The New Evangelicalism in the Church of England

By Rev. David N. Samuel, B.A.

Contents

The New Evangelicalism in the Church of England.

INTRODUCTION

The Keele Congress held in 1967 was a turning point for Anglican Evangelicals, but not all would agree about the wisdom of the course that was then set. By many it has been looked upon as a sort of 'coming of age', a liberation of Evangelicals so that they can now take their full part in the life of the Church of England. Others, however see in the policy which has been implemented since Keele a steady decline in the distinctive doctrinal position of Evangelical Anglicanism. This 'downgrade' has caused them serious concern because in the past Evangelical Churchmen have regarded themselves as the upholders of the Reformation teachings upon which the formularies and liturgy of the Church of England are based. The abandonment of this position can, therefore, only be attended with great loss, not merely to Evangelicals themselves, but the Church at large.

These articles were written with the conviction that what some leading Evangelicals have done since Keele does represent such a departure, and that the steps leading to this can be clearly traced. It is important that others should see this to be the case, for it is the conviction also of the writer and this Society that the spiritual renewal of our Church can only come from a renaissance of those teachings which derive directly from the Reformation, and which some knowingly and others unwittingly are now setting aside. There recovery, therefore by us at the present time is of the first importance to the regaining of our identity as a church, and a new sense of spiritual purpose and power.

I wish to acknowledge the kind permission of the editors of the Evangelical Magazine, in which these articles first appeared, to reprint them here as a booklet.

David N. Samuel
The Rectory, E. Ravendale, Grimsby, Lincs.

(I) The Real Significance of 'Growing into Union'

IN 1964, shortly after discussions were begun on the local level between Anglicans and Methodists, I was invited to speak to the local Methodist church on the 1963 Report. I remember saying at the time, that though the talks were ostensibly taking place between the Church of England and the Methodist Church, there were really more than just two parties involved. The Church of England is a divided church—divided theologically on how it regards the ministry, the sacraments, and so on. It is common sense therefore to acknowledge that the Methodist Church is not negotiating with one church, but in effect with two. This is fundamental to our whole understanding of the Anglican-Methodist conversations, and the latest result of them, the tract *Growing into Union.*

At first I think it is true to say that this awkward fact of a divided Anglicanism was only acknowledged with great reluctance. There was a determined effort to mount a united front, to keep up the pretence that the Church of England was a monolithic structure, substantially agreed on the crucial questions under discussion. But gradually the cracks began to appear. First, there was the complaint that the whole spectrum of theological opinion within the Church of England was not represented on the Commission, and this led to the inclusion of the Rev. J. I. Packer. Then there followed his dissension from the Report issued in 1968. The conflicting elements within the Church of England were now beginning to manifest themselves. In 1969 the Scheme was defeated by the opposition of Anglo-Catholics and Conservative Evangelicals. The situation had crystallized.

[1] 'Growing into Union,' by S.P.C.K., 18s.

In all this it must be abundantly clear that the negotiations with the Methodist Church served merely as a catalyst to reveal the antagonisms and tensions within the Church of England, and bring them out into the open. I am not, of course, suggesting that Anglicans were not aware of these differences, they had existed since the Tractarian movement; but for some time they had lain dormant—cold war had given place to co-existence. The negotiations had revived the very questions which had been at the centre of the controversy over a century ago—the ministry, the sacraments, the Scriptures and so forth. The Methodists were indeed negotiating with two churches not one, a Catholic church and a Protestant church, represented by the two wings of Anglicanism. In fact it became increasingly plain that the Methodist Church was almost an irrelevance. It had served only to activate the age-old debate, and once that had been effected it could conveniently drop out of the picture. The real issue lay between Catholics and Evangelicals, both of which were fully represented within the established church, and both of which understood the terms of the controversy best if it were confined to their own formularies. It was, then, inevitable, after the collapse of the Scheme in 1969, that the debate should be taken up on this level, and the Methodist Church cease effectively to be a participant, and become merely an onlooker.

Allowing for the fact that the Methodists may feel hurt by this development, there is undoubtedly a certain value in it. The matter has resolved itself into its proper constituents. At last it is possible to see the wood without the trees getting in the way. What we have in reality is not a new, emergent, ecumenical situation, but the recrudescence of the old controversy between Catholics and Protestants. You cannot really take many steps in ecumenism before you come up against this problem, and the insistence of Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals upon dealing with the doctrinal issues, and not evading them by ambiguity, has revealed this in fact to be the case. There is, then, nothing new in this situation, not even in the supposed consensus, which the authors of *Growing into Union* believe they have achieved, for it is common knowledge, to those who are acquainted with the subtleties of this controversy, that it has all been done before.

Reading through the book *Growing into Union,* it is obvious that all the principal theological questions under discussion centre upon the question, Are the differences of the Reformation between Catholics and Protestants capable of resolution? He must be a bold man who can affirm that they are. He must be prepared, and able, to give exhaustive

reasons for thinking as he does. He must be confident of succeeding where the cleverest and most subtle minds in Christendom have attempted and failed. A sketchy outline of supposed agreement, buttressed by pious hopes, is clearly not sufficient in a field like this, where the ground has already been so carefully searched, and the possibilities so thoroughly canvassed.

