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## ATTITUDE OF EVANGELICALS TO THE CELEBRATION OF THE CENTENARY OF THE OXFORD MOVEMENT.

BY ACADEMICUS.

**I**T has seemed good to the Archbishops and Bishops to express approval of a public religious celebration of the Centenary of the Oxford Movement. The date selected removes all ambiguity as to the object proposed. July 14, 1833, was the date of the Assize Sermon preached by John Keble before the University of Oxford. John Henry Newman regarded that sermon as the beginning of the Oxford or Tractarian Movement. The selection of July 14, 1933, as the great day of the Centenary celebration concentrates attention on that particular event, and on the current of English Church life derived from that source, as the occasion of a Thanksgiving to God by the whole Church of England.

It is important to envisage clearly both the object and the character of the proposed celebration. Already it is clear that the object is likely to be confused. Reference is frequently made by supporters of the celebration to a general advance in the religious life of the Church, to the expansion of the Church abroad, to the multiplication of Church services at home, to more frequent communions, to development of reverence in public worship, to the enlistment of art, of music, of architectural adornment, to aid devotion, and especially to the growth of a sense of the corporate life and responsibility of the Church. On such grounds as these it is urged that even those who object to the prominent doctrines of the Tractarians can find abundant cause for thanksgiving, and join their praises with those whose primary cause of thanksgiving is the doctrinal development to which the Movement gave birth or resuscitation. Some advocates of the Celebration even hint that it may be made an occasion of thanksgiving for the Evangelical revival, others, with yet greater boldness, for the birth of Methodism. Now it is true that we are taught "in everything to give thanks," and "to count it all joy when we fall into manifold temptations." But to select a particular day in a particular year when a particular event happened, a day which has a special meaning for a particular group of Churchmen, and to call on *all* Churchmen to use it as an occasion for giving thanks either for anything and everything, or for the over-ruling Providence which has brought good out of evil, goes very near to the margin of religious dishonesty. To those who believe the Tractarian Movement to have been, on account of its doctrine, a blessing to the Church, July 14, 1933, is the centenary of a great birthday, the centenary of a Pentecost. No one can blame them for celebrating that day. No one will wish to interfere with their celebration. But to call on Evangelicals

to celebrate the day is like asking Roman Catholics to light fireworks on the Fifth of November. The day fixes the object of thanksgiving, turns it to a definite purpose, and in fact confines its proper observance to those who look upon that day as a day of special blessing.

When the Archbishops and Bishops determined to approve the appointment of a Committee "so to guide the celebration" of that day that "the celebration may make for the unity of the Church," they seem to have confused promotion of Church unity with the celebration of a movement which rent asunder the unity of the Church. There are some even to-day who prefer the English Church of the eighteenth to the English Church of the nineteenth century, who look back to the eighteenth century as a time when Reason held its fitting place in the religious life of England. It is conceivable that the pendulum of religious thought may swing back in this direction. Without at all concurring in this view, Churchmen may look back to the pre-Tractarian days as days in which Church divisions were on the whole negligible, days in which no such gulf separated the public worship of the Church into distinct camps, as that which to-day divides an Anglo-Catholic Mass from an Evangelical Evening Communion. Nor can anyone who has even a glimmering inkling of Church History doubt that the present wide cleavage in the Church is the direct outcome of the Oxford Movement. When, therefore, we are told that the celebration is to be so guided as to make for the *unity* of the Church, we are compelled to ask whether the Bishops intend that the Anglo-Catholics should give up all those practices and observances which are outgrowths of the 14th of July, 1833, or that Evangelicals should conform their worship to the Anglo-Catholic for the sake of unity? Possibly a glorious optimism laid hold of their Council, and suggested a vision of the 14th of July, 1933, becoming under guidance of its Committee a day when Anglo-Catholics would tone down their doctrine and worship and Evangelicals tone up theirs, but any such conception is a pure day-dream, at all events so far as Anglo-Catholics are concerned. Their ultimate goal must be the reunion of Western Christendom, and there is not the remotest possibility of such reunion being effected if the Church of England maintains Protestant services. If Anglo-Catholics are true to their necessary spiritual goal they must persevere unflinchingly in the work of a Counter-Reformation in England. Their aim is settled and no Committee can deflect them from it. As for Evangelicals, one object of this paper is to show why they cannot join in any de-Protestantizing of the Church.

