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THE CHURCHMAN

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RESERVATION

By the Rev. C. SYDNEY CARTER, D.D.,

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THE Report of the Commission on "Church and State" is not so dead a document as it is sometimes said to be, and its first Recommendation was that an attempt should be made to secure agreement on the "Use and Limits of Reservation." It is therefore probable that this important, crucial and long-standing question will shortly be raised again as a practical issue. Consequently it is well that we should examine afresh this difficult subject from a Scriptural and historical standpoint and in the light of modern developments and claims.

It is first of all necessary, in dealing with a matter of this highly contentious character, to "define our terms." This was done very clearly by Archbishop Temple in his declared "Opinion" in May 1900. He stated that popularly the term "Reservation" covers three distinct practices :

(1) A custom based on Justin Martyr's account of the Eucharistic Service in his day, during which the elements are not "reserved" at all, but, at the time of the administration, portions are taken at once by the deacons to the sick who are supposed to be following the service in church, and who therefore in some sense form part of the congregation. This is really "coincident or concurrent Communion" and it should not be called "Reservation." To such a simple and practical custom, if it could be safeguarded from abuse or extension, few, if any, Evangelical or loyal Churchmen would object.

(2) The permission allowed under the First Prayer Book of 1549 for the priest to reserve from the elements left over from the "Open Communion" in church a portion to administer, with certain prayers, to some known sick person later on during the same day—as soon as may be. Under this rule there was no form or permission of permanent reservation contemplated. But in the 1552 Book even this practice was prohibited.

(3) The extension of this custom by keeping such reserved portions in the Church for any case of sudden emergency of sick cases which may arise. This is really "continuous reservation." In May 1900

the considered "Opinion" of the two Archbishops after the lengthy hearing of expert evidence on both sides, was that "the authorized formularies of the Church leave no place for any kind of Reservation, since the language of the XXVIIIth Article cannot be taken otherwise than as condemning the practice altogether. To say that 'the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up or worshipped' is to say, with clearly implied condemnation, that those who do these things, *use for one purpose what our Lord ordained for another.*" This judgment only confirmed the declaration of the *Upper House of Canterbury Convocation* which in 1885 stated that "the wise and carefully revised order of the Church of England, as expressed in the Book of Common Prayer, leaves no place for the practice of Reservation, and that no Reservation for any purpose is consistent with the rule of the Church of England."

It would be well to pause here to say a word on the Scriptural and Church of England teaching on the Presence of Christ. In the Fourth Gospel Our Lord told His followers that "He would not leave them orphans but would come to them" in the gift and mission of the Holy Spirit; so that, as He also said, "where two or three are gathered together in My Name there am I in the midst of them." It does not appear that the New Testament anywhere teaches a *special* Presence of Christ in any ordinance which He instituted. Neither, as Waterland points out, is the actual term—Real Presence—used in our Formularies, although as he admits, "the term seems to be grounded on Scripture."¹ It would seem to be true to the teaching of our Church to affirm that in the whole Ordinance or service of the Lord's Supper we realize in a very real and special way the Presence of Christ and that the elements are the divinely appointed signs "given unto us" in order to intensify and "signify" to us the "inward part" of the Sacrament, which is "the Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." And these "faithful" at every administration, are exhorted to "feed on Him in their hearts by faith." Therefore in view of the teaching of our Catechism, the actual term "Reservation of the Sacrament," so commonly employed, is ambiguous and scarcely accurate. Because while it is possible to "reserve" the "outward visible sign," it by no means follows that it is possible to reserve the "inward spiritual grace," or the "inward part or thing signified." Our Church does not assert that a change takes place in the elements themselves, but in the "worthy receivers" (Art. 25), since our Catechism declares that "the Body and Blood of Christ" are the "inward thing *signified*" by the outward sign. Christ is present by faith to our spirits only. As Bishop Jeremy Taylor expressed it, "we by the real spiritual presence of Christ do understand Christ to be present as the Spirit of God is present in the hearts of the faithful by blessing and grace."²

But to return to the Archbishops' Judgment of 1900. Their "Opinion" on the present illegality of Reservation, either temporary or permanent, has been confirmed by the Ecclesiastical Courts in 1906

¹*Doctrine of the Eucharist*, p. 171.

