

Eastern Churches NEWS-LETTER

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CONTENTS :

Notes.

The Meaning and Place of Tradition.

Some Comments on Anglican-Orthodox Relations.

J. M. Neale : Apostle of Unity.

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**THE ANGLICAN & EASTERN CHURCHES
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founded in 1864

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His All Holiness Athenagoras I

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NOTES :

Centenary (1). We hope to publish a fuller report in the October issue, which should come out before the end of September. We should, however, record our thanks to so many kind friends who helped us: The Archbishop of Canterbury, our Anglican Patron, and Mrs. Ramsay, for so kindly being our hosts at Lambeth Palace. Our Orthodox President in England, the Metropolitan of Thyateira, for the splendid and moving celebration of the Divine Liturgy in his Cathedral of the Holy Wisdom. Fr. Brandreth, O.G.S., for his most excellent speech at the meeting which followed. The Bishop of Chichester for being our preacher at the Sung Eucharist at East Grinstead. The Vicar of East Grinstead, the Revd. H. C. F. Copsey, for celebrating the Eucharist and for many other kindnesses, and our good friends the Revd. Mother and the Sisters of S. Margaret's Convent who accorded us the gracious hospitality which we have come to associate with them.

I want to take this opportunity of acknowledging an error in the announcements. Dr. Neale was, as I fully realise, warden and not founder of Sackville College. He founded S. Margaret's Convent, and was a co-founder of the Eastern Churches Association.

Centenary (2). The second stage of our Celebrations opens in September, when there will be a course of lectures in S. Dunstan's, Fleet Street, E.C.4 (by kind permission of the Guild Vicar, the Revd. Canon J. R. Satterthwaite) on Wednesdays, 1.25-1.55 p.m.

- 23 Sept. The Revd. Basil Minchin, Secretary of the Fellowship of S. Alban and S. Sergius, "Orthodoxy and the Liturgical Movement."
30 Sept. The Revd. Austin Oakley, Chairman of Committee, "Some considerations of our debt to Orthodox Theology."
7 Oct. The Very Revd. Dr. M. Fouyas, of the Orthodox Church in Manchester, "Anglican and Orthodox Relations."
14 Oct. The Revd. B. Oman, O.G.S., "Dr. J. M. Neale."

The Annual Festival will take place on Saturday, 17th October. Sung Eucharist in S. Mark's, North Audley Street, W.1., at 11 a.m. (by kind permission of the Vicar, the Revd. Michael Bruce), at which the preacher will be the Most Revd. Archbishop Anthony of Sourozh. At the afternoon meeting the speaker will be Sir Harry Luke, K.C.M.G. A further announcement will be made in the October issue.

THE MEANING AND PLACE OF TRADITION

by Bishop Wand

What may well turn out to be one of the most important ecumenical documents of recent years was presented last July at Montreal to the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order under the modest guise of Faith and Order Paper No. 40. It now appears before the general public still in modest format as the report of the theological commission on "Tradition and Traditions." Earnest seekers after truth may be little attracted by its dull appearance, and they may even be repelled by the appalling jargon in which much of it is written. But if they reflect that it is not the prime business of reports to be attractive and settle down to read carefully they will be amply rewarded.

This is the first time since the modern ecumenical debate began that any official body has undertaken to examine and compare the various views held on the subject of tradition by churches represented in the main stream of Christianity. Obviously in a small brochure of 63 pages such a task can only be taken in a very summary fashion. Actually the differing views are for the most part taken as read, and the main effort is quite properly directed towards an examination of the possibility of reconciling them.

When one remembers the utter abhorrence in which "the traditions of men" were held in Protestant circles only half a century ago, and the extremely firm emphasis laid on tradition in the Catholic and Orthodox churches, one can only marvel that anyone had faith to believe that reconciliation was possible, and thank God that so much success has already been achieved.