It may be replied that the object of the Committee is to promote unity without any interference with faith and worship on either side, each retaining its own position, but cultivating a greater spirit of unity in spite of external divergences. It is hard, however, to see the connection of July 14 with any such object. Fraternalisation of Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals already exists in Ruridecanal Conferences, Clerical Meetings, Diocesan Missionary

Days and like occasions. But such fraternisation depends on the ignoring for the time being of the distinctive tenets and practices of two parties. Assuredly, the birthday of one of the two parties is the last day in all the year to select for the inculcation and promotion of a charitable spirit between the two. To one of the two parties it is a day of rejoicing and thanksgiving, to the other of sorrow and humiliation. The measure of the success of Tractarianism is the degree of the expulsion of Protestantism from the Church of England. To say this is not to suggest that all Tractarians would approve of a harsh, wholesale banishment of Protestants from the Church, or even grudge them the maintenance for the present of their churches and societies. Many Tractarians are willing to tolerate Evangelicals, and even, if they officiate in Protestant churches, to conform to Protestant uses. But toleration is not approval. To the Tractarian the goal of his labours, the full answer to his prayers, would be the day in which all Englishmen, or at all events all English Churchmen, were in heart and soul Tractarians. The Tractarian is bound to regard Protestantism as a defective and imperfect form of religion. Some (W. G. Ward, for instance) unhesitatingly condemned it as worse than atheism. The suggestion that Evangelicals should unite with Tractarians in praising God for the birthday of Tractarianism, has only one logical sequence, the abandonment of Evangelicalism. If Tractarianism as an interpretation of the Christian faith, as a system, is of God, Evangelicalism is not of God. It is what St. Paul would have called "another Gospel." Evangelicals, if they praise God for Tractarianism, should go on to repent of their Evangelicalism.

The most probable explanation of the action of the Archbishops and Bishops is this. They have, as a body, abandoned the Episcopal opposition which characterised them in the early days of Tractarianism. In the Revised Prayer Book they made room for greater concessions to Romanism in our Church than Newman or Pusey had ever dared to suggest. In so doing they obtained support from a considerable section of Evangelicals, whom they naturally regard as the only Evangelicals worth consideration. To invite these to join the July 14 celebrations is perfectly natural. Why should *they* not thank God for the beginnings of that Movement for which they have shown themselves prepared to find hospitality in the Church of England? By so doing they will confirm what they did in 1927 and 1928. They will endorse the belief then expressed that the Church of England has not repudiated the ritual or worship of pre-Reformation days, and that the main feature of her Protestantism is repudiation of Papal authority. That this was the true meaning of the Revised Prayer Book is indubitable. It restored the Mass, and continuance of the Real Presence in the Elements after the conclusion of the Communion Service. It confirmed all that Newman had contended for in Tract XC, and even more than he had desired. Considering the treatment then meted out by the Bishops to Newman and his friends, we are inclined to suggest that the right attitude of the

Episcopal Bench to the July celebrations to-day is that of reparation for the treatment which the Episcopate of 1842-5 awarded to Newman. Something in the shape of "a journey to Canossa," or "Henry II's flagellation" at the tomb of Thomas à Becket, is required by the fitness of things: something much more penitential than this invitation to Evangelicals, if the Bishops wish to make reparation for the past. "Ye build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them," are words exactly fitted to the Bishops and their Evangelical supporters to-day.

But there are Evangelicals who are both strong Protestants and loyal Churchmen. They are not, as some Bishops have suggested, bigoted party-men and sectarians. They look upon the Book of Common Prayer and the XXXIX Articles as the witness of the Church of England against the Roman corruption of the Gospel, and their opposition to Tractarianism is dictated by their loyalty to the Church. In the Tractarian demand for a revision of the Prayer Book and XXXIX Articles they read dissatisfaction with the doctrine of the Church of England as contained in those formularies. They place loyalty to the Church before loyalty to the Bishops, because they are well aware of the processes by which the present Bishops have been "squeezed" out of their former championship of the Church of England position into their present deference to the Romanizing tendencies of Tractarianism, nor are they in the least convinced by the subtleties by which the Bench has tried to persuade itself and the world that it has found an impregnable position at once anti-Roman and anti-Protestant. At the same time out of the deference due to the Episcopal Office those Protestants put their reply to the charge of disloyalty into the form of a concise review of the Oxford Movement as they have found it narrated in contemporary documents. From this summary it will be evident that those who so read the narrative cannot praise God for Tractarianism without manifest hypocrisy, and that their abstention from the celebration of the 14th of July is dictated not by partisanship but by loyalty to the Church of England.

