied the necessity for a ministry or asserted that any person who felt he had a call was thereby entitled to perform the functions of a minister.



In considering the articles on the Sacraments we come to highly controversial questions.

"This Article does not deny the five rites in question to be sacraments, but to be sacraments in the sense in which ~~that is, say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, Extreme Unction,~~ Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ~~are not to be counted sacraments~~ sacraments: 'sacraments of the Gospel', sacraments with an outward sign ordained of God." He then goes on to affirm that the Church has the right to create sacraments, or to give its rites or ordinances the standing of sacraments. He then asserts that 'if a sacrament be merely an outward sign of <sup>an invisible</sup> spiritual grace given under it' (note the apparent paraphrasing, with an alteration of the meaning, of the phrase in the Church Catechism), the five rites may be sacraments; but if it must be an outward sign ordained by God or Christ, then only Baptism & the Lord's Supper are sacraments.

The ideas here expressed by Newman have been held & propagated by Anglo-Catholics & are characteristic of the Oxford Movement. But let us look at them closely.

"This Article does not deny the five rites in question to be sacraments". This is Newman's interpretation of the phrase "commonly called". In art. 8 we find the phrase applied to the title "Apostles' Creed". Now that title was given to the Creed because of the legend that it was compiled on an occasion when the twelve apostles met & each contributed an article to it, thus forming the "Apostles' Creed". There is no doubt that this is the origin of the name, & that it is purely legendary. The 'apostles' Creed does summarise conveniently the faith believed & taught by the apostles, but they had nothing to do with the framing of it. But ~~and~~ <sup>it is</sup> convenient for a document to have a name & therefore the popular appellation was used by the compilers of the Articles, but with an implied caution against accepting the legend which gave rise to the name. The document had no historical evidence in support of its name, but there was no other name convenient to call it. In fact we can trace several stages of its growth and it does not appear in



its complete form until the middle of the eight century, & then in the country we now call France.

The compilers of the Prayerbook display a similar caution in the rubric at the head of what they designate as "this Confession of our Christian Faith, commonly called the Creed of St. Athanasius." They were quite aware that it had no right to the name by which it was commonly called.

The instances I have quoted <sup>from</sup> of contemporary usage of the phrase "commonly called" are sufficient to show that the Article (25) questions the right of these institutions to be called sacraments, and it goes on to say that they are "such as have grown, partly of the corrupt following (note this phrase) of the Apostles, partly from states of life allowed in the Scriptures." This is a curious way, at least, of not denying these five rites to be sacraments, especially when we consider the phrase "the corrupt following of the Apostles." The way in which Newman overlooks this phrase does suggest that he is guilty of special pleading. And many others have done likewise. Newman, <sup>he</sup> & others also, have also failed for some reason to mention the fact that the precise number was not fixed, definitely, until the Council of Florence in 1439. Hugo of St. Victor, in the twelfth century, enumerates as many as thirty. The number seven is purely arbitrary, & while ~~the~~ adoption of the number seven in the West seems to have been recognized after on the authority of Peter Lombard, there was still some doubt as to which rites were to be included in the seven and, as already noted, the precise seven did not become an article de fide until 1439. Baptism & the Lord's Supper are of such pre-eminent importance that the Reformers made a wise application of the principle of limitation when they assigned the status of a sacrament to these two alone, & their wisdom has been confirmed by the famous Lambeth Quadrilateral. It is at



least wise to limit the term sacrament to ordinances which can claim the imprimatur of the Lord Himself, & thereby to set them above those rites which cannot claim so high an authority.

Besides recognising only two institutions as worthy of the dignity of a sacrament, the Articles lay great stress upon worthy reception which implies a proper estimate and a right approach. This is the remedy provided by the Articles against two extreme views, the *ex opere operato* & the view that treats them as "badges or tokens of Christian men's profession" nothing more. <sup>in the first paragraph</sup> Art 25 says they are more than bare signs or arbitrary symbols, & in the last paragraph there is a caution against the mechanical view of their operation. The mere performance of the outward rite, however correct in its details does not ensure the effectual conveyance of the blessings which the sacrament was intended to guarantee. We must never forget the two sides of the covenant, the two sides of every religious experience, namely the God's & man's. God is always <sup>able &</sup> willing to bless men but men are not always ready & willing to accept what God desires to give. The sacraments are of benefit only to those who are ready & willing ~~& desirous~~ & actually desire to receive & use the blessings of which the sacraments are an assurance or external guarantee. The sacraments are signs & seals of covenanted blessings, but while they are witnesses that strengthen the religious life of the sincere believer, they are also witnesses that condemn those who neglect or otherwise refuse the opportunity offered to them by the sacraments. <sup>It is from that</sup>