In the past it has generally been agreed by protagonists of both sides that the problem admits of no solution. Catholicism and Protestantism have been found to be like oil and water, they will not mix. It has been acknowledged that what we are dealing with here are two mutually exclusive systems, where the terms of the one serve to cancel out the other. That there should be any agreement between them has therefore been looked upon as a logical impossibility. Why then should it now be thought possible to reconcile what has been irreconcilable? Why has it not been done before? Does the nature of logic change with the passage of time? If we wait another four hundred years will it be possible to square the circle, and in another four hundred that parallel lines continued to infinity will meet?

But the question I ask has already been asked by a most eminent man, much thought of in the present ecumenical debate. Karl Barth asks in his letter to Hans Küng, regarding the astonishing agreement he claimed to find between Trent and Barth's theology of Justification, 'How do you explain the fact that all this could remain hidden for so long, and from so many, both inside and outside the church?' Indeed, this is a most searching question. Can it be that we have had to wait, indeed the world has had to wait, until the breakdown of the Anglican-Methodist conversations for the differences that have divided Christendom for four hundred years to be resolved by four Anglican clergymen, and that all within the space of six months?

The hope of a final rapprochement between Catholics and Protestants is kept alive by the belief that somehow, somewhere, a new ground of synthesis and agreement will be found which has been overlooked by controversialists of the past. The fact is that every square inch of the ground has already been covered, indeed was covered before the Reformation was fifty years old, by the most able Protestant and Catholic theologians. There is simply no place to stand where another has not already stood; excepting of course the fence, and it would appear that it is this which our authors have succeeded in mounting. But even here it is true to say that others have stood before, but not for very long; for since the act of balancing upon it cannot be sustained indefinitely they

have found it expedient to get down on one side or the other. But while they were there they did not refrain from proclaiming to the world, rather like the cock on the farmyard fence, that they had achieved a very remarkable thing.

That our authors stand upon the fence in every doctrinal question with which they deal is not a very difficult thing to establish.

First let us take *Scripture and Tradition.* We are wrong it would appear in regarding them as two separate and distinct entities. Although Catholics and Protestants have been content with this understanding in the past it will not do any more. Our authors remind us that if we go back to Thomas Aquinas we find that the whole of tradition was called Scripture, and if we go back further still, to when there was no New Testament canon as such, we find that the whole of Scripture was called tradition. The inference from this would appear to be that we suffer today from too clear and precise notions of what we mean by tradition and Scripture. The categories call for greater latitude and less precision. The chapter, it must be admitted, produces the desired effect. The meaning of tradition changes with every paragraph. Early in the argument tradition is essentially the handing on by the Church of the faith of the Scriptures. A little further on we are told, without demur, that Pius IX speaking ex cathedra is also tradition, though not the whole of tradition, and that tradition as well as Scripture is necessary for the serious reformation of the Church. Later we learn that the ground of both Scripture and tradition is the revelation given through Jesus Christ. Again tradition is both the handing on process and also the riches themselves which are handed on—of which the Scriptures are a part. Tradition is also Catholic eucharistic practice and Evangelical group Bible study—it is the vitalizing milieu of Scripture. The net result of the chapter is that no clear idea of what tradition is, or its relation to Scripture emerges at all.

It was one of the first principles of the Reformation to establish a profound and qualitative distinction between these two concepts. Tradition must be clearly seen, whether it be the hymns of Charles Wesley, the Creeds, or the dicta of the Apostolic Fathers, to occupy a derivative and secondary role to Scripture. To obscure this distinction is not to render any service to the Church or the unity of the Church. Yet the distinction is obscured in this chapter by insistence upon the 'organic unity' of Scripture and tradition, by asserting that both have a common ground or origin, and by using the sophism that at one time Scripture could be termed tradition (the authentic apostolic paradosis) and tradi-

tion Scripture. The purpose of this kind of argumentation is clear, and that is to break down the distinctive character of these opposing concepts in order to create some common ground for their reconciliation.

In the dark all cats are grey, and in the conditions of poor visibility that are brought about by this discussion of the subject it is possible to assume some vague mediating position, which is hailed, if it is not examined too closely, as a rapprochement, and a harbinger of that final reconciliation which is to follow. One feels that here an apostolic disjunction might shed some light. If it is Scripture then it is no more tradition, and if tradition then it is no more Scripture.

This chapter is claimed to be a foundation for the rest of the book; a judgment with which we must at once concur. This chapter is indeed a preparation for all that is to follow. If you can swallow the camel of inconsistency here, you will not strain at the gnats of contradiction which follow. It is a kind of psychological conditioning for what is unfolded in the remaining pages. It is said of the Rev. John Oman, whose sermons were noted for their abstraction and obscurity, that when he went to his charge in the Orkneys none of his congregation could understand him, but when he left they couldn't understand anybody else. Such may be the state of mind induced by too ready an acceptance of the 'foundation' of this tract. An accommodation to its headiness may produce a reaction to sound argument and valid deduction.

We must now consider *Justification.* Let us first get a clear view of what we must hold on to, and then we can proceed to discover how our authors lose it in the course of their dialogue.