First let it be observed that the Oxford Movement is never rightly appreciated when it is regarded as a local, or even as a national, manifestation of religious vitality. The second quarter of the nineteenth century was an era of spiritual revival throughout the whole of Western Christendom. The Napoleonic wars were over. Energies long repressed for fear of imperilling national safety were free to find a vent, and they found it, some in political, some in religious activity. Especially there arose in most nations a passionate demand for a Church which was something more than a department of Government. Disestablishment was the simplest answer, but Disestablishment, pure and simple, might have been no more than the outcome of irreligious forces. From such quarters, in fact, cries for Disestablishment were raised. But these cries hindered the spiritual movements towards Revival. There was not a country in Western Europe where the call was not heard among Roman Catholics as well as among Protestants. In the Pietistic

awakening in the German Universities, in the missionary earnestness of the Moravians, in the Roman Catholic movement in Bavaria associated with the names of Görres and Möhler, in the Swiss Protestant Churches under the leadership of Vinet, in the French Church voiced by La Mennais, Lacordaire and Montalembert, among French Protestants caught up by Adolphe Monod, in Scotland associated with the great names of Chalmers and McCheyne, in Ireland, even in Rome itself, this surging demand for more spiritual religion swept like a volcanic wave from shore to shore. The Oxford Revival was one form of it, and must be judged as a special form there taken by a force which was working through the whole of Western Christendom.

In England this Revival for many years had found expression in the Evangelical Movement. That Movement began indeed in the eighteenth century, but its great advance came not till the early days of the nineteenth. Its full tide ran with force during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. So far was it from being spent, as Dean Church, among others, asserts, that it was then taking rapid possession of London, and of many of the large towns of England. Simeon's followers were rousing town after town from spiritual deadness to new life. By 1840 the newly founded Church Pastoral-Aid Society numbered nearly 2,000 clerical subscribers. Three Evangelicals, Dudley Ryder and the two Sumners, were on the Episcopal Bench. But the most remarkable of all its activities was the social work which it was doing in the final abolition of Slavery, the humanising of the terribly drastic Penal Code of the country, in the demand for limitations on the capitalistic exploitation of labour, and on the commercial greed displayed in the Opium Trade. The Evangelicals were in the front rank of social reformers. They took the same position in ecclesiastical reform. They refused to be terrified by the Reform Act, and were confident that in spite of all the agitation of Dissenters and Roman Catholics the Church had nothing to fear and everything to gain from the new electorate which the Reform Act had called into existence.

Oxford, on the other hand, shared in the general panic, which assailed even such Churchmen as Arnold, the fear that the days of the Church were numbered. To this fear Keble gave expression in his sermon on National Apostasy preached before the University at the Assizes on July 14, 1833. In that sermon Keble finds omens of National Apostasy in "the desire of the Nation to disavow the principle that being a Christian Nation, she is also part of the Christian Church, and bound in her legislation and policy by the fundamental laws of the Church," and in "the restless demand for a change of constitution." He goes on to ask: "Are not offices conferred, partnerships formed, intimacies courted—nay (what is almost painful to think of), do not parents commit their children to be educated, do they not encourage them to intermarry in houses, on which Apostolical authority would rather teach them to set a mark as unfit to be entered by a faithful servant of Christ?" (i.e. presumably Dissenting schools and chapels). After condemning the spirit which leads men to exult in the decay of what they call an

exclusive system, Keble goes on to ask, "whether, according to the coolest estimate, the fashionable liberality of this generation be not ascribable in a great measure to the same temper which led the Jews voluntarily to set about degrading themselves to a level with the idolatrous Gentiles? And, if it be true anywhere, that such enactments are forced on the Legislature by public opinion, is APOSTASY too hard a word to describe the temper of that nation?" Farther on he speaks of "disrespect to the Successors of the Apostles, as such, as an unquestionable symptom of enmity to Christ," and adds that if this "disrespect be general, and grounded . . . on mere human reasons of popularity and expediency," the nation guilty of such disrespect "stands convicted in His sight of a direct disavowal of His Sovereignty." He defines the Church as "the laity as well as the clergy in their three orders, the whole body of Christians united, according to the will of Jesus Christ under the Successors of the Apostles."

The distinctive feature of the sermon of July 14, 1833, was the emphasis laid on disrespect to the Bishops, the successors of the Apostles by our Lord's ordinance, as symptomatic of National Apostasy. Now that disrespect was largely due to the Episcopal opposition to the Reform Bill. The immediate manifestation of it, uppermost in Keble's mind, was the suppression of ten Irish Bishopricks and two Archbishopricks by the Reformed Parliament, there being at the time twenty-four Archbishopricks and Bishops for a Protestant population equal to the Diocese of Lincoln. On the nation which dared to do these things Keble, from the University pulpit, issued what was equivalent to a sentence of excommunication. He pronounced it guilty of Apostasy. This is the sermon for which, and for its outcome, we are called to offer thanksgiving to God.