²'*Real Presence*' Sect. i.

(the Henley Case), in 1920 (the Salford Case), and in 1931 (the Truro Case). Moreover, after a careful examination of the *Law and Custom of Reservation*, Professor W. M. Kennedy—a well-known ecclesiastical scholar, whose leanings towards Reservation, for the Sick at least, are natural enough in one who has joined the church of Rome, acknowledges that “all idea of reserving the sacrament regularly for the Sick seems to be historically untrue to the Anglican position.” He adds, “Any notion of a ‘sacrament chapel’ or ‘tabernacle’ or ‘receptacle shut off from the people’ is quite contrary to the history of the Reformation in England.”¹ But these weighty verdicts and “Opinions” have been challenged by partisans of an extreme school of churchmen of mediæval-catholic outlook, the most learned exponent of which is, probably, the late Dr. C. Harris, who contributed a long article on the subject published in *Liturgy and Worship* in 1932. It is full of unsupported and amazing dogmatic assumptions and assertions, and of most improbable special pleading, made more plausible by the omission of clear contrary evidence. For instance Dr. Harris attempts to defend Reservation from the Constitutions of Archbishop Peckham (1279 and 1281) and Lyndwood’s *Provinciale*. He contends that these obsolete Canons are still in force and are authoritative, because the Commission of 32 appointed by Henry VIII to revise them, never concluded its task. He entirely overlooks the fact that the “Act for Submission of the Clergy” 25, Henry VIII, cap. 19 (which is still in force) only allowed the use of Canons, Constitutions and Synodals “which are not contrariant or repugnant to the laws and customs of the realm.” This Act has the effect of ruling out Reservation (*a*) as being contrary to the rubrics of the present Prayer Book, “to the doctrine and discipline of Christ, as this Church and Realm hath received the same”; (“Ordination of Priests”), and (*b*) as contrary to the Elizabethan Act of Uniformity, which the Convocations of 1661 accepted and inserted as the first item in our present Prayer Book. The last-mentioned Act distinctly forbids under heavy penalties “any whatsoever Minister to use any other rite, ceremony or order, *form or manner of celebrating the Lord’s Supper* openly or privily . . . than is *mentioned* and set forth in the said Book.” This prohibition was merely carrying out the Revisers’ method in their Preface in *Of Ceremonies* of “Abolishing Ceremonies” by not “retaining them” or specifying them.

Now it is quite clear that the 1559 Book does not “mention” and “set forth” any order to reserve the elements in celebrating the Lord’s Supper. Moreover, this unequivocal exclusive prohibition of the use of any other rites, ceremonies or services, is confirmed and, if possible, made even more definite in the last clause of this Act, where it is enacted “that all Laws, Statutes and Ordinances, wherein or whereby any *other* Service, Administration of Sacraments or Common Prayer is limited, established or set forth to be used within this Realm . . . shall from henceforth be utterly void and of none effect.” This rules out any reference to “other” services or ceremonies allowed in 1549 or in 1552, and certainly leaves no loophole whatever for an asserted

¹Page 31.