What has made all the difference is the shift in scholarly opinion as to the historical relation between scripture and tradition. The popular idea that scripture had come into existence as a divine oracle was slow to disappear, but it could not long survive the revelation of the slow degrees by which the canon was built up, although it is even now not sufficiently realised that it is not until Athanasius in the middle of the fourth century that we first find record of a canon precisely like our own. During several centuries without a completed Bible the life, faith, and work of the Church had to go on. It was maintained by the steady preaching of the word, by the learning of the creed and the rule of faith, by the sacraments and the ministry—in other words, by tradition. All these elements reached stabilisation before the canon.

Historically, therefore, it became absurd to contend that scripture is before and above the Church. Whether theo-

logically the positions may be reversed and an original deposit may be justly regarded as so enshrined in Scripture that it may govern and correct all other tradition is another question. In so far as Orthodox and Catholic are prepared to consider this as a debatable issue they have already taken a big step towards meeting the more enlightened Protestant position. Hence the ground for hope.

The question is made at once more complicated and more hopeful by the recognition of the difference between the singular and the plural; between tradition and traditions. What we have mentioned so far is the Christian tradition, the steady stream of the manifestation of the life of Christ in the history of the Church, the thing which, however difficult to define, is the one common possession of all the different types of Christianity.

It does not take long, however, to recognise that each of the separate types does not succeed in maintaining its distinct existence without developing its own individual tradition. This habit must have been present from the beginning. Indeed, it is probably the stress of modern scholarship upon the presence of an "apostolic tradition" behind the New Testament documents that first began to take the sting out of the term "tradition" for the present generation of Protestants. Inevitably scholars have not been satisfied with recognising the existence of one apostolic tradition, but have developed a fondness for pointing out that the various evangelists may have followed different traditions, and even that one evangelist may have had access to more than one tradition. In fact, we have added to "Form-history" a "Tradition-history Method" in our efforts to disentangle the story of the oral transmission of the gospel message.

All this has done much to break down the alleged antagonism between scripture and tradition, and made the work of the commission worth while. Actually the commission operated in two halves, one in Europe and the other in U.S.A. Representatives of the Orthodox in both halves made the discussions much more pointed than they could otherwise have been. Even so the two halves worked independently and provided two very different reports. The North American section tries to answer the question how far our interpretation of the history can give a true account of the one tradition common to all Christians. The European section in a rather more down-to-earth fashion discusses the relation between Scripture, Tradition and the Church.

Lest these two reports should appear to drift too far apart, Dr. Jean-Louis Leuba writes a conclusion in which he draws them together and states the points on which agreement appears to have been reached while showing what still remains for discussion. The agreed points are as follows :

1. The legitimacy of the subject. All are agreed that in some sense tradition must be accepted as an "essential aspect of Christian reality."
2. Tradition as the work of the Holy Spirit. "Only God speaks truly of God." It is the Spirit who confirms the continuing presence of Christ and his life in the Church.
3. The need for a standard of judgment between Tradition and traditions. We ought to be able to find some criterion to distinguish the genuinely common tradition of Christianity from all partial and individual traditions.
4. Scripture and Church are the two elements to help in finding this criterion. The apostolic testimony is to be found in Scripture alone. But the Church has had to formulate that tradition afresh for every generation.

SOME COMMENTS ON ANGLICAN-ORTHODOX RELATIONS—II.

If we are now to shift our attention from the factors to the results, the benefits and conclusions of the co-operation of the present and the union in the future we have these different opinions :

- A. Through the co-operation and the union of the Orthodox with the Anglicans there will undoubtedly result a reinforcement of Christianity against atheism, unbelief, and religious indifference.
- B. Through this unity each of these Churches will be at its best to protect herself from the proselytising efforts exerted upon them by other Churches or religious groups.
- C. Through this union the Anglicans will find themselves within the One undivided Church, which is considered the successor and the heir of the Apostolic Tradition.
- D. In case these two Churches unite in the future, the scheme of union upon which they will be united will be the only safe foundation on which the unity of all Christian Churches would be based in time to come.
- E. Orthodoxy, too, is to profit extensively from the continuous co-operation and later union with the Anglican Church. especially from the practical expression of faith, from the active Christian life, from the various aspects of pious living, from the methods of work, and their attainments in the field of Christian preaching and missions. In theology as well we have much to gain when we are to consider the tremendous progress that has been made, especially in certain theological fields and the technical means which are at their disposal for the publication of sources and references.
- F. Another benefit will be the mutual enrichment and supplementing of respective national traditions.