The Reformers asserted against Rome:

(i) That we are justified by Christ's righteousness imputed or reckoned to us. This is an alien or extrinsic righteousness residing in Christ, not ourselves. This is the ground of the sinner's justification and not any inherent righteousness or merit.

(ii) That this righteousness is imputed to us through faith. Faith does not itself justify us, as an act of righteousness, for this would be justification by works, and diametrically opposed to grace and the free gift. Faith is simply the means by which the gift is received.

(iii) Justification and sanctification are logically distinct and may not be confused. The justified man is a new creature, regenerated by the Spirit of God, but God's declaration of acquittal is in no way dependent upon, or logically related to this fact.

As against this Rome asserted:

(i) That a man is not justified by Christ's righteousness imputed or reckoned to him, but that God declares a man just by virtue of the fact that he has been renewed inwardly by grace, and therefore possesses an inherent righteousness.

(ii) Faith is not simply the instrument which receives an imputed righteousness, but is part of an inherent righteousness which thus becomes the ground of justification.

(iii) Justification and sanctification are not to be regarded as logically distinct and separate, since the declaration of justification is dependent upon and directly related to the inward renewal of man's nature.

Here we have the kernel of the controversy. Three sets of contradictions. Let us see now how our authors propose to reconcile the differences. First strangely, or appropriately enough, by the enunciation of another contradiction, namely this, 'The forensic model of God as lawgiver and judge, of sin as lawlessness and transgression, of God's judicial wrath against sinners being quenched by sacrifice, and justification as the paradoxical acquittal and acceptance of the ungodly before God's judgment seat permeates the Bible and must be taken as one basic and normative category, not capable of reduction to, or explanation in, terms of any other'. Now the term 'justification' is one that arises in the Bible only within a judicial or forensic context, and therefore under the conditions laid down by our authors, it must be interpreted and understood only in those terms. Yet that is obviously not what they wish to do, for they go on. 'Not that it is the only thought model of which it is true: the organic incorporation-model of our Lord as the last Adam, the vine in which we are branches, the head of the body of which we are members, is equally ultimate, and in fact a true doctrine of justification is only achieved when set in the context of incorporation.' These two propositions of course cancel each other out. For if justification, which belongs essentially to a forensic thought model, is taken outside its context, and interpreted in terms of incorporation, it is being explained in terms other than its own, and this we have been told is neither possible nor permissible. At the same time we are told that unless we do this we shall not get a true doctrine of justification However, for the purposes of doctrinal synthesis the direction and goal of this 'argument' is clear; it is to apply to the doctrine of justification the concepts of sanctification or incorporation. This is precisely what Catholics have always wished to do, and what the Reformers rightly and resolutely set their faces against.

The reason for this becomes clear in the next thesis of our authors. 'The divine act of grace, in which the declaration that a believing sinner is justified is central and basic, is in its totality an act of effective and vital union with the living Christ, and hence is constitutive of a new creation.' We see now why it is so important that the concepts of sanctification should be introduced into the doctrine of justification. The declaration of righteousness, which on the basis of the forensic model is only a declaration, or accounting righteous, is now interpreted as an effective, or constitutive act of inward renewal. Thus the dialectical bridge is thrown across the logical chasm. Here our authors lean heavily upon Hans Küng, when they assert, 'Thus it can be truly said that God's justifying word (which is a creative word effecting union with Christ) creates subjective righteousness'. All the time an attempt is being made to make room within the doctrine of justification for a subjective, inherent righteousness, which if it is permitted vitiates the true doctrine.

Let me quote from Hans Küng. He asks, 'Does it follow that God's declaration of righteousness does not imply an inner renewal? On the contrary, it all comes down to this, that it is a matter of God's declaration of righteousness, and not man's word . . . unlike the word of man the word of God does what it signifies. God pronounces the verdict, "You are righteous" and the sinner is righteous, really and truly, inwardly and outwardly . . . . man is righteous in his heart. In brief God's declaration is at the same time and in the same act a making righteous'.

So Hans Küng would have it both ways at once, that justification is both an accounting righteous and a making righteous, and so it would appear would our authors. How can it be that, what in the past has borne for Evangelicals only one meaning, can now be made to bear two? It comes about in this way. Küng regards the declaration of the sinner as righteous before God as a parallel to the creative activity of the Word of God in Genesis 1 where God says, 'Let there be light', and it was so. According to this reasoning when God declares the sinner righteous, He also constitutes him righteous. But the argument proves too much. For according to this reasoning it must also follow that when God declares the sentence of condemnation, as He must, this actually makes the sinner unrighteous, and not merely pronounces him to be so. Küng's argument, and our authors implicitly assent to it, affirms that the word or utterance of God invariably does what it signifies. But this clearly cannot be so, and is not intended to be so. We must rightly distinguish things that differ. The term must be interpreted according to its context. It

is capable, to use the words of our authors, of being explained only in terms of the forensic thought model, and no other, and this demands a judicial sentence and not a creative act.

If the shoemakers had stuck to their last they might have produced shoes that did not pinch.

So what we have again in this chapter is an ill-assorted jumble of ideas and contradictory assertions, some of which sound well on their own, until they are related to the others with which they rub shoulders. If this is the measure of agreement that can be arrived at and stated, the mind boggles at that which has been left unsaid.