For the development of Keble's principle let us turn to the Tracts for the Times, issued under Newman's auspices, the manifesto from which the party derived its name. We read, for instance, in

Tract I. We must necessarily consider none to be really ordained who have not been thus [i.e. episcopally by Bishops as transmitters of the Holy Spirit] ordained . . . "Exalt our Holy Fathers, the Bishops, the Representatives of the Apostles, and the Angels of the Churches, and magnify your office, as being ordained by them to take part in the ministry."

Tract IV. Why should we not seriously endeavour to impress our people with this plain truth : that by separating themselves from our communion, they separate themselves not only from a devout, orderly, useful society, but from **THE ONLY CHURCH IN THIS REALM WHICH HAS A RIGHT TO BE QUITE SURE THAT SHE HAS THE LORD'S BODY TO GIVE TO THE PEOPLE.**

Tract X. "We (i.e. the Clergy) who are intrusted with the keys of Heaven and Hell, as the heralds of mercy, as the denouncers of woe to wicked men, as intrusted with the awful and mysterious gift of making the bread and wine Christ's body and blood, as far greater than the most powerful and the wealthiest of men in our unseen strength and our heavenly rights." (1st Edition.)

The foregoing are not an exhaustive list of passages insisting on the Apostolical Succession as confined to the ministry of the Church of England. They are but illustrative, and could easily be multiplied. To evacuate the Tractarian movement of insistence on the monopoly of the Church of England to convey the grace of the Sacraments in England, and on that monopoly being a Divine ordinance, is to evacuate it of its most cherished teaching. The Tractarians were, in fact, engaged in a desperate conflict with Dissenters. Alarmed by Radical and Dissenting threats of Disestablishment, they retaliated by denying all validity, any kind of efficacy, to Nonconformist ministry. Among the Tracts are some written by Tom Keble in the form of dialogues, condemning participation even by attendance at marriages of Dissenters. A rustic is praised for refusing to give away his relative, the bride, at one of these weddings. If a more liberal tone prevails in the Church of England to-day, Tractarianism is not to be praised for it. It forms no part at all of the heritage which we are bidden to extol. No persons could be more out of place at a celebration of the inception of Tractarianism than those who are to-day advocating intercommunion with Nonconformists. Keble and Newman would have regarded them with nothing short of holy horror, and might even have refused to communicate with them.

While Apostolic Succession was a good weapon for chastising Dissenters, it was not long before it was found to be inconvenient in relation to Roman Catholics. The English Roman Catholics in 1832 were still an obscure and negligible body. Their desire for Roman Catholic Emancipation had associated them with the Whigs, and this association led them to take up with the Dissenters' demand for Disestablishment. In the early Tracts they are denounced, and, by distortions of history of which Tract XV is a most flagrant example, a defence of sorts is set up against them. They are consistently called Papists, and are represented as having adopted their most distinctive errors in the Council of Trent, for which we have to thank Luther! But with Wiseman's lectures in London in 1836, and the concurrent establishment by him of the *Dublin Review*, the scene changes. Wiseman, who had been specially urged by La Mennais to undertake the conversion of England, was consulted by Newman and Froude in 1830 as to the possibility of special terms being granted to England by the Papacy by way of reconciliation. Wiseman was, of course, unbending, but his interest in his special charge was sharpened. The rise of Tractarianism and Newman's growing reputation attracted the attention not only of Wiseman but also of the French Roman Catholics. The consequence was an assault on Newman's theory that the Church of England had by a special providence of God continued to be Catholic, while repudiating Tridentine additions to the Catholic Faith. It began to dawn upon the Tractarians that they had raised the flag of Apostolical Succession without considering its Romeward implication.

So it came to pass that three and a half years after the memorable 14th of July Newman wrote to his sister, in January, 1837 :



"The controversy with the Romanists has overtaken us like a summer cloud," and in Tract LXXI of the same date he writes : "All that we know is that we are from long security ignorant why we are not Roman Catholics. . . . We find ourselves under the Anglican régime. Let every one of us, cleric and layman, remain in it till we have reason to suspect we are wrong. Let us put practical grounds in the forefront. Our Church, like her Latin sister, is in captivity, and we must pray with Bishop Andrewes for her deliverance."