The broad ecclesiology and the lack of internal unity within the Anglican Communion is one of the most important or rather the main obstacle in the contacts of the two Churches and for their union in the future. Certain basic teachings which constitute the essence of Anglicanism, such as the episcopal order, the apostolic succession, the teaching on the sacraments, etc., are being accepted by all the members of the Anglican Communion; but beyond this we are aware of the spirit of toleration of the existing differences, a tendency to reconcile with different opinions, not only concerning external and trivial matters, but on essential articles of the Christian Faith, which is known as the *via media* or the concept of comprehensiveness.

Keeping in mind the development of the Church of England after the Religious Reform and the historical events through which this Church had to live, we have to be well aware of the historical factor.

Another impetus on the Anglican-Orthodox relations is the unanimous trend within Anglicanism for union, the plans for ecclesiastical and theological conversations, and the attainment of intercommunion or the organic union of the Anglicans with other Churches or ecclesiastical bodies in England and outside of it on an international scale. It would be worthwhile to state the degree to which the Anglican Communion keeps the essentials of the Faith and its willingness to give in for the sake of the goal.

The Orthodox ecclesiology, however, accepts as indispensable articles of faith, the oneness in faith, the full unity and agreement in essentials, in the dogmas and Church government, and allows freedom only in the theologoumena and the non-essential articles of faith and Church order.

The problem of Orthodox-Anglican relations demands once more the need for an external expression and witness of the existing internal unity within Orthodoxy, that is the need to determine one common line to be followed by all Orthodox Churches.

Orthodox delegates, participating in Anglican-Orthodox conversations, have been expressing their views that the final solution of the problem on the relations between the two Churches would be given by an Ecumenical Council or by a Pan-orthodox pro-synod or synod, which unfortunately have not yet met in spite of all efforts.

This Pan-orthodox synod will definitely set a pattern for the contacts of the two Churches and will also deal with the problem of recognition of the validity of the Anglican ordinations. The Orthodox Churches in the Union conferences with Anglicans were fully represented and there was mutual co-operation, except on the question of the validity of the

Anglican ordinations. The Anglican delegates on the other hand were not only people belonging to a pro-orthodox group but were people who represented all the trends and different groups of Anglicanism.

In order to be able to eliminate the obstacles on either side it is considered essential to prepare a brief authentic exposition on the basic beliefs of each Church respectively.

Consequently there is still the need for more conferences and study of the beliefs and practices in the two Churches respectively. But this must not be limited to the good will of the Church leaders or the theologians, but the members of each Church as a group and as individuals should make it their own issue, and this is to be accomplished only after the proper enlightenment of the laity; something which unfortunately has been neglected, with some exceptions, of course.

Professor Vasil T. Istavridis.

JOHN MASON NEALE, APOSTLE OF UNITY

When the history of the reunion movement within the Anglican Church comes to be written, it may well be that future historians will say of John Mason Neale that he was the great apostle of unity in the nineteenth century in the Anglican Church. Neale made a great impact upon the whole life of the Church of England in five fields: by founding a religious community, in Church Architecture, Hymnology, Reunion, and in the liturgical world. Dr. Dugmore points out that he introduced the word "liturgiology" to the English language in his "Essays on Liturgiology and Church History." (Influence of J. M. Neale, by A. G. Lough, p. 4.)

Neale was a scholar of European reputation and a master of twenty languages, and also a man of great practical energy and saintliness. He was the author of a great number of books in which we are interested, but our study here is only with his work on the history of the Orthodox Church.