The next article, no. 26, has these two points in view. The true believer can enjoy the full blessing assured by the sacrament even when it is administered by the wrong type of minister, but also ~~affirms~~ implies that the efficacy of the sacraments does not depend on many ~~into~~ personal qualities or qualifications of the minister such as



an alleged Apostolical Succession or episcopal ordination. The character or status of the minister does not impair the validity of the sacrament as we may see from the <sup>official</sup> ~~fact that~~ doctrine even of the Roman Catholic Church concerning baptism by laymen or heretics or schismatics. In the famous controversy between Rome & Carthage during the third century Rome took the more liberal side & a Roman priest who rebaptizes a person who has already received baptism by water in the name of the Trinity at the hands of a Methodist minister is breaking the law of his own church.

Now we are all familiar with the importance of fossils in the study of Geology. The expert geologist, when a fossil is put before him, can reconstruct a picture of the conditions that prevailed on the earth when what is now a fossil was an actual living creature. The fossil remains as evidence of conditions that obtained long ago, probably very different from the conditions of today. So to the historian attaches importance to the survival of institutions & practices which are characteristic of an age that is past & which ~~are~~ may provide valuable evidence of a different order of things.

There are several survivals in the Roman church today which point to an order of things far different from that which now prevails & far different from what our Anglo-Catholic brethren desire to establish. The validity of baptism even by an unbeliever if administered with the proper form & matter, i. e., with water in the name of the Trinity, is such a survival. Another instance is the Roman view concerning the episcopal order, namely that it is not strictly a separate & superior order but that the priesthood can validly perform all the functions of the episcopate if necessity should so require.



have been <sup>once</sup> informed on the best authority that every year in Rome itself the rite of confirmation is administered by a priest as is done also in the Greek & the Orthodox Church & in the German Lutheran Church. The particular personal or ecclesiastical character of the minister does not necessarily impair the validity of the sacrament. We must bear in mind the important distinction between validity & irregularity. Lay baptism is irregular but valid, in the Roman Church as well as in our own.

~~I can~~ There is no time to go into detail on the many questions that are raised by the attitude of the Oxford Movement & its followers towards the Thirty-nine Articles which is the main subject of this lecture. I must make some reference however to the Sacrament enlisted in the Articles "The Lord's Supper" & to the general subject of the Ministry.

With regard to the Lord's Supper the early Tractarians reaffirmed the ~~doctrinal~~ statements of the Article which repudiated the <sup>doctrine</sup> ~~theory~~ of Transubstantiation. Yet Newman in Tract 90 while he attacks the Roman doctrine, or, rather certain inferences & practices which were more or less based upon that doctrine yet tries to show that the Anglican formulae "taught" a real super-local presence in the Holy Sacrament. The Anglo-Catholic doctrine of the ~~alleged~~ Real Presence when regarded from the point of view expressed & illustrated by the practices which are characteristic & products of the Oxford Movement have resulted in the re-introduction into our services of forms of worship which were discarded by the Church of England at the time of the Reformation. Some Anglo-Catholics have gone so far as to



to reproduce the order of the Roman mass as a substitute for the order of Holy Communion in our Prayer book.

Others have re-introduced the old Sarum Use, others again have reverted to the order of Communion in the first Prayer book of Edward VI. But the general impression left on the minds of ordinary people, & that is the most important consideration, is that the ~~Ang~~ Oxford Movement was essentially an attempt to restore the pre-Reformation standards of forms of doctrine & worship. Whatever distinctions may be drawn by professional theologians the general effect on the minds of ordinary people is ~~that~~<sup>to</sup> impress them with a view of the Holy Communion which ~~in its results~~ produces results that cannot be distinguished in practice from the results of holding the doctrine of Transubstantiation. In effect the result is that the distinction drawn by many Anglo-Catholics between their doctrine & that of Transubstantiation is a distinction without a difference. This is impressed upon the people by the ceremonial that has been introduced into our church services by as the result of the Oxford Movement, by the teaching given, by reservation for the purpose of adoration, & in other ways all of which are suggestive of doctrine which is very different from that of the Articles & from the classical Anglican exposition thereof in the works of Hooker & Waterland. Their view of the Real Presence may well be stated in the famous declaration of Hooker "The real presence of Christ's most blessed Body & Blood is not therefore to be sought in the Sacrament, but in the worthy receiver of the Sacrament" [c. 67 § 5]. This view is borne out by the following Article, 29, "of the wicked which eat not the Body of Christ in the use of Mr. Howard's Supper".