If in taking these points up it might seem that one is engaged in splitting hairs, we would do well to remind ourselves of what James Buchanan says in his definitive work on Justification. 'In controversies of faith the difference between antagonist systems is often reduced to a line sharp as a razor's edge. Yet on the one side of that line there is God's truth and on the other side departure from it.' I am sure we cannot impress upon our minds too much the importance of this truth, especially in these days when people seem to be impatient of doctrinal differences. We cannot forget that the difference between Arianism and orthodoxy in the 4th century turned upon a diphthong, yet it was the difference between saying Christ was God or that He was not God. The same is true in the matter of justification. No amount of apparent approximation of the two doctrines, Catholic and Protestant, should blind us to the fact that there is a great gulf between them. The close linguistic approach which Küng and others make to the Protestant teaching may hide from some the fact that they can never reach it, without abandoning completely the Catholic presuppositions by which they are bound.

Lastly *Eucharistic Sacrifice*. There seems to be a determined effort in this chapter, and the appendix, to agree upon calling the Lord's Supper a sacrifice in some sense. This is a thing which in the past evangelical churchmen have refused to do, asserting that the Lord's Supper is a Gospel sacrament having a manward or downward movement, and not an upward or Godward one. Thus Canon W. M. F. Scott says in commenting upon the words 'Ye do shew the Lord's death', 'The word is commonly used in the Acts and Pauline epistles (17 times) for the proclamation of the Gospel before men. It is never used in the New Testament in any other sense. Indeed its structure forbids any other, as the prefix κατα means "down". καταγγελλω can, therefore, no

more mean "show up to God" than cataract can mean a fountain, or a catacomb a skyscraper'.

The drift of this part of the book, however, seems to suggest that if once agreement can be arrived at about the application of the word sacrifice to the sacrament, then some real progress will have been made in reconciling the two positions.

The reasons why Anglo-Catholics wish to term the Lord's Supper a sacrifice are varied and many. There are those who view it as a sacrifice propitiatory, rather along the lines of the Church of Rome. This is emphatically the case, despite Dr. Mascall's disclaimer. These view the sacrifice of the mass as identical with that of Calvary, and itself procuring the benefits of Calvary. For others this view is too crude and mediaeval. For them the offering for sin has been made once and for all upon the Cross and cannot be offered again, but the eucharist is the complement of that offering, in that it provides the ritual or sacerdotal context for the expression of its true significance. Thus the eucharist is not a separate sacrifice from that of Calvary, but supplies a necessary element in the sacrifice of Calvary by expressly investing our Lord's death before God and man with its sacrificial significance. For others the sacrifice of the eucharist is the earthly counterpart of, and that by which the Church participates in, the heavenly self-oblation and intercession which Christ the High Priest offers continuously in the presence of God the Father.

What however, is common to all these approaches to eucharistic sacrifice is the belief that the sacrifice of the Church is the sacrifice of Christ. That in some way an identity can be established between what Christ has done or does now, and what the Church does as a corporate body and through its representative ministers. Archbishop Ramsey summed this up when he said, 'In the eucharist the sacrifice is that of Christ Himself. Having nothing of our own to offer, trusting only in Christ's one offering of Himself, it is that which we re-present to the Father as members of Christ's body, accepted only in Him'. This common thread holds all these different approaches together, like beads on a string. In the eucharist the sacrifice is that of Christ Himself, whether you conceive of that sacrifice as one of propitiation or homage.

It is from this position that Evangelicals have to dissent. They acknowledge that they are to present their bodies as a living sacrifice to God, their sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, of prayer and service; and they know that these things are accepted not for any worthiness in themselves, but solely for the sake of their Saviour Christ. But at no

point, however high in the scale you go, does this sacrifice merge and become identical with the sacrifice of Christ. That the one is the ground of the other is not denied. What we do would find no acceptance apart from the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, but the two can never be fused or synthesized conceptually without grave danger arising.

Extravagant and bewildering language on this subject is therefore not helpful. However hard one tries, what an Evangelical means by sacrifice can never be made to carry the significance of what a Catholic means by sacrifice. Yet it would seem that our authors are convinced that by some multiplication of language, by mounting higher and higher up the scale, the gap might eventually be closed. Thus they ask (with a hint of desperation?) 'What can we offer at the eucharist? Not mere bread and wine—even the term "offertory" sounds an odd note; not merely "the fruit of our lips"; not merely undefined "spiritual sacrifices"; not merely ourselves considered apart from Christ' (a rising crescendo); 'not even ourselves in Christ, if that is seen in separation from our feeding on Christ; but ourselves as reappropriated by Christ.'

Like some game with language, you go on saying one—is balls, two—is balls, three—is balls, until suddenly a new qualitative distinction emerges—tennis balls! This sort of language can serve no useful purpose, except to hide the distinction between our offering and Christ's, and so through the reaches of some higher theological mysticism it becomes possible to say that we offer Christ, or that He offers us, or that Christ offers Himself through us in the eucharist. Try, however, as we may, our offering can never be made the same as that of Christ, no more than persevering with the series $1\frac{1}{2}$; $1\frac{3}{4}$; $1\frac{7}{8}$; $1^{15}/_{16}$; will enable us to reach 2.