permanent obligation of a mediæval Canon regarding Reservation. It is amazing therefore that Dr. Harris, in his long, comprehensive article on this subject, can assert that "the Revisers in 1552 left the whole question of Reservation discreetly vague and failed to prohibit it" (p. 560-1). This statement is made in spite of the language of Article 28 of 1552 which declares that "Christ had not commanded the Sacrament of His Body to be reserved," as well as in spite of the deliberate removal of the rubric in the 1549 Book allowing reservation for the Sick when there was an "Open Communion" in Church. Further, the wording of the rubric directly after the "Gospel" in the "Communion of the Sick" service in 1552 and 1559, proves that Reservation of any kind at that service was prohibited. It states: "At the time of the distribution of the holy Sacrament the priest shall first receive the Communion himself, and after minister unto them that are appointed to communicate with the Sick." Now if it had been intended (as allowed in 1549) to communicate the sick person with the "reserved sacrament," the priest would not have *first* received the Communion himself. The very object and great plea for reservation, is that the priest can at any time of day administer the reserved sacrament to a sick person (without having fasted) because he *does not himself* partake of it. He would not "receive the Communion himself" unless he had *then* consecrated it, when, according to a mediæval rule, he *must receive*, in order to "consummate the sacrifice" which is not otherwise completed. So in 1549 it was only when there *had* to be a celebration in the "Sick" house (because of no "Open Communion" in church) that the priest is ordered "first to receive himself."

It is also singular that Dr. Harris entirely overlooks the *additional* last rubric which was inserted in the Service for the Communion of the Sick in the 1552 Book, because its insertion at once proves that ministering to the Sick with the reserved sacrament was no longer allowed. It states that in cases of "Plague or of contagious diseases" when no neighbours can be persuaded to join the sick person for Communion, the Minister *alone* (that is without others joining in) may communicate *with* him. The fact that the Minister had himself to communicate shows that he was not administering the reserved sacrament to the sick person. In fact, if reservation had been permissible this rubric *would not have been necessary at all*, for the infectious person would naturally have been communicated by that method. Bishop Cosin's attempt to alter this rubric in the 1661 revision confirms this fact. He wanted permission for the sick person with a contagious disease to be communicated even when the terms of the rubric about "others to communicate with him" could not be complied with. He asks "if there might be here some indulgence given in case the sick person doth so earnestly desire the sacrament that he cannot be in a quiet state of mind without it."¹ But this could at once have been possible if the 1549 rubric regarding reservation from the "Open Communion" in church, had been operative. It must not be forgotten in this connection that there was an important alteration in the rubric for "spiritual Communion" in the 1552 Book which proves conclusively that Reserva-

¹ *Works*, v. 524.

tion was altogether prohibited and unused from that time. In 1549 there was the possibility of communicating the sick person *alone* (without others) with the reserved sacrament from the "Open Communion" in church—"if there be any," are the words of the rubric which prove that the participation of others is not essential. But this was not allowed in 1552 and the rubric for "spiritual Communion" added a further reason for the Curate to employ *that* method. For this rubric provided "spiritual Communion" for the sick person when there was "lack of company to receive with him." If Reservation had not been abrogated it would have covered just such a case—"Let the sick person be communicated with the reserved sacrament" would have been the rubric. But *instead* the Curate is instructed to comfort the sick person by reminding him that he can make a "spiritual Communion" if he "truly repents him of his sin and stedfastly believes that Christ suffered for him on the Cross," and that this would be equally profitable for his soul's health. Clearly these two rubrics alone prove that no Reservation was contemplated or practised under the rules of the 1552 Book. It has been somewhat speciously urged that the statement in Article 28 that "the Sacrament was not by Christ's ordinance reserved" leaves room for its authorization by "*ecclesiastical* ordinance." But there is not the slightest trace of evidence that the Reformers, who compiled the Articles, would for a moment countenance superseding or contradicting "Christ's ordinance" with the "Church's" ordinance. The expression "Christ's ordinance" is used frequently in the Articles, and always with the implication of asserting a final and full authority. The constant anxiety of the Reformers was to use the Sacrament, as Jewel expressed it, "as Christ Himself commanded" (Works III. 55). Bishop Cooper describes it as "exceeding arrogance to make your spiritual governors omnipotent in altering the Sacraments by *Christ ordained*" (*Private Mass*, 114). He lays down the clear rule that "In the celebration of this Sacrament of the Lord's Supper we ought to do that only, and nothing else, that Christ the author of it did in His institution" (*ibid* 74). Moreover, it is plain that a definite prohibition of Reservation, *excluding* an alternative authorization by another co-ordinate, if not superseding authority, is intended in Article 28, since the other three practices mentioned—"carried about," "lifted up" or "worshipped" were at the same time definitely prohibited. The object of the statement regarding "reservation" in the Article is made quite clear by the language of Article 25 which declares the purpose for which Christ ordained sacraments—not that they "should be gazed upon or carried about, but that we should duly use them." Christ ordained them to be used and not to be "reserved." As Dr. Bicknell very truly says: "We must not presume to argue about our Lord's presence in the Eucharist as if it were in any way an earthly presence. . . . We cannot be certain that that Presence abides when we use the consecrated bread and wine for . . . a purpose not ordained by Christ, but prompted by the fallible logic of human devotion. . . . We cannot, as it were, bind Him to earth by our treatment of the elements . . . there is nothing in His institution or in the outward signs to suggest in any way that He gave us the Eucharist