The Article (28) on  
Mr. Howard's Supper



Art. 30 is obviously aimed at the withdrawal of the Cup from the laity in the Roman Church, & Art. 31 attacks one of the <sup>modern</sup> cardinal features of the ~~Roman~~ medieval & Roman doctrine of the mass. It was Newman's attempt in Lect 90 to show that Art. 31 did not speak "against the mass in itself, nor against its being an offering, though commemorative, for the quick & the dead for the remission of sin . . . but against its being viewed, on the one hand, as independent & distinct from the sacrifice on the Cross, which is blasphemy, & on the other, its being directed to the emolument of those to whom it pertains & celebrate it, which is imposture in addition." [p. 83, 2nd ed.]. He begins his comment on this Article [id. p. 59] by thus referring to its last sentence, "nothing can show more clearly than this passage that the Articles are not written against the creed of the Roman church, but against actual existing errors in it, whether taken into its system or not. Here the sacrifice of the mass is not spoken of, in which the special question of doctrine would be introduced; but "the sacrifice of masses" [Note mistake in quotation, the art. uses the word "sacrifice"], certain observances, for the most part private & voluntary, which the writers of the Articles knew to have been in force in time past, & saw before their eyes, & which involved certain opinions & a certain teaching."

A full discussion is impracticable in this lecture but some points must be briefly noted.

In the first place let me remind you that the compilers of the Articles were well aware of the mind of the Council of Trent and that the final edition of the Articles was issued some years after that Council had concluded, & some years also after the issue of the Creed of Pius IV. Even Bicknell repeats



Dubnell pp. 14 & 515

The misleading assertion, ~~that~~, "The decree of Trent on this subject was not issued till 1562 hence, the doctrine attacked is not official Roman teaching but popular medieval ideas." This is history made to order not history which actually happened. In a word this is "his story" - not the full story.

Secondly the "sacrifices of Masses" were based on the current, & afterwards the official, doctrine of the Mass. The regular practice of the Roman Church today makes that quite clear. The basic idea of the Mass is that it is a sacrifice offered for the sins of the quick & the dead, & the "sacrifices of Masses" are a particular application of that idea. The ~~error~~ <sup>real error</sup> lies in the doctrine of the Mass itself.

Thirdly, at the Reformation the <sup>drastic</sup> change in the Order of Holy Communion was intended to turn the Mass into a Communion. Two considerations will confirm this statement. One reason for altering the Order of Communion in the 1549 Prayer Book - where the alternative name Mass was included in the title - was that Bishop Gardiner & other opponents of the Reformation were using the 1529 order "as the very mass". Hence in 1552 a drastic revision of the order was made, the term "mass" was expurgated from the title, & a declaration or preface was inserted at the end of the office. The other consideration lies in the strong agitation that was carried on during the <sup>recent</sup> P. B. revision movement in England to revert to the 1549 form & the inclusion of an alternative form, or similar lines to that of 1549 in the proposed new P. B. It was the inclusion of this alternative mass form that led to the defeat of the proposed Book. If this alternative form had not been included in the proposed Book it would have gone right through. It was the attempt to legalise



was that made the opposition so strong.

Among the many alleged defects of the Articles in the eyes of the Tractarians were the omission of any assertion of apostolical Succession & of any direct statement that episcopacy was of the esse of the church. The most they could assert was that these points were implied in the Articles, especially Arts. 19 & 36.

Having looked at the Articles in the light of the treatment they received from the Tractarians we had better review their history although a good deal has already been said about it. We must however pay due attention to their history because like every document they reflect the age in which they were compiled & first published. We must study the circumstances of the time in which they appeared in order to get at their real meaning & the purpose they were intended to serve.

The Articles are a product of the Great Reformation of the sixteenth century & were compiled by the leaders of the English Reformation. It was an age of confessions. Those who broke away from Rome felt the need of issuing statements defining the position they held. Of the Confessions issued by Continental Reformers we need notice at present only two, the Augsburg Confession of 1530 & the Wittenberg Confession of 1552, both Lutheran documents. The compilers of our Thirty nine Articles made use of these Confessions but were in no sense dependent on them. They derived useful suggestion regarding topics & phrases & general treatment & it was also felt desirable to promote <sup>sympathetic sentiments</sup> cooperation among the various groups of reformers. They felt the need of combination



& cooperation especially when they were threatened dangerously by the forces of reaction. Hence the more points of agreement they could find the better. But while making free use of other reformed ~~Confessions~~ the English compilers of both the Prayerbook & the Articles took their own line, & if they accepted suggestions from the Continent they did so because they expressed a <sup>frame of</sup> mind they had reached in their own way.