In this last utterance are distinct notes of distress. There is a call *not* to secede ; there is a possibility, a suspicion that Church of England doctrine may be unsound. There is an avoidance of some main issues of the controversy between the two Churches. We are to put *practical* grounds in the forefront, and doctrinal in the rear. There is an alarm, the fruit not of Dissenting malevolence, but of Roman Catholic superiority in controversy. Newman followed up the Tract by a fierce attack on the *Christian Observer*, which had told Dr. Pusey that his proper place as a Professor was not Oxford but Maynooth. From this onslaught Newman proceeded to his Lectures on the Prophetic Office of the Church, in which he tried to assert for the Church of England a theological position equally distinct from ultra-Protestantism and from the unhappy demon-possessed Church of Rome. These Lectures were succeeded by a course on Justification by Faith, which he found exceedingly difficult, a *terra incognita* in English Theology. The work of publishing a Library of the Fathers was pushed on, for it had become manifest that some such supplement was needed to secure for the Church of England its impregnable fortress of the Via Media between Rome and Geneva ; Scripture and the XXXIX Articles were not enough. Indeed, in Tract LXXXV Newman makes answer to a supposed inquirer, who asks : "All this you say about the Church is very specious, and very attractive, but where is it to be found in Scripture ?" Whereto Newman replies : "This difficulty is one which before now (I do not scruple to say so) I have much felt myself, and that without being able to answer satisfactorily."

The force of this admission, of course, lies in the fact that the words, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church," are an Article of the Creed, binding on every Churchman and in some shape generally necessary to salvation. But in the VIth Article of the Church, "whatsoever is not read in the Scriptures nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an Article of the Faith, or to be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." Newman's admission that his teaching concerning the Church was not to be found in Scripture, was a plain confession that his doctrine was not in harmony with that of the Church of England. This is precisely what Protestant Evangelicals maintain, and a cardinal difficulty in the way of their joining in thanksgiving for Tractarianism.

The difficulties raised by Apostolical Succession were not nearly

at an end. As Newman applied himself to study of the Fathers, he found that the position of the Church of England was perilously like that of heretics, such as the Monophysites, and he began to say to himself that he would rather be found in the company of Leo and Athanasius than in that of Cranmer and Ridley. While he was thus meditating appeared Wiseman's article on the Donatists in the *Dublin Review*. Wiseman, laying aside all other controversies, set out to show that the position of the Church of England exactly corresponded to that of the heretical Donatists. Like the Church of England, the Donatists had an undoubted Apostolical Succession, they maintained no heresies, they sought only to separate themselves from corruptions of the Church, but heretics they were, because they separated themselves from the Chair of St. Peter. Their mere separation was their condemnation. The whole of the Catholic world was against them. Thus the very ground on which Newman specially relied, the Divine Providence vouchsafed to our Island Church, her position as another Zoar in the days of Divine visitation, was cut away from under his feet. The insularity of the Church of England, her *Via Media* fortress, became the very ground of her condemnation, the supreme proof of her want of Catholicity. Insularity was incompatible with Catholicity. So Newman, unable to establish his doctrines on Scripture, found himself equally at a loss to establish it from the Fathers. He "had seen a ghost." He had felt "a pain in the pit of his stomach." He began to ask whether the Church of England, if not the spouse of Christ, might not rank as a handmaid. If she could not be a Sarah, might she not be a Hagar? Most Reverend and Right Reverend Lords, is a Churchman disloyal who cannot see his way to Thanksgiving for a day which led, in the person of the most brilliant of her sons, to this humiliating conclusion?

The immediate consequence of Newman's defeat by Wiseman was restlessness on the part of his followers, and growing desire for secession to Rome. Correspondence began to pass between the Tractarians and Ambrose Phillips de Lisle, a Leicestershire squire who had joined the Church of Rome and founded a monastery. De Lisle's most cherished longing was to bring about a reunion of the two Churches, and it was represented to him that nothing could be more fatal to his object than individual and disconnected secessions. The Roman authorities must discountenance such secessions. Meanwhile, steps could be taken to bridge the gulf between the two by an interpretation of the XXXIX Articles which should show that they were not so Protestant as were commonly supposed, but Articles of Peace, so worded as to give an impression of Protestantism, while stopping short of condemning authorised Roman teaching. If this interpretation could be accepted by the Anglican authorities, the ground would be prepared for that conciliation for which Newman and Froude had pleaded in Rome before the preaching of Keble's Assize Sermon. It must be clearly understood that there is no definite statement in the existing correspondence of the formulation of this design. What we do find

historically is Newman's retraction of the hard things that he had said against Rome. This retraction was published by Dr. Bloxam, of Magdalen College, and was a complete surprise to Pusey and Keble. Bloxam might be called the agent of the De Lisle party in Oxford. The retraction published by him could not fail to soothe the Roman authorities, and to induce them to listen to the suggestion of discouraging individual secessions. Another effect of the publication of Tract XC was to divert public attention from Roman propaganda by the agitation aroused within the Church of England. On the other hand, to quiet Roman Catholic activity, a précis of Tract XC appeared in the *Univers* of Paris, a principal organ of the Ultramontanists. This précis was the joint work of W. G. Ward and Dalgairns, intimate friends and followers of Newman. By Tract XC Newman was able to appear in England as making a supreme effort to keep his impatient followers in the Anglican fold, and on the Continent to pose as destroying the principal Formulary which stood between Romanism and Anglicanism. It was left to the crude, downright honesty of Father Dominic, an Italian Passionist, to reject the subtleties of Tract XC, and to insist that the Formularies of a Church ought to be plain and not ambiguous. Father Dominic four years after reaped his reward by receiving Newman into the Church of Rome.