The careful and painstaking investigation of all the grounds on which it might be possible for an Evangelical to call the Lord's Supper a sacrifice—because 'prayer, evangelism, almsgiving and self-dedication can be called sacrifices', etc.—seems inept and foolish, as indeed is the attempt to call both the sacraments sacrifices in order to get over the difficulty. Clearly what Evangelicals and Catholics mean by sacrifice in the context of the Lord's Supper are two entirely different things, and inventing a new terminology, or investing an old one with new meanings is not going to resolve the difference.

For the Evangelical the sacramental movement is essentially manward, as we are reminded of the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross, the spiritual benefits of which we now receive by faith, and the proof of the acceptance of which lies in the resurrection, ascension and

heavenly session of Christ in the presence of the Father. The movement of the sacrament for the Catholic is essentially Godward, as the church re-presents the sacrifice of Christ to the Father. That is why he calls the eucharist a sacrifice, and unless we are going openly to acknowledge the authenticity of this teaching, we would do well to avoid playing with the notion of calling the Lord's Supper a sacrifice.

In the fundamental doctrinal questions with which this book deals no real or significant rapprochement has been reached. It is a hasty, ill-considered attempt to approach the great issues of the Reformation controversy. As I see it these differences are incapable of resolution. There is no presumption in that. The presumption is on the side of those who would challenge this conclusion. The questions of tradition and Scripture, justification and the Lord's Supper are closed questions. They have been discussed and answered definitively. No benefit can derive from yet further attempts to achieve understanding and agreement. Much of the mischief in the church, and especially the Church of England, has arisen from such attempts, as is only too plainly shown by Newman and the Oxford Movement. A man must choose what side he is on, where the truth lies, and when he has done that adhere to it unswervingly.

Simply to remove the landmarks that plot and chart this area, to turn the signposts round, and then in the resulting confusion claim that all roads lead in the same direction can only serve to trivialize the momentous issues that are involved, and upon which the purity of the Gospel depends. And the Scriptures have some severe things to say about the man who removes his neighbour's landmarks.

12

(II) Sense and Consensus

The Anglican-Roman Catholic Agreement on the Eucharist[1]

In commenting on this statement it is necessary in the first place to draw attention to the climate of opinion in which we live today. Because it is the intellectual element in which we move it is least noticed, yet its influence upon our minds and the phenomena we perceive is profound. I mean, of course, that we are living today in a climate of thought and opinion which of itself tends very strongly towards consensus. Preoccupation with consensus is not the preserve of theologians and churchmen, but is evident in politics too, both domestic and international. 'Dialogue', 'communication', 'open ended discussion' are the stock-in-trade of journalists, politicians, artists and dramatists as well as religionists. You do not have to embrace consciously these notions to be influenced by them. Consensus, agreement, is in the air, it is absorbed without reflection and yet it profoundly conditions people's thinking on fundamental issues.

If we look at the mid-Victorian period we find a similar phenomenon, but then the climate was evolutionism. Men were thinking, talking, breathing evolution. It was apparent in the generality of lectures, books, opinions, theories and sermons. Man was evolving, history was evolving, religion was evolving—everything was evolving. Today, if I may coin a word, it is consensusism. The psychology of consensusism works in this way. It seizes upon the similarities of systems, however superficial and ignores the differences, however profound. Thus for example in the arguments for entering Europe emphasis was laid upon the homogeneity of all Europeans, but it is evident to a thoughtful person who takes the history of Britain and the European nations into account that such homogeneity is in the mind of the theorist.

Similar forces are at work in the sphere of religion. For example, the Report states that 'the eucharist has become the most universally accepted term' for this sacrament of the Lord's Supper. But we all know that this is not so. It is generally called the Mass in Roman

[1] *THE ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC AGREEMENT ON THE EUCHARIST.* The 1971 Anglican-Roman Catholic Statement on the Eucharist (with an Historical Introduction and Theological Commentary by Julian W. Charley). *Grove Books*, Bramcote, Notts. 24 pp. 20p.

Catholicism and the Holy Communion in the Church of England. How can this extraordinary distortion of the facts be explained, except in terms of the psychology of consensusism? Or again, take the Rev. Julian Charley's notes, in his commentary on the statement, on realism in sacramental language. 'The words of Jesus, "This is my body", "This is my blood" set a pattern of realist language in eucharistic theology. To suppose this was the prerogative of Catholic tradition only is to fly in the face of history. In Protestant and Reformed theology also there has always been a tradition of this nature.' He then cites a number of instances where these words have been used, but the deep theological differences that underly the use of these words are skated over. The superficial likeness is seized upon, the fundamental difference is discarded. We could multiply these examples many times in the recent history of consensus making.

What we see here, then, is a powerful influence at work bending systems, history and facts too, into agreement and conformity. Is it surprising in this atmosphere that a public body declaring its intention of exploring the possibility of agreement should come up with precisely such an agreement? Indeed it would have been more surprising had it not. In this climate of opinion very little effort was needed. As long as the current was not actively resisted everything could float down stream until it came to rest and coagulated into a mass—which is a sort of consensus. Let us then, in our consideration of this document, make full allowance for the spirit of the age.