He was the author of the *History of the Holy Orthodox Church* (1847-1850-1878) and of the work on the Greek Liturgies (1859). The two introductory volumes (General Introduction) to his historical work brought an entirely new understanding of the Eastern Orthodox Church to a wide circle of Anglicans. By his writings and work for an understanding with the Holy Orthodox Church, Neale made a move to break down the insularity of the Church of England and to persuade her members to look beyond her own borders. He brought to the attention of Anglicans a great part of Catholic Christendom, about which the majority were

almost entirely ignorant. As a result of his work Eastern Orthodoxy was henceforth something with which to be reckoned in any consideration of reunion in the Church of England. (Influence of J. M. Neale, A. G. Lough, p. 128.)

In his book *Voices from the East* he writes: "And now I pray God to accept this volume as a mite thrown into the treasure-house of preparation for Union. The Union of the Three Churches, that second and even more glorious Pentecost, we cannot hope to see; but in the meantime, amidst all the obloquy, and disputes, and suspicions, and hard words of this generation, it is a blessed and consoling dream, which some day will most assuredly, become a reality." (Influence of J. M. Neale, p. 109.) It was to the Great Church of the East which Neale looked for union with the Anglican Church rather than with the Roman Church.

Sister Miriam, one of his East Grinstead sisters, wrote of him: "Reunion was now, and henceforth to the end, the object of his hopes, and desires, and labours. To say, to write, to do everything towards the fulfilment of our Lord's prayer, 'That they all may be one,' no difficulty was too great to be encountered." (Influence of J. M. Neale, p. 109.)

In a letter to his friend Haskoll, Neale wrote: "First reunion. You don't know how hopeful matters are. The American Church has had a semi-official request from the Holy Governing Synod through Philaret of Moscow for information on five points: 1 Our Succession; 2 Tradition; 3 The Articles; 4 Filioque; 5 The Seven Sacraments."

"In the Eastern Association we have divided these among ourselves for a short plain treatise. I have the Filioque, S. Oxon sent for me the other day to Lavington where we met. There was an attaché to our Legation at Brussels, who had lately seen Prince Orloff, the Emperor's great favourite, who promised to do all he could; and the Empress, who prays for reunion every day. I have to draw up a series of propositions about the insertion of the clause (not the doctrine) Filioque, which Archdeacon Randall is to get through Committee, if he can, and then through the Lower House, and S.O. will fight it through the Upper. It ends with our deep sorrow for the insertion. Is not this like business?"

This was one of the first tasks of the Eastern Churches Association in close co-operation with the Greek-Russian Committee in the American Episcopal Church, which had been founded in 1862.

At the time of the reorganisation of the Jerusalem Bishopric in 1886, the Association was very active with Bishop Popham Blyth, working in close contact with its members in the Near East.

For a number of years there had been proselytising missions conducted among Eastern Christians by the Church Missionary Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society, and by church societies from America who were working in the Near East. It is primarily to the Eastern Churches Association, however, that the honour is due for recognising that we should not seek converts from the Eastern Churches, but should rather seek reunion with them. This statement which the Eastern Churches Association made brought this un-Christian work to an end.

"In 1868 the Association addressed an interesting memorial to the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America in which they asserted that the American Church was better qualified than the English for working towards reunion with the Orthodox. The main reasons for this assertion were that the American Church was not trammelled by state control; the relations between Russia and the United States were uniformly friendly and the actual juxtaposition of the two churches in the possessions of the Pacific, recently ceded to the American Government by Russia." (i.e., the Aleutian Islands and the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867.)

This Memorial, "answering to the reflections from within the Episcopal Church, widened the scope of the Eastward movement and strengthened the confidence of its leaders. The Russo-Greek Committee had now passed the experimental stage. With its Report to the General Convention in 1871 a new era may be said to have begun in the history of American and Eastern Church relations." This Russo-Greek Committee started with a clearly anti-Papal intention, using Anglican-Orthodox rapprochement as a buttress against Rome. But the Revd. J. F. Young, who was Secretary of the Committee, did say in a letter to George Williams that he prayed that these preliminary steps towards a restoration of the long-lost communion of the East and West may prove but the harbinger of a restored Catholic unity unto the fulfilment of the Redeemer's earnest prayer.

