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THE 'APOSTOLIC ANAPHORA', AND THE
PRAYER OF ST POLYCARP.

THE book which has prompted the following enquiry¹ is written with the express purpose of popularizing the results obtained by the author in a more elaborate work, entitled *L'Eucharistia*, which was published at Tournai in Belgium just before the war. It consists to a large extent of quotations from that work with amplifications and justifications where they have seemed to be required. The style is lucid, and the writer never staggers under the weight of his learning: he has 'the grace of repetition' and insists on making himself understood. His theme in brief is this: the Eucharistic Prayer preserved in the so-called Egyptian Church Order, now identified by Dom Connolly with the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus, represents in character (if not always in actual words) the Apostolic Anaphora, the essential Eucharistic formula which may be considered as having Apostolic sanction and has formed the groundwork of all Catholic Liturgies. Its simplicity, its exclusively Christological character, the antiquity of its phraseology, the echoes of its language in the earliest Christian writers—all these take us back to primitive times and justify the claim to apostolicity in a sense of that term which the author is careful to define.

Whether we accept Dom Cagin's view of it or not, the text of this Prayer is so important, and at the same time so unfamiliar, that we must needs have it before us from the outset. It is here given from the Verona palimpsest published by Hauler, and from Mr Horner's translation from the Ethiopic in his *Statutes of the Apostles*, with due regard to the better MSS of which he has given a collation in his appendix.

¹ *L'Anaphore apostolique et ses témoins*, par Dom Paul Cagin, moine bénédictin de l'abbaye de Solesmes. (P. Lethielleux, Paris, 1919.)

Dominus uobiscum :

Et cum spiritu tuo.

Sursum corda :

Habemus ad dominum.

Gratias agamus domino :

Dignum et iustum est.

Gratias tibi referimus, deus, per
dilectum puerum tuum Iesum
Christum,

quem in ultimis temporibus misisti
nobis saluatorem et redemptorem
et angelum uoluntatis tuae ;

qui est uerbum tuum inseparabilem
(*sic*), per quem omnia fecisti et
bene placitum tibi fuit ;

misisti de caelo in matricem uir-
ginis, quique in utero habitus
incarnatus est et filius tibi
ostensus est ex spiritu sancto
et uirgine natus ;

qui uoluntatem tuam complens et
populum sanctum tibi adquirens
extendit manus, cum pateretur,
ut a passione liberaret eos qui
in te crediderunt ;

qui cumque traderetur uoluntariae
passioni, ut mortem soluat et
uincula diaboli dirumpat et in-
fernum calcet et iustos inluminet
et terminum figat et resurrectionem
manifestet,

accipiens panem gratias tibi agens
dixit: Accipite, manducate: hoc
est corpus meum, quod pro
uobis confringetur.

Similiter et calicem dicens: Hic
est sanguis meus, qui pro uobis
effunditur ; quando hoc facitis,
meam commemorationem facitis.

The Lord (be) with you all :

Perfectly with thy spirit may he be.

Lift up your hearts :

We have (them) with the Lord our
God.

Let us give thanks to the Lord.

Right it is, meet and just.

We give thanks to thee, Lord,
through thy beloved Son Jesus
Christ,

whom in the last days thou sentest
to us, a saviour and redeemer,
the messenger of thy counsel.

This is the Word who is from thee,
by whom thou, being willing,
madest all things ;

and thou sentest from heaven into
the womb of the Virgin ; he
became flesh and was borne
within her ; and thy Son was
manifested by the Holy Spirit,

that he might fulfil thy will and
make a people for thee. Spread-
ing out his hands while he
suffered, that he might release
the sufferers who trust on thee.

He who was delivered up of his
own will to suffering, that he
might unloose death and burst
the bonds of Satan and trample
on Siola and lead forth the holy
ones ; (that) he might establish
the covenant and make known
the resurrection.

He took bread, he gave thanks
and said: Take and eat: this
is my Body which for your sake
is broken.

And likewise the cup, he said:
This is my Blood, which for
your sake is shed ; when ye do
this, ye shall make a memorial
of me.

Memores igitur mortis et resurrectionis eius offerimus tibi panem et calicem, gratias tibi agentes, quia nos dignos habuisti adstare coram te et tibi ministrare.