The Thirty-nine Articles have a history of their own in England. After the final breach with Rome the Ten Articles appeared in 1536. Their general tendency was conservative in doctrine but they affirmed three, not seven sacraments. They were signed by the archbishops & many of the bishops & were put forth by Royal authority after passing both Houses of Parliament.

There were now two parties formed, one desiring a reform in doctrine & worship & the other content with separation from Rome but desiring no doctrinal change. Political considerations led to negotiations between the king (Henry VIII.) and the Lutheran princes & in 1538 a conference of Lutheran & Anglican divines was held at Lambeth which resulted in the drawing up of 13 Articles as a basis of a Concordat. The articles were never published but were found among ~~Cranmer's~~ <sup>Cranmer's</sup> papers, & they never had any authority. But they show the <sup>direction</sup> ~~course~~ in which Cranmer & his associates were thinking, & in some ways they anticipated the Thirty-nine Articles.

In 1539 however the Act of Six Articles marked a reaction to mediaeval standards. The six points <sup>re-</sup>affirmed were: - Transubstantiation, Communion in one kind, Vows of Chastity, the use of Private Masses, the Celibacy of the Clergy & the obligation of Auricular Confession. Any denial of these was subject to severe penalties & a few ~~persons~~ <sup>persons</sup> were actually executed under this Act. Notably Anne Askew - were executed under this Act.



The accession of Edward VI. inaugurated rapid changes in a Protestant direction. The publication of the first Prayerbook in 1549 marked one stage & a further stage was reached in 1552 when the second Prayerbook was issued. Next year the forty two Articles were published, "agreed upon by Bishops & other learned men in Synod of London, 1552, for avoiding of controversy & establishment of concord in certain matters of religion". They were published in June 1553 with the order that all beneficed clergy should sign them. But

But Edward VI. died in July 1553 & the accession of Queen Mary brought in a Romanist reaction. Mary's policy, however, drove England further in the Protestant direction & according to Elizabeth, who succeeded to the throne in 1558, decided to restore the political measures of her father & the doctrinal measures of her half brother.

The second Prayerbook of Edward VI. was restored with scarcely any alteration - these minor changes were specified in the Act of Uniformity (which is still in force) - and so far as the documents show, the Elizabethan Church settlement was definitely Protestant, though not sufficiently so in the view of certain extremists who had been embittered by the Marian persecution & by events on the Continent. The choice of the Second Edwardine Prayerbook was significant enough and in 1559 eleven Articles were issued as a preliminary series <sup>with a Protestantizing</sup> ~~also indicating a~~ tendency, while the forty two Articles were being revised. During the revision the forty two ~~were~~ underwent many, though not very drastic, alterations & were reduced to 39. They were passed by Convocation in 1563. The Queen reduced them to 38 & it was not till 1571 that the final revision took place. In that year Art. 29 was restored & the first phrase of Art. 20 in the authority of the Church was finally accepted.



An Act of Parliament was passed to enforce subscription to the Articles with due penalties. Since that date the Articles have remained unaltered, ~~in spirit &~~

Were the Articles a compromise, or part gone? It is the fashion to style the Elizabethan settlement a compromise, but an examination of the official documents - the Acts of Supremacy & Uniformity, the Injunctions, Articles, Parker's much discussed "Advertisements" &c., - has convinced me that the Church settlement under Elizabeth was definitely Protestant & not in any way a compromise between two extremes. We must remember Newman's effort & failure - to establish the Via Media - to place the Church of England as a middle way between Protestantism & Romanism.

But while laws & declarations & other official documents may bear a certain character we must remember there may be a wide difference between a legal definition & its practical application in the course of administration. A persecuting policy does not appeal to the English temperament unless it is - and it seldom is - very highly excited. So long as those who objected to the religious changes did so passively, & made no fuss, & kept out of the way, so to speak, the policy of the Elizabethan government was to let them alone. But open disaffection & public propaganda such as was fomented & fostered by the Roman mission under Parsons & Campion, & by very self-assertive Puritans, such disturbers of the common order, as they were regarded, were sure to meet trouble from the authorities. Yet really drastic legislation of a penal character was not enacted till 1593, & the Court of High Commission was not given a permanent <sup>organization</sup> ~~form~~ until 1583. It was when political ~~religious~~ differences were



joined to the religions, that as under the Stuarts, that controversy developed into open war. But that's another story.

There is much more I had thought of saying but at any rate I have introduced the subject & present topics for discussion.