In any ecumenical statement of this kind there must be some 'middle term', some 'new element' introduced which is to act as a bridge and effect a transition between the opposite points of view that have formerly prevailed. To summarize briefly those positions, we may say that according to the Council of Trent the eucharist is a propitiatory sacrifice which the priest offers up on behalf of the living and the dead. According to the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was 'ordained for a continual remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ's death and of the benefits we receive thereby'.

Again, with regard to the nature of Christ's presence in that sacrament, the Council of Trent stated that 'through consecration of the bread and wine there comes about a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood . . . This conversion is properly called transubstantiation'. The Church of England declares, 'Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of the bread and the

wine) in the Supper of the Lord cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

'The Body of Christ is given, taken and eaten in the Supper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the Body and Blood of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith.' Article XXVIII.

These positions are logically contradictory and irreconcilable as they stand. As long as the lines remain drawn thus nothing can happen, no movement can take place between the two sides. To effect a rapprochement, then, some transition has to be made, a bridge has to be built at some point. The task of examining this document is to determine where exactly the lines have been breached and the bridge has been built. I say it is a task because no help is given to the general reader by the bridge builders themselves. Indeed, it seems carefully concealed in the statement rather like those shapes that are hidden in the lines of a child's puzzle picture so that you have to turn it this way and that in order to see them. We can, however, be sure it is there somewhere, for if it were not the statement could not have been produced. We found exactly the same thing, of course, when we looked at that other consensus statement, *Growing Into Union.* Some 'new element' had been introduced into the discussion of Justification and Scripture and Tradition with which to effect a transition and get movement in what was formerly a static theological position.

In the case of this statement the 'new element' or 'middle term' is 'anamnesis' or 'memorial', and is expressed in these words in Section II. 'The notion of memorial as understood in the passover celebration at the time of Christ—*i.e.* the making effective in the present of an event in the past—has opened the way to a clearer understanding of the relationship between Christ's sacrifice and the eucharist.' Now the log jam has been broken up and the traffic is moving again. 'The way has been opened up . . .' it is claimed by this understanding of memorial or anamnesis. It is fundamentally important, therefore, that we understand what this bridging or middle-term means, and know whether it will bear the weight that is now being put upon it.

Gregory Dix in his book *The Shape of the Liturgy* gives a representative account of this view of anamnesis or memorial in these words, 'It is not quite easy to represent accurately in English, words like "remembrance" or "memorial" having for us a connotation of something itself *absent*, which is only mentally recollected. But in the Scriptures both

of the Old and New Testaments anamnesis and the cognate verb have the sense of "re-calling" or "re-presenting" before God an event in the past, so that it becomes *here and now operative by its effects.* Thus the sacrifice of a wife accused of adultery (Numbers 5: 15) is "an offering 're-calling' her sin to (God's) remembrance" . . . So the widow of Sarepta (1 Kings 17: 18) complains that Elijah has come "to 're-call' to (God's) remembrance (anamnesai) my iniquity", and therefore her son has now died . . . It is in this active sense, therefore, of "re-calling" or "re-presenting" before God the sacrifice of Christ, and thus making it here and now operative by its effects in the communicants, that the eucharist is regarded both by the New Testament and by second century writers as the anamnesis of the passion, or of the passion and the resurrection combined. It is for this reason that Justin and Hippolytus and later writers after them speak so directly and vividly of the eucharist *in the present* bestowing on the communicants those effects of redemption—immortality, eternal life, forgiveness of sins, deliverance from the power of the devil and so on—which we more directly attribute to the sacrifice of Christ viewed as *a single historical event in the past.* One has only to examine their unfamiliar language closely to recognize how completely they identify the offering of the eucharist by the church with the offering of Himself by our Lord, not by way of repetition, but as a "re-presentation" (anamnesis) of *the same* offering by the church which is his body.'

This is the understanding of anamnesis to which the statement refers, and which it believes 'opens up the way' to a clearer understanding of the relationship between Christ's sacrifice and the eucharist. It is my conviction that it opens up the way to the *identification* of Calvary and the eucharist, and that this is the very point which it is intended to establish. This is the thrust of the argument. The significance of this concept for Catholic doctrine must be clear to all who are not wilfully blind. By this device the time barrier is broken down. Calvary is not simply an event in the past, but is mysteriously and metaphysically present in the 'now' of every eucharist. Consequently there is a 're-presentation' of the sacrifice, there is a 'real' presence of the broken body and shed blood. All this follows once you agree that an event in the past may be made present by the 'anamnesis' or 'remembrance' of it. If this seed is allowed to take root, from it must grow every branch of Catholic doctrine. It is only a matter of time to unpack and make explicit what is contained in this concept. What we mean by anamnesis or remembrance is, therefore, a matter of the utmost significance.