that through the consecrated elements He might dwell among us to-day by an abiding external presence comparable to His presence during His life on earth." (*Thirty-nine Articles*, 503, 507/8).

We have further direct contemporary evidence that absolute prohibition of Reservation was intended, since the *Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum* published in 1552 and drawn up by Cranmer, contains the distinct statement : " And so we allow this sacrament neither to be lifted up, nor carried about, nor *reserved* nor worshipped, and lastly we suffer no greater veneration of the Eucharist than of *baptism* and of the *Word of God*" (cap. 19). It is also important to remember the historical setting of Article 28 of 1552, because by comparison with the contemporaneous Canons of the Council of Trent, we get clear evidence of the purpose of its definite language. The Council of Trent at its 13th session had declared in canon 7 that if any one asserted that the Eucharist may not be *reserved*, but must necessarily be distributed to those present immediately after the consecration, or that it may not be carried to the sick with due honours, let him be anathema." This was enacted on 11th Oct., 1551. Cranmer refers to this Roman canon in a letter to Calvin in the following March (20) : " Our adversaries are now holding their councils at Trent for the establishment of their errors. . . . They are making decrees respecting the worship of the host, wherefore we ought to leave no stone unturned, not only that we may guard against idolatry, but also that we may ourselves come to an agreement upon the doctrine of the sacrament" (*Original Letters*, P.S., vol. i, p. 24). When the Articles were issued the next year it was at once seen how Cranmer had " guarded" against this " idolatry," of the " worship of the host," by the clear statements of Articles 25 and 28—that the sacraments were to be used and not " carried about," " worshipped " or " reserved." The anathema of Trent was directly challenged and completely accepted. Not content with this, in his learned treatise on the *True and Catholic doctrine of the Lord's Supper*, Cranmer unequivocally condemned the Romish practice of " keeping the host under lock and key," " as leading the people unto all error and idolatry, not bringing them by bread unto Christ, but from Christ to bread" (" Lord's Supper," 238). As early as 1550 Bishop Ridley, illegally anticipating the complete abrogation of Reservation in the 1552 Book (as he also did the removal of altars), inquired " whether any doth reserve the sacrament and not immediately receive it?" Roger Hutchinson also, even before the issue of the 1552 book, condemned not merely the adoration, but also the *reservation* of the sacrament. He says : " Undoubtedly Christ would have left us some commandment or else have taught us by His ensample, if either the bread or the wine were to be heaved up or to be *reserved*, or hanged up in a pyx, as it hath been abused" (*Works*, 253). Bishop Hooper in a series of fifty *Articles concerning Christian Religion* issued for his clergy, declares that the fact that the Sacraments " were not instituted for a spectacle or wondering stock doth evidently prove that they ought not to be *kept* nor *worshipped*, or any other ways to be used than as Christ did institute them" (*Later Writings*, 125).