Et petimus ut mittas spiritum tuum sanctum in oblationem sanctae ecclesiae; in unum congregans des omnibus qui percipiunt sanctis in repletionem spiritus sancti ad confirmationem fidei in ueritate,

ut te laudemus et glorificemus per puerum tuum Iesum Christum, per quem tibi gloria et honor, patri et filio cum sancto spiritu, in sancta ecclesia tua, et nunc et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Remembering therefore his death and his resurrection, we offer to thee this bread and this cup, giving thanks to thee because thou hast made us worthy to stand before thee and minister as priests to thee.

And we beseech thee to send thy Holy Spirit upon the oblation of the Church, that in joining (them) together thou mayest grant to all of them who take of it, that it may be to them for holiness and for filling (them) with the Holy Spirit, and for strengthening of faith in truth,

that thee they may glorify and praise through thy Son Jesus Christ, through whom to thee be glory and might in the holy Church, now and always and for ever and ever. Amen.

The first point to which Dom Cagin calls our attention is the absence of the angelic hymn, 'Holy, Holy, Holy', which forms a part of all Liturgies. He notes, however, that its position is not constant in the Liturgies, and that it is sometimes inserted into the Anaphora so as seriously to interfere with its original structure. He also points out that in the *Liber Pontificalis* its introduction is ascribed to Pope Sixtus I, who died in 127. The absence of the *Sanctus* therefore, so far from militating against the apostolicity of this Anaphora, is a direct argument in its favour.

In addition to the two texts which we have given above Dom Cagin cites the parallel, but interpolated, texts of the Anaphora found in the Syriac *Testament of the Lord*, the Ethiopic *Liturgy of the Saviour*, and the Ethiopic *Liturgy of the Apostles*. He refuses at this point to consider the problem of the relation to each other of the Church Orders in which the Anaphora is preserved to us. He prefers to regard it as a pre-existing formula which the Church Orders have simply embodied in the form in which it was current at the time of their compilation. He thus

provides himself with five independent witnesses to its text: but it is evident that in such a method of treatment the writer lays himself open to serious criticism.

In the *Testament of the Lord* he finds the Anaphora in a form interpolated and modified so as to introduce the Patripassian heresy. He cites the following changes:—

(1) The insertion, after ‘angel of thy counsel’, of the words ‘for it is thy counsel that we should be saved by thee’—redemption being thus attributed to the Father.

(2) The alteration of ‘his death and resurrection’ into ‘thy death and thy resurrection’; so that the passage runs: ‘Therefore mindful of thy death and thy resurrection, we offer unto thee this bread and this cup’—the death and resurrection being thus attributed to the Father.

(3) The insertion into the clause next following (‘We give thanks unto thee, that thou hast counted us worthy’, &c.) of the words ‘who alone art God for ever and our Saviour’—the modalist formula of the solitary Father in eternity and the Son and Saviour in time.

(4) The combined effect of the various changes of the vocatives throughout the Prayer: such as ‘Tu uirtus Patris’ and ‘aeterna Trinitas, Domine Iesu Christe, Domine Pater . . . Domine Spiritus Sancte’.

For these modifications and interpolations our author can find no place in Church History other than the Patripassian controversy of Praxeas or of Noetus in the second century. But, if the Anaphora was already thus interpolated in favour of this heresy, it must plainly be of earlier date.

We cannot here deal with all these points or with others which further complicate the argument. It must suffice to consider the remarkable change which gives us the clause ‘Mindful of thy death and thy resurrection, we offer unto thee this bread and this cup’. It occurs in the two Ethiopic Liturgies referred to above as giving parallel texts of this Anaphora. But this very fact makes it difficult to accept the view that the words are only capable of an interpretation in a Patripassian sense. Moreover they occur also in the text of the Ethiopic Church Order itself, in the fuller MS which Mr Horner has selected for his edition of the *Statutes of the Apostles*, and in another MS which is similar to it. Here they are undoubtedly a later insertion and are

perhaps taken from the *Testamentum Domini* which precedes them in both of these MSS. But this shews that they were not offensive to a later age. The true explanation would seem to be that the author of these changes disregarded the principle by which the Eucharistic thanksgiving is solely directed to the Father. Having begun with 'Pater unigeniti tui saluatoris nostri', he soon introduces a clause addressed to the Son—'Tu uirtus Patris'; and then, after a recurrence to the Father, he once more reverts to the Son in the words 'Mindful of thy death and thy resurrection we offer unto thee'; and before he reaches the close he even addresses the Eternal Trinity. We cannot acquit him of clumsiness, but it is hard to charge him with heresy. And we certainly need not look for him as far back in the past as the days of Praxeas or Noetus.