What are we to say then about this interpretation which is clearly the

position adopted in the statement? The best we can say of it is that it is partly true and partly false. There is an element of truth in the premise and it is this which lends colour to the invalid conclusion which is drawn from it. The result is that there is a considerable degree of ambiguity in the position which needs to be cleared up. There are in fact two propositions here between which we must distinguish. If it is contended simply that a past event is recalled to mind so that its effects, consequences or benefits are available in the present, then the truth of this is acknowledged. But this, of course, is saying nothing specially significant or new. It is what evangelicals have always held about the Lord's Supper, viz. that the benefits of Christ's death are available to the believer today in the use of that sacrament (and indeed outside it also). If, on the other hand, it is contended that this act of remembrance means more, that the event of Calvary itself is present so that there is an identity between the two, and that not merely the consequences and effects of the sacrifice of Christ are available to the believer, but the sacrifice itself is actually present, so making the sacrifice of the Cross and the eucharist one and the same, then this we reject totally and without qualification.

We reject it because there is no ground for it in the biblical expression which nowhere suggests that the very act or event itself is made present by remembrance but only the effects or consequences of it. Thus, to take the favourite example, the widow of Sarepta was not saying that her past wrong action was being made present, but that the penalty or consequences of it were being carried out in the present as a result of her past sin being brought to light by the man of God. To insist that it means more than this, that the very event itself is made present, is to graft upon it a metaphysical and mystical notion that is completely foreign to it.

We reject it because it is contrary to reason. An event which has happened in the past cannot be made present. This would be to deny its true character as an event, *i.e.* an historical happening, a specific point in the time-space continuum. It is not good sense to talk like this and what is not good sense is *a fortiori* not good theology either. The sacrifice of the Cross took place in time, in history, and it cannot be arrested and perpetuated in this way. 'It is finished' is the only fitting and appropriate word that can be spoken. There is no way by which the sacrifice of Christ can be made present, though the benefits of His death are available to all who believe. More than this we do not need, nor

should we desire. More than this can only serve to obscure what is necessary.

On this question the mainstream of Anglican teaching has always been very clear. Waterland expresses the distinction we have been making very nicely when he says in his treatise on the eucharist: 'We do not say that Christ's death, or Christ's crucifixion, is now *present;* we know it is *past*: but the *benefits* remain; and while we remember one as past, we call to mind or keep in mind, the other also as present'. The Book of Homilies also warns against the danger of so interpreting the memorial that it be given the nature of a present sacrifice. 'We must take heed, lest of the memory, it (the sacrament) be made a sacrifice.'

The true sense in which the benefits of Christ's death are present to faith but the sacrifice itself is acknowledged as past is shown in these words of Cranmer. ' When I say and repeat many times in my book that the body of Christ is present in them that worthily receive the sacrament . . . I mean . . . that the force, the grace, the virtue and benefit of Christ's body that was crucified for us and of His blood that was shed for us be really and effectually present with all them that duly receive the sacrament.' And again Dean Aldrich says, 'Wherefore it is evident that since the body broken and blood shed neither do nor can now really exist, they neither can be really present, nor literally eaten or drank; nor can we really receive them, but only the benefits purchased by them'. Finally, we meet with the expression of this truly Anglican teaching in Bishop Moule: 'The body and the blood (of Christ), as presented to faith in the Lord's Supper, are things which literally exist no longer, for in the Calvary state that most sacred body is now no more. They are not existing things to be infused into our being; they are an infinitely precious Fact to be appropriated by our faith'.

This notion of anamnesis, then, that is adumbrated in the statement is a mistaken and dangerous one, for if it is adopted uncritically it leads to confusion, not clarity, about the relationship of Christ's sacrifice to the Lord's Supper. It perpetuates the error that is fundamental to all Catholic teaching on this subject which is the refusal to take Calvary seriously for what it is—a past event (the benefits of which may be appropriated in the present by faith), and also, of course, the determination to hypostatize the sacrifice of Christ in the eucharist. This notion is repugnant to Scripture, to reason, and to the true development of Anglican teaching.

The ramifications of this error, which lies in Section II, may be traced

backwards and forwards throughout the rest of the statement. We may briefly summarize the implications of this under three heads.

(i) *Its significance for the statement's appeal to biblical teaching.*

Because the concept lays some claim to being derived from Scripture (cf. Gregory Dix's quotation from the Old Testament and the statement's assurance that this is how the notion of memorial was understood at the time of Christ in the passover) it gives the appearance of being biblical when in fact it is not. Or to put the matter more precisely, the biblical element in the concept, which we have acknowledged, which is that an event in the past may have effects and consequences which are operative in the present, is used to establish the unbiblical idea that the sacrifice of Calvary is the same, and identifiable with that of the eucharist. It is possible that some evangelicals will be misled by the declared intention of the Commission 'to seek a deeper understanding of the reality of the eucharist which is consonant with biblical teaching' into thinking that what is contained in the statement is in consequence itself scriptural. This is not the case. The intention may have been present, but has not been fulfilled.