Yet in face of this and other definite and clear evidence, Dr. Harris

actually asserts that the compilers of the 1552 Book adopted the policy of "saying *nothing whatever* about Reservation" (561) as "they found themselves unable to condemn Reservation outright"! When we reach the Elizabethan period we find that Queen Elizabeth on May 9, 1559, the very day on which this restored 1552 Prayer Book came into use, removed the reserved host from her Chapel and the Royal Commissioners in the same year in their Visitation to enforce the use of this Prayer Book, made Incumbents publicly *recant*, amongst other customs, "the *reserving* and keeping or worshipping of the Sacrament." Yet in spite of this direct evidence Dr. C. Harris asserts that the *English Book of 1552*—the one restored by Elizabeth in 1559—"discreetly left a loophole for Reservation" (p. 577), He even goes further and declares that the Royal Commissioners of 1552 "regarded *continuous* reservation *in one kind* as lawful under the Second Book" (556)!!

But we have, further, the clear statements of prominent Elizabethan bishops on the subject. Bishop Jewel, in his long controversy with Harding the renegade Papist, accepts his imputation that Reservation was denied by the Elizabethan Church, and speaks of the "abolishing of the Reservation of the Sacrament," and justifies it "for that Christ said 'not to take and *keep*, but take and eat.'" He declares that they cannot tolerate in their churches "the carrying about of the bread, nor worshipping it, nor other such idolatrous and blasphemous fondness which none of them can prove that Christ or his Apostles ever ordained or left unto us" (*Works*, III. 550).

Bishop Cooper in 1562 admits "that in the primitive Church divers used Reservation." But he argues that this is no justification for saying "that we have any testimony in the Word of God to justify it, or that all the holy Fathers did approve it." He adds that because some "good men" used it "it is not sufficient to prove that it must therefore be always used; or that all did well at that time in using it." We have, he declares, "a number of sound testimonies that all did not allow Reservation nor think it according to the Word of God." He then cites Origen as condemning the practice and also Cyprian. He quotes the supposed 2nd epistle of Clement of Rome, who ordered that if any consecrated bread remained it "was not to be kept until the morrow, but, with fear and trembling, let the ministers eat it up" (*Gratian decret.*, p. 3). He concludes: "Therefore you may not force upon us to receive reservation as a thing either grounded in Scripture or generally allowed by the primitive Church. . . . If ye will prove us impudent or mad for not receiving reservation, I trust you see, that we shall have company in our impudency and madness" (*Private Mass*, 150-1). This is not the language of an Elizabethan Bishop who knew that the traditional custom of perpetual Reservation based on Archbishop Peckham's obsolete Canon, was still lawful in the Church of England!

Prebendary Becon in his *Catechism* also speaks of "reserving the sacramental bread" as well as "keeping it in pyxes" as an "abuse of the Papists": "Christ said, 'Take ye, eat ye,' He said not 'take ye, reserve ye.' The Sacrament was instituted of Christ to be *received* and not to be reserved." "They therefore that reserve the sacramental

bread after the Lord's Supper be done, enterprise that which is not found in the Word of God" (*Catechism*, 251-3). To go a generation further, we find that Bishop Andrewes condemned the practice, although he admitted that "reserving the Sacrament was suffered for a long time in the Primitive Church." But following the language of Article 28, he said: "It was instituted as a sacrament that it should be *received and eaten*, and not to be reserved and carried about." Quoting Theodoret, he says, "the sacramental symbols after consecration go not from their own nature, so . . . it is easily shown no divine adoration can be used to them." With regard to the need of the sick or dying, he says that the English clergy "may not refuse, but go to him and minister it to him. So that Reservation needeth not, the intent is had without it" (*Minor Works*, 17-9). There was evidently no thought of the possibility of administering the *reserved* sacrament to the sick in the mind of Bishop Jeremy Taylor, for he says clearly, "the manner of the sick man's reception of the holy Sacrament hath in it nothing differing from the ordinary solemnities of the Sacrament" (*Holy Dying*, sect. 4, para. 12; *Works*, 2. 206). Bishop Cosin enunciated what were practically current Lutheran views on the subject, when he declares that the consecration "only lasted as long as the holy action remained for which the bread and wine were hallowed and which being ended, return to their former use again." Therefore, he added, "Christ in the consecrated bread cannot be kept preserved to be carried about because He is *present only to the communicants*" (*Hist. of Transubstantiation*, p. 51). Such teaching excludes the possibility of any idea of Reservation.

