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by

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TO MY WIFE

C. B. D.

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PREFACE.

A FEW words must be said as to the origin and purpose of this book. Frequent mention was made, in the evidence given before the recent Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline, of the elevation of the Bread and Wine immediately after Consecration, and not unfrequently the practice of "elevation" was denied, even where the witness distinctly alleged that some such ceremony had taken place¹. It further appeared, from the evidence of several of the clergymen who were examined, that this discrepancy arose from a distinction drawn between elevating the elements after consecration so as to make them visible to the people, and the practice of a more moderate elevation, either when taking the paten and chalice into the hands, or at the words "Do this in remembrance of Me."

It is beyond dispute that, whatever name may be assigned to it, both types of this ceremony are now practised in many Anglican churches². Yet there is

¹ This occurred in twenty-seven instances. *Report of Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline*, p. 36.

² See the letters from clergymen published in the *Minutes of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission*. Vols. I.—III.

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an entire absence of any direction in the rubrics to lift up the elements, except so far as is necessary in order to perform those manual acts, which were specified with such deliberate care at the last revision.

In the absence of any rubrical authority, the ceremony is defended on the ground that the "elevation or showing to the people," which was expressly forbidden in the first Prayer Book, had an exclusive reference to the lifting up with a view to worship, which had been introduced after the rise of a belief in Transubstantiation, and is specially referred to in Article xxviii. Accordingly, other explanations of the purpose of elevation are put forward by those who practise it. Even extreme elevation in view of the congregation is justified as enabling the manual acts to be made visible, when the eastward position is adopted, while a slight elevation is interpreted to signify a presentation to God of the memorial of Christ's sacrifice¹.

These varying accounts suggested a more exact enquiry into the various types of elevation which have been practised in the Church, and into the several shades of meaning which they have been taken to represent. I have endeavoured to collect and arrange the evidence available on the subject, and to present a fair and impartial, if not a complete, statement of the main issues which are involved. I have thought

¹ *Minutes of Evidence*, i. pp. 268, 269, 274, 414, 440, 476, 533, 541: ii. pp. 37, 114, 118, &c., &c.

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that this might be more useful than a strong expression of my own views upon the whole subject.

Such an enquiry cannot be regarded as unimportant. There is no more striking, and hardly any more significant, ceremony in the Roman Mass than the elevation of the Host. It is the very climax of the service, and is looked for with feelings of the most intense expectation and devotion. Its intention, moreover, is undoubted, and is one which marks distinctly the "line of deep cleavage" between the Churches of England and Rome.

If this study has proceeded on sound lines of enquiry, there can be no doubt as to the historical meaning in the Western Church of any extreme elevation of the elements as soon as they have been consecrated¹. And however sincerely a different signification may now be intended, the coincidence in time between the Roman elevation, and that recently introduced into the Anglican service, must inevitably result in a serious confusion between the two ceremonies, and in frequent misunderstanding².

¹ "That the people with all reverence and honour may worship the same." *The Rationale*, see p. 160. *Ut visum ab omnibus adoretur*. Coutances Missal, A.D. 1557. See pp. 110 f.

² *Report*, p. 35. "Those who guided the Church of England through this process of restoration to primitive antiquity were of opinion that the elevation was so connected with the repudiated doctrine of Transubstantiation, as distinguished from the Real Presence, that it ought not to be suffered to remain." Extract from a judgment in the Court of the Arches by Sir R. Phillimore.

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The significance of elevation cannot therefore be regarded as a matter of private interpretation. We must weigh, with the utmost care, not only its historical purpose, but also the impression produced on the popular mind, when a ceremony, so intimately wrapped up with a doctrine repudiated at the Reformation, is being restored, without authority, at the very point of the service where it is most liable to be misunderstood.

But further, a distinction has been drawn, in the recent Report of the Royal Commission, between extreme elevation to evoke worship, and "the slight lifting up which has come to be practised after consecration at the words 'Do this in remembrance of Me'." The history of elevation, as practised at these words, is a very complicated one, but it does not appear, from any of the evidence adduced in this volume, that moderate elevation had, at this particular point of the service, any peculiar significance other than that of the ordinary post-consecration form. The slighter elevation of the Chalice, which was almost universally enjoined, arose out of special reasons which are definitely named, and not from any variation in the meaning of the ceremony¹.

One witness stated to the Commission that he believed the grounds on which this lesser act of

¹ See below, pp. 113—124.

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elevation is practised to be “a certain interpretation of *τοῦτο ποιεῖτε*, ‘Do this’¹.” It is obvious that such a view raises a serious doctrinal question, and that the ceremony, when so explained, commits our common worship to a highly controversial interpretation of those words. I am fully aware that such an intention is far from the minds of many who practise this moderate elevation, but the careful employment of the ceremony at that point of the service, as an act of oblation, certainly gives the impression of fixing upon the words *τοῦτο ποιεῖτε* a meaning, which no formulary of the Church of England sanctions, and which no commentator of the first rank has ever adopted². In a public Liturgy such a result is surely to be deprecated, especially where the ceremony, as so used, has no clear historical support, and no rubrical warrant whatever.

The general conclusion to which I have been led is that, while the forms of elevation which were practised *before* consecration appear to have had, for the most part, a God-ward intention, all elevation *after* consecration has, by almost unanimous testimony, been practised with a view to displaying the hallowed Bread and Wine to the people, either as an invitation to Communion, or, in later times, to evoke their adoration.

¹ *Minutes of Evidence*, II. p. 258.

² Prof. Bigg, in his *Wayside Studies in Ecclesiastical History*, points out that even the Council of Trent did not adopt this interpretation, p. 170.

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The results of this enquiry are published at the suggestion of friends whose judgment I greatly value, and I can only add an expression of my own hope and prayer that they may in some small measure promote a fair and dispassionate consideration of the whole subject, and may eventually contribute towards a reasonable conclusion.

My sincere thanks are due to those friends who have helped me in the work. Both the Regius and the Norrisian Professor of Divinity have kindly made several valuable suggestions. The Rev. R. Sinker, D.D., and the Rev. G. A. Schneider, M.A., have not only given their counsel and advice, but also much patient labour in revising the proof sheets. Nor must I forget the help received in preparing the index and in the tedious work of verification from members of my own family.

Few pages fail to show how much I owe to the learned and painstaking labours of Dr Wickham Legg in his *Tracts on the Mass*, and to the Rev. F. E. Brightman, in his *Eastern Liturgies*.

T. W. D.

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