With reference to Tract XC it has not seemed necessary to state even in a summarised form all the points to which Evangelical Churchmen take objection. Our object here is to present reasons why we cannot join in Thanksgiving for the Tractarian Movement. Tract XC was the culminating instance of that sophistry which characterised the whole movement, and constitutes our gravest objection to regarding it as a movement for which we ought to praise God. Confusion arises in some minds from forgetting the historical setting of that Tract. Because the Church to-day regards subscription to the XXXIX Articles with laxity, and because they are presented by Bishops to many ordinands as having very little fixed meaning, therefore subscription to them is treated as a pure formality. When they are so presented, it is not surprising that men perfectly honest should accept them with the indifference with which they are presented for signature. Is this lax subscription a sign of spiritual vitality? It appears to mean that the Anglican Church has become an almost creedless Church. Lax subscription of the Articles is naturally extended to the Creeds as well as to the Articles. Is it a good thing for the Church to have thus scrapped her Creeds? We do not believe that it is. Though the Church to-day is creedless, it was not so a century ago. The celebration of July 14 takes us to the Church of that date, and forces us to form our opinion on Tract XC in the light of those days. For this purpose out of a multitude of witnesses we will select one who for his intellectual ability, his experience of University life, his natural desire to regard the Oxford Movement in its most favourable light, stood head and shoulders above all his contemporaries—we mean Bishop Copleston. Copleston had been the

Provost under whose administration Oriel won the first place among all the colleges of the Oxford of that day. He was still in close touch with his old College. He knew the esteem in which Newman was held, to say nothing of Keble and the other Tractarian leaders. He did not stint the praise which was their due. But on the question of subscription to the Articles, and of the sense in which signature should be made, he spoke as follows: "To speak of the language of the Articles as being capable of two or more senses, and to teach that the subscriber may therefore take them in his own sense, knowing at the same time that the authority which requires his assent understands them in another, is merely a dishonest course—tending to corrupt the conscience and to destroy all confidence between man and man. . . . If, for instance, in subscribing to the Article which condemns the Romish doctrine of Purgatory, he mentally reserves the right of holding that doctrine, provided it differ *in some respects* from the *Romish*, he betrays, according to my judgment, a want of principle, which ought to exclude him not only from sacred functions, but from every office of important trust." Opinions to the same effect could easily be multiplied, but none could be adduced which would carry greater weight with those who knew Oxford a hundred years ago. Tract XC was not, and did not profess to be, an exposition of the XXXIX Articles. Its aim was not intellectual but moral. It aimed at reconciling subscription to the XXXIX Articles with retaining the doctrines which they seemed to condemn. It was condemned for its dishonesty.

On W. G. Ward's characterisation of Protestantism as worse than atheism it is not necessary here to dwell, as it can hardly be imagined that the most optimistic of Bishops would expect Evangelicals to give thanks for what Ward said about them. On the other hand, it is an entire error to imagine that if the Oxford Movement had achieved its object, a single Evangelical would have been left in the Church to-day. It is due, as W. G. Ward admitted, to the *failure* of the Oxford Movement that there are Evangelicals left to be invited to take part in the celebration. "Newman's hope was to restore the Catholic ideal by degrees, to expel heresy, to reinstate once more the spiritual brotherhood of Anglicans by uniform doctrine. The attempt was made and it signally failed" (W. Ward's *Oxford Movement*, p. 378). There might be a call to Evangelicals to give thanks for the failure of the Oxford Movement, but July 14 is not the day for the thanksgiving, nor could Anglo-Catholics take part in it.

To sum up. The Oxford Movement inaugurated by Keble's Assize Sermon was the reaction of Oxford to a great spiritual revival. The opportunity presented to men distinguished for religious earnestness and great intellectual gifts was thrown away. They had such an opportunity as has seldom occurred in ecclesiastical history of kindling the flame of faith and life among the leaders of thought, culture, refinement and political eminence in a great nation about to enter on a career of predominance throughout the

world. They had gifts for this work such as have rarely been entrusted to men. The poetry of Keble, the spiritual genius of Newman, the profound humility and impressive character of Pusey, formed a conjunction of spiritual forces not to be found in any of the surrounding European countries. In an evil hour, panic-stricken by fears of the new electorate, themselves swayed more than they realised by political and social prejudices, they made a desperate effort to put the clock back, or to use Keble's simile, "to force backward the waves of Time." Referring to the staying of the sun in the Book of Joshua, Keble says:

"We too, O Lord, would fain command  
 As then, Thy wonder-working Hand,  
 And backward force the waves of Time  
 That now so swift and silent bear  
 Our restless bark from year to year:  
 Help us to pause, and mourn to Thee our tale of crime."