In 1870 Archbishop Alexander Lycurgos of Syros and Tenos visited England to consecrate the new Greek church at Liverpool. The Revd. George Williams, the first Secretary of the Eastern Churches Association, represented the Archbishop of Canterbury at this solemn service of consecration and attended Archbishop Alexander throughout his stay in this country. He translated for the Archbishop in his talks with leading Churchmen, which included Dr. Pusey, Mr. Gladstone, and Bishop Wordsworth. A very important Conference took place at Ely on 4th February, 1870, between Anglicans and Greek Orthodox, the Orthodox taking part in

the Conference included Archbishop Alexander, the Archimandrite Statulis, M. Tymbas, and Deacon Depastas. The Anglicans were the Bishop of Ely, the Revd. George Williams, and the Revd. F. Meyrick. The Archbishop spoke during his visit of the blessed union of the Orthodox and Anglican Churches, for which he prayed, and asked the prayers of his people.

Bishop Michael, in a paper which he delivered at the Theological Conference in Moscow in June, 1956, says, "At the same time other foundations were laid in England of yet another organisation with a much broader programme. This was the Eastern Churches Association. The Association undertook a thorough study of the life of the Orthodox East, it endeavoured to acquaint English people with this life, and at the same time to acquaint Orthodox Christians with the Church of England. In addition, the Association set itself the task of using every opportunity to make friendly contacts with the Orthodox Church and to help the spiritual welfare of the Orthodox inhabitants of the East. As a result of the Association's publishing activities questions relating to relations between Anglicanism and Orthodoxy were for many years constant themes in Russian theological literature."

We are celebrating our centenary at a time of great spiritual renewal throughout the whole of Christendom. Christians are being called by the Holy Spirit to draw closer to our Lord, and in drawing closer to Him they are coming closer to each other in love and understanding. The historic pilgrimage of His All-Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and His Holiness the Pope to the Holy Land this year have been a manifestation of true Christian love and a desire to grow in understanding. This meeting has been an illumination of the fruit of the Holy Spirit which is love.

May the fruits of our Centenary be a memorial to John Mason Neale, and a renewal in our service to Christ and His Church in fulfilling the principal object for which the Association is established: "For the advancement of the Christian religion in particular by means of teaching the members of the Anglican Churches and those of the Eastern Orthodox Churches the doctrines and respective principles and methods of each other in the work for the advancement of the Christian religion with the view to promotion of visible union between our two Churches."

Brother Cuthbert Fearon.

The Revd. George Williams was the chosen representative in the East of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Williams wrote a book on the non-juring bishops, perhaps the only full history of this body.

Aims of the Association

The Association exists to unite members of the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches for the following objects :-

- (a) The principle object for which the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association is established is for the advancement of the Christian religion in particular by means of teaching the members of the Anglican Churches and those of the Eastern Orthodox Churches the doctrines and respective principles and methods of each other in their work for advancement of the Christian religion.
- (b) The Association exists also to unite members of the two Communion in prayer and work in achieving the principle objects with a view to promotion of visible unity between them.

Some Methods of Helping the Work

1. By joining the Association and getting others to join.
2. By arranging for a meeting in the neighbourhood, when a lecture may be given on the Eastern Churches and Reunion, and the objects of the Association explained.
3. By asking the Parochial Authorities to promise a Sunday collection every year either in the service or afterwards at the doors.
4. By uniting in local centres for the study of Eastern Christendom, and for Intercession for Reunion.

Lectures—with or without lantern illustrations—can be arranged by writing to the General Secretary.

Subscription

The normal annual subscription is 10/- (Life-membership £5), but none will be excluded solely on account of inability to pay this amount, while it is hoped that those who can afford to pay more will do so.

All members receive the Eastern Churches News-Letter which is published quarterly.