Bishop William Beveridge, another prominent Caroline divine, in his Commentary on the 28th Article is most emphatic in his condemnation of the practice of Reservation. After giving Scriptural evidence against the doctrine of transubstantiation he says: "Now we having before proved that this bread is not the very body of Christ, but bread still after as well as before consecration, we have overthrown the very foundations of these gross superstitions; it being only upon *that account* that they perform so much homage and worship to it. . . . Neither need I heap up many arguments to prove that according to Christ's institution, the sacramental bread is not to be reserved, much less worshipped, but eaten. Howsoever or whensoever this superstition first crept into the church, by their own confession it is contrary to Christ's institution. . . . They must know that the bread they reserve and carry about, is not the body of Christ, nor hath any relation to it upon that very account, because they reserve and carry it about, and do not eat it" (*Works*, VII, 487-9). It is also worthy of notice that in the last Revision, of 1661, there is a slight alteration of wording in the first rubric before the Service for "Communion of the Sick." In 1552 it had read, "he shall there *minister* the holy Communion." It is obvious, from the context, that the term "minister" there, is equivalent to "celebrate," but the 1661 Revisers were determined that it should be quite clear that the priest was not to "minister" the reserved sacrament to the sick person, so they altered the wording of this rubric to read—"shall there *celebrate* the holy Communion."

It is necessary here to say a word about the Latin Prayer Book of 1560. It is boldly claimed that "the official and authoritative character of this Prayer Book is beyond doubt" (Harris, p. 562). It is then argued that because this 1560 Latin Book provides, in its service for the "Communion of the Sick," for some sort of "Reservation" (which we will consider later) therefore "Elizabeth did not regard Reservation of the 1549 type as in any way inconsistent with the 1559 Prayer Book which was authorized by Parliament, nor with the 1552 office for Sick Communion, which was retained unaltered" (p. 564). In fact, it is dogmatically asserted that "the 1552 office for the Communion of the Sick was *officially interpreted* as permitting Reservation of the 1549 type" (p. 562).

(To be continued.)

Starting Afresh, by the Rev. Pat McCormick (Longmans Green & Co., 2s. 6d. net) is the Bishop of London's Lent Book for this year. Mr. McCormick is well known through his broadcasts from St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. These addresses are conceived in the same direct, homely and arresting style as his Sunday addresses, and should be effective in their appeal to those who should make a fresh start. The road to travel with its difficulties, the help that is given and the ultimate end are set out with many impressive illustrations.

A volume of addresses by the late Bishop of Jarrow, the Right Rev. Geoffrey Gordon, has been issued by Messrs. Skeffington & Sons Ltd. (3s. 6d. net). The title *The Life of Mastery*, indicates his purpose. He shows in a practical way that the Christian Faith is the way of victory over the troubles, disappointments, limitations through circumstances or poverty, and all the failures of life. He deals with the ills that flesh is heir to, and his treatment of them are specially suggestive to preachers who will find many helpful thoughts in these discourses. The Bishop of Durham pays a sympathetic tribute to the memory of his late Suffragan.

The Master and the Disciples, General Editors the Rev. J. P. Hodges and R. B. Parker, is a series of Sunday School Lessons published by the S.P.C.K. for the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement (2s. net). Its aim is "to foster a true spirit of discipleship," and is intended for "the eleven-plus" age. The Bible lessons are illustrated with many modern illustrations and the lives of modern Christians.

Miss C. M. Fox has arranged a series of *Prayers for Women's Meetings* (The Lutterworth Press, 2s. 6d. net). A wide variety is provided to meet every kind of need and they are arranged in four divisions: Times and Seasons, Thanksgivings, For Mankind, and For Graces of Character.