This consideration leads us to the strongest plea that is advanced on behalf of the Oxford Movement—that it revived the idea of **THE CHURCH** and of its corporate life: that it found the Church almost smothered to death under the patronage of the State, reduced to the position of an ecclesiastical department of Government, its Bishoprics the reward of political service, its Church building hampered, its freedom to conduct its own worship regulated by State orders, its Convocations silenced, and its whole framework so encumbered with sinecures, pluralities and other abuses that it was ripe for destruction at the hands of dissenting and infidel Reformers. Then, we are told, came the Oxford Movement and revealed once more to men the Divine origin of the Church and insisted on her right to administer her own affairs. If all this were true, a strong case would be made for Evangelical thanksgiving, and we should be among the foremost to advocate it. Unfortunately, while it is generally true as to the condition of the Church a hundred years ago, it is not true as to the part that the Tractarians played, but the reverse of the truth.

As has been already pointed out, England with other countries shared in the passionate desire for release from the stranglehold of the State upon the Church. Having regard to the character and faith of the Tractarians, we should have expected them to be foremost in the agitation for Church Reform, which coincides with the political reforms of the thirties. We should have expected to find them calling on the Bishops to stand up in the House of Lords for the liberties of the Church, petitioning for the revival of Convocation and the increase of its powers, or at least assuring the Government of cordial support in remedial measures. But these things we do not find. Out of the Hadleigh Conference following on Keble's sermon came an Address to the Archbishop of Canterbury guardedly assuring him of support in reforms if he thought that any were needed. It was well known that his Grace was not an advocate of reform. But even in this address Newman and Keble took no part. Instead of so doing, they formed the Tractarian

party, and initiated the Oxford Movement. Pusey, it is true, made a real contribution to Cathedral Reform, and Newman later on advocated the revival of Bishops Suffragan. But the Oxford party detested the Whigs, denounced the formation of the Ecclesiastical Commission, and took no part in suggesting or advocating reforms. In a sense they almost courted Disestablishment, but they had not the courage to ask for it. Their position is indicated in Newman's lines :

" Dear brother—hence, while ye for ill prepare  
Triumph is still your own ;  
Blest is a pilgrim Church !—yet shrink to share  
The curse of throwing down :  
So will we toil in our own place to stand,  
Watching, not dreading the despoiler's hand."

Tory prejudice was sanctified in its opposition to Whig reforms of the Church. Pusey's Whig connections—he was a cousin of Lord Ashley—help to explain his somewhat more liberal attitude.

The one reform which the Tractarians desired was the revival of Church discipline. Keble called it the only reform worth having. Newman wrote a series of letters to the *Record* advocating it. It figures largely in the early Tracts. Unfortunately Church discipline meant to its advocates practically excommunication of dissenters. The Nelson Tracts, by Thomas Keble, show plainly enough what village life would have become if the Tractarians had had their way. Now it is notorious that laxity of Church discipline has been one of the most prominent results of the Tractarian Movement. Never was there less discipline of the clergy either in ritual or in teaching than there is to-day, and this laxity is directly due to the Oxford Movement. The supporters of the Oxford Movement began by putting their own interpretations on the Rubrics and the XXXIX Articles. Not only did they break away from old customs such as the use of the black gown in the pulpit, but they maintained that the revival of the whole ritual of the Pre-Reformation Church, except where it was expressly forbidden, was the *duty* of all priests. In discharge of this supposed duty they defied the Bishops, set at naught decisions of ecclesiastical courts, as well as of the Privy Council, became, each incumbent of them, a Pope in his own parish, trampled on the remonstrances of godly parishioners, and made the Church of England a byword of clerical indiscipline throughout all Western Christendom. Nowhere has any party in Church failed so signally in its *principal* aim as the Tractarian party in its plea for the revival of discipline.