After supporting his argument for the extreme antiquity of this Anaphora in its uninterpolated form by citing passages from early writers which appear to him to shew familiarity with the phrases of its Christological scheme, Dom Cagin comes with a special delight to a collection of parallels which Dom Connolly had brought together from the works of Hippolytus for a very different purpose. Having given various reasons for assigning the so-called Egyptian Church Order as a whole to the authorship of Hippolytus, Dom Connolly illustrated the language of the Anaphora in particular by the parallels in question, which seemed to him to suggest that in the Anaphora itself the hand of Hippolytus could be traced. Dom Cagin finds much satisfaction in reversing the argument and printing the passages in full as a proof that the Anaphora was well known to Hippolytus, whose mind was so penetrated with it that reminiscences of it are found to be constantly shaping his thoughts. We may leave this particular point of controversy to others, and pass on to a task which is specially incumbent on the present writer.

In illustrating the influence of the presumed Apostolic Anaphora on the language of early writers Dom Cagin has done me the honour of reprinting almost the whole of an article which I wrote twenty years ago in the *Expositor* (Jan. 1899), under the title 'Liturgical Echoes in Polycarp's Prayer'. I was careful at that time to refrain from discussing any of the interesting questions which were raised by the parallel texts which I there brought together, and I ended by saying, 'I commend them to the

attention of students alike of the Martyrdoms and of the Liturgies of the early Church'. I am grateful to Dom Cagin for having reproduced them with such fullness, and I hope that now at length they may receive the consideration which I still believe them to deserve. Dom Cagin uses them, naturally enough, in support of his particular view of the primitive character of the Anaphora which we are considering; for some at least among them offer coincidences with this Anaphora, which is thus itself carried back, if the Martyrdom is to be trusted, to a period antecedent to the year 156.

But in the process of writing that article my faith in the genuineness of this famous Martyrdom was somewhat shaken by the occurrence of these very parallels, though I was unwilling without much further investigation to cast doubt upon a tradition which had the recent support of Bishop Lightfoot's authority. Now, however, Dom Cagin's reproduction of my article and the use which he has made of it compel me to return to the enquiry, and at the least to point to one clause of Polycarp's Prayer which, I am now convinced, was not written within the limits of the second century.

No better subject could be proposed for a prize dissertation in one of our Universities than the Doxologies of the early Christian Church. A collection of the texts, with a record of important variants, would in itself be illuminating and fruitful; and, if the subject were limited in the first instance to the Ante-Nicene period, it would hardly be necessary to go outside the printed editions. The mere arrangement of such a collection would be an admirable introduction to the study of Christian doctrine. Moreover, the answer to some interesting questions would then appear at a glance. What, for example, is the earliest reference of any kind in a doxology to the Holy Spirit? There is none in the doxologies of the New Testament, nor in the numerous doxologies of the Epistle of Clement of Rome. Can we find one in any doxology which can be securely dated before we come to Clement of Alexandria or Hippolytus? And then how noteworthy is the doxology which closes Clement's *Quis dives salvetur*: 'To whom *through* the Son (*τοῦ παιδὸς*) Jesus Christ, the Lord of quick and dead, and *through* the Holy Spirit, be glory . . .' How fresh and informal, and almost poetical, is that which we find in *Paed.* iii 101. 2: 'Rendering thankful praise to the only Father and Son, Son and Father, to the Tutor and

Teacher (who is) the Son, together also with the Holy Ghost'. And what a striking parallel does the close of Hippolytus's tract against Noetus—'To him (i. e. the Son) be the glory and the might, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the holy Church'—afford to the close of the Anaphora in what is now claimed as the *Apostolic Tradition* of the same Hippolytus—'per quem tibi gloria et honor, patri et filio cum sancto spiritu, in sancta ecclesia tua'. A like formula is prescribed in this same Church Order to be said with every benediction. Such is the language of that part of the document for which we have the attestation of the Latin version. But, when we turn to the additional prayers which the Ethiopic version has added to the text represented by the Latin, we find the regular use of another formula, which is somewhat strange to our modern ears: 'through whom to thee, with him and the Holy Spirit, be glory and might'.