The reason of this failure lay in the Tractarian misconception of the very doctrine for which they are most often praised, their doctrine of the Holy Catholic Church. They started from the position that the Holy Catholic Church was " the laity, as well as the clergy in their three orders—the whole body of Christians united, according to the will of Jesus Christ, under the successors of the Apostles." This is Keble's definition of the Church in his *Assize Sermon*, and that he is referring to the Holy Catholic Church is

clear from the words "according to the will of Jesus Christ." Episcopalians are members of the Holy Catholic Church as defined by Keble. non-episcopalians are not. Further, there is a reason for the use of the word "*under*" rather than, for instance, "in communion with." To Keble the Bishops as successors of the Apostles were the rulers of the Church. They might depute some part of their power to Presbyters, but the right of government remained theirs. According to Newman, his own diocesan was his Pope. Out of this definition inevitably rose the question: "What right had the Bishops of the Anglican Communion to separate themselves from the rest of the Episcopalians in Western Europe?" The Pre-Reformation Church was a corporate body—an order wholly international, with a central government at Rome, a common language—Latin—and in spite of variations known as uses (the use of Sarum for instance, or of Hereford, etc.) a common attitude towards the Sacraments, and exercising through the Confessional and Purgatorial fires a fairly strong discipline over the laity. It was true, no doubt, that the Pope had to reckon with the Holy Roman Emperor and with the sovereigns of each of the lay governments of Europe, who strove to restrict his powers. With some he dealt more successfully, with others less. But when it came to a question of breaking away from the faith and order of the Church, the Pope dealt with the innovators as heretics, and called on the secular arm, if necessary, to assist in suppressing them. So he treated the Albigenses in Languedoc and the Hussites in Bohemia. So too had he dealt with Queen Elizabeth, excommunicating her, and calling on Philip of Spain to crush her with his Armada. What the Tractarian party had to show was this: "What title had the English Church to reckon herself Catholic, when she separated herself from the rest of the Catholic communion?" The Tractarians strove to answer this question by minimising the extent of the separation. They tried to show that England had not committed herself to heresy: that she still held fast the Catholic faith: that her Liturgy was but an expurgated translation of the old Catholic liturgies and breviaries. But the more successful she was in repudiating the charge of heresy, the more unjustifiable became her schism. If she held with the Church of Rome in faith and doctrine, what right had she to break away from the Chair of St. Peter?

The only answer was to point to the tyranny of secular rulers, to denounce Henry VIII, Edward VI and Elizabeth, to blacken the fame of Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer, to undo their work as far as it could be undone. But there was, and there still is, in the English Church and nation a great multitude of loyal sons of England who entirely refuse to accept this counter-Reformation movement, who prize dearly as life itself the open Bible, the pure worship, the freedom of thought and conscience won for them at the Reformation. They see plainly that the doctrines of the Holy Catholic Church advocated by the Tractarians have driven a deep cleavage into the Church of England. They know what multitudes of godly men and women have been driven out of churches dear to them by time-

honoured association through the introduction of Romanising practices. They know that the sophistries of the early Tractarians have deeply discredited the clergy of the Church with multitudes of loyal Churchmen. To call upon these loyal Church people, faithful adherents of the Church of England, to praise God for the Tractarian Movement, and especially for its doctrine of the Church, is to ask them to play the hypocrite in the sight of God, and to join in a movement which has no meaning at all, if it does not unchurch all Episcopalians. They cannot help hoping that this statement of their case will absolve them from the rash charges of partisanship and sectarianism already levelled in some quarters against them. Their whole attitude may be summed up thus. Our Blessed Lord has said: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." To these words the Church of Rome and its admirers add: "through the Church," and the proposed July celebration is, in fact, a thanksgiving for the revival of this addition. Evangelical Churchmen through loyalty to Christ and His Church refuse to make this addition. They hold fast to their belief that no man can be a member of the Church except through Christ. This difference is vital.

What, then, is the relation between the Holy Catholic Church and the Church of England? The English nation, being ideally a body of members of the Holy Catholic Church, organises its religious life in the form and under the laws constituting the Church of England, finding as it does in Scripture the doctrine of *national* responsibility to God.

It does not follow that membership of the Church of England is co-extensive with the Holy Catholic Church. There are members of the Holy Catholic Church, both in other nations and in England, who are not members of the Church of England. The Holy Catholic Church is the Body of Christ throughout the world, of which Christ is the Head. Of that Church He is not only the Head, but also the indefeasible Ruler and King. Against that Church the gates of Hell cannot prevail. The national or local churches are "congregations in which the pure Word of God is preached and the Sacraments are ministered according to Christ's ordinance," human efforts to realise and respond to the Divine ideal. These human efforts are liable to error, and have in fact erred (see Article XIX). There is not one of them that can claim to be the Holy Catholic Church, the pure and spotless Bride of Christ. The confusion between the two was at the root of Tractarian error, and a dishonour, however well-meant, and unintentional, yet a grave dishonour to the Church of God. That dishonour Evangelicals cannot make a cause of thanksgiving.