I come now to the point to which I have been leading up. This strange formula is the stereotyped doxology of the Ethiopic Church, being regularly used in its Liturgies. It is found three times in the Arabic 'Canons of Hippolytus'; but in each case it occurs in connexion with a modification of or an addition to the prayers taken over from the *Apostolic Tradition*. The only instance (*with one exception*) to which I can at present point of the occurrence of this formula in a Greek document is in the midst of the Anaphora of the 'Liturgy of St Mark'—that curiously composite Liturgy which comes to us from Alexandria. Here we read (Swainson, p. 30): 'Thou didst make all things through thy Wisdom, the true Light, thy only-begotten Son, our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ; *through whom to thee, with him and the Holy Spirit*, we give thanks and offer. . .'

The one exception, to which I have referred above, is the Prayer of St Polycarp's Martyrdom. The text printed by Lightfoot (or by Gebhardt, Harnack, and Zahn, 1877) runs as follows: δι' οὗ σοὶ σὺν αὐτῷ καὶ πνεύματι ἁγίῳ δόξα καὶ ὕμν καὶ εἰς τοὺς μέλλοντας αἰῶνας. ἀμήν. We need not here cite the variants of the MSS, but only observe that Eusebius in quoting the passage writes ἐν (for καὶ) πνεύματι ἁγίῳ, a change which would be in harmony with his dogmatic position. The Latin version supports the reading of the text, which doubtless must be accepted. If then this Martyrdom was indeed written shortly after A.D. 156, we have the surprising phenomenon that the earliest doxology in

which the Holy Spirit is mentioned at all presents us with the stereotyped formula of the Ethiopic Church, a formula which also occurs once in the so-called Liturgy of St Mark. Here I leave the matter. It will be evident that I cannot admit the use which Dom Cagin makes of parallels drawn from this Prayer in his argument for the early date of the 'Apostolic Anaphora'. The beauty of this famous Martyrdom must not deter us from a fresh investigation of its genuineness. There are other reasons than the one which I have here alleged which will, I believe, shew that it cannot be a document of the second century.

I should wish, in conclusion, to call attention to the interesting Epilogue which Dom Cagin adds to his work. It deals first with the simplicity and sufficiency of the 'Apostolic Anaphora'; secondly, with the Prayers of the *Didachè*, for a fuller treatment of which he refers us to his larger work in which he maintained that they are not intended as Eucharistic in the liturgical sense, but as the Blessings at a Christian common meal, and that the Eucharist is not treated of at all until a later chapter of the book. Then he passes to a consideration of the Invocation of the Holy Spirit which is found in the 'Apostolic Anaphora'. His treatment of the structure of the Prayer at this point is interesting. After the Words of Institution—which are for him of course the Moment of Consecration—the Prayer contains in a single sentence '(1) the Anamnesis, (2) the priestly Oblation of the Sacrifice, (3) the Invocation asking for the co-operation of the Holy Spirit, to unite and confirm in the plenitude of His holiness those who are receivers together in the consummation of this Offering'. The words have been given above from the Latin and Ethiopic texts, and their general sense is clear, though the Latin is at one point corrupt and we cannot re-establish the Greek text with certainty. The Invocation here is simply a prayer for communicants that the virtue of the offering may be theirs for unity and holiness. Dom Cagin points out the sharp contrast between this prayer for communicants and the later Invocation into which it was transformed, when the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was in continual discussion in the fourth century, and the Holy Spirit's action was invoked to effect a change in the Bread and Wine, as in the various forms of the Consecratory Epiclesis of the Eastern Church. Dom Cagin does good service by insisting that such a Consecratory Epiclesis has no place in the primitive Anaphora,

whereas the prayer for communicants is a vital element which continues to find expression, though in different language, in the later forms of the Anaphora. This portion of his book deserves to be considered when we are again being threatened with an attempt to insert an Eastern patch into our own sufficient form of Western Liturgy.

The Epilogue is followed by a long Appendix, and these together make up nearly half the book. Seventy pages of the Appendix are devoted to a kindly but critical discussion of Dom Connolly's identification of the so-called Egyptian Church Order with the *Apostolic Tradition* mentioned in the inscription on the Chair of St Hippolytus. So far as his own thesis is concerned Dom Cagin is quite ready to welcome Dom Connolly's view; but he is not yet convinced of its truth, and he is glad as he says to have a hand in the game. His survey is instructive, though it is not easy to see what alternative solution he would propose.

I have selected some points—and one in particular—at which Dom Cagin's main argument appears to require modification. I hope that his book will be studied with care. Even those who in the end are unable to give the title 'Apostolic' to this ancient Anaphora will thank the veteran scholar for the attention which he has called to it, and the way in which he has expounded and illustrated it.

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