(ii) *Its significance for eucharistic sacrifice.*

Here again the first part of paragraph 5 may serve to disarm evangelicals. It appears that the finality and sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross has been categorically affirmed, therefore, it will be said, a biblical and evangelical position has been secured. The Rev. Julian Charley himself comments on this, 'There could hardly be a more explicit emphasis on the atoning work of Christ. His redeeming death and resurrection are firmly placed in history. The emphasis of the writer to the Hebrews upon the "once for all" nature of Christ's sacrifice is taken up and spelled out. "There can be no repetition or addition." Any attempt to express a nexus between the sacrifice of Christ and the eucharist must not obscure this fundamental fact of the Christian faith'. And then with incredible naivety, as if he had never heard of the storms surrounding the word 'memorial' before, he adds, 'It will be observed that the statement itself conforms to this principle by declining to call the eucharist a sacrifice . . . it prefers to employ the term "memorial" '. But that as we have seen is the very term in dispute. The whole controversial question is wrapped up in the meaning of that word. Nothing has been done to safeguard the uniqueness of Calvary, if by the use of this term an identity has been established, or is allowed to be established,

between the sacrifice of Christ and the eucharist. Catholics are not saying that the eucharist is a repetition or addition, but the same as Calvary. In this statement, the evangelical position has not been taken into consideration, but outflanked. It may place the sacrifice of Christ in history, but it does not anchor it there. The value of what has been said about the finality and sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice in the first part is cancelled out by the insistence upon a particular understanding of 'memorial' in the second part.

(iii) *Its significance for the 'real presence'.*

There are many references throughout the statement which speak strongly of this. Indeed this was one of the things to which Bishop Butler drew attention in the *Times* of September 8, 1971. He stated, 'The Commission is very explicit on this real presence'. In this he was right. These are some of the expressions the statement uses. 'In and by His sacramental presence given *through* the bread and wine, the crucified and risen Lord . . . offers Himself to His people.' 'His true presence, effectually signified by the bread and wine, which in this mystery *become* His body and blood.' 'Christ is present and active . . . and gives Himself *in* the body and blood of His paschal sacrifice.' 'Through the prayer of thanksgiving . . . the bread and wine *become* the body and blood of Christ by the action of the Holy Spirit, so that in communion we eat the flesh of Christ and drink His blood.' And finally, the extraordinary statement in the footnote about transubstantiation: 'The word *transubstantiation* is commonly used in the Roman Catholic Church to indicate that God acting in the eucharist effects a change *in the inner reality of the elements.* The term should be seen as affirming the *fact* of Christ's presence and the mysterious and radical change which takes place. In contemporary Roman Catholic theology it is not understood as explaining *how* the change takes place'. This is intended to show that the Roman Church, somewhat embarrassed by the categories of substance and accidents in view of modern philosophical criticism, has rationalized its position. It has, however, in no way modified its claim that the real body and blood of Christ are present *in* the elements, but leaves unexplained the question 'how?'.

All this must surely lead us to the conclusion that the statement comes down firmly on the side of a *spatial conjunction* between the sign and the thing signified, *i.e.* between the bread and wine, and the body and blood of Christ. It follows logically from this that there is a

manducatio oralis (a partaking with the mouth) of the body of Christ by all, *i.e.* the faithful and unfaithful alike.

The true Anglican teaching on the subject follows Calvin very largely and has consistently denied any spatial conjunction. Professor Whale in a recent study of Calvin's teaching puts it very well. 'According to Calvin reality and sign are respectively related *direct* to the believer, whereas between the reality and the sign itself there is only a parallel relationship. If his opponents mean that the reality is inseparable from its sign, Calvin has no great quarrel with them. But this is not their meaning. They may strenuously disavow 'Impanation' (enclosure in bread), but that is what their insistence on spatial conjunction must mean: and Calvin rejects this decisively, not (be it noticed) because it asserts the presence too strongly, but because it actually endangers it.'

In Reformed teaching then, in which the Church of England essentially shares, the bread and the wine enclose, contain nothing, but stand for Christ's sacrificial death on the Cross, and, as legal instruments, convey to those only who worthily receive the bread and wine the merits of Christ's broken body and shed blood. The feeding upon Christ is a spiritual feeding and the body of Christ is received, not with the physical organ, but with the 'mouth of the soul'. Christ communicates the benefits of His passion and His spiritual presence directly to the soul and therefore the prepositions 'in' or 'through' can never be used of the elements in this aspect. The only preposition that would be appropriate here would be 'with'. This is summed up admirably in Article XXVIII 'The Body of Christ is given, taken and eaten in the Supper, *only* after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith'.

It is clear that the statement teaches a 'real presence' *in* the elements of bread and wine, something akin to what the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey, described as the Tractarian doctrine of the Real Presence when he preached at the 1958 Eucharistic Congress. This is 'the teaching that after the consecration of the elements there are indeed present, not carnally but spiritually, the body and blood of the Lord, and that He, present in the sacrament, alike in His deity and humanity is rightly to be adored'. This doctrine, he said, 'linked the Blessed Sacrament with the Incarnation itself. The Bread from heaven is none other than the Word-made-flesh. Before ever we receive the gift as food for our souls, we are lifted out of ourselves in adoration of the mystery of the Incarnation, of which the gift is already the present effectual sign'. This is a refined transubstantiation as the footnote declares. The strange

thing is that it appears to be assumed that as long as the word 'spiritual' is substituted for 'substantial' everything will be all right.

It is, however, no good trying to justify such a position, as Julian Charley does, by an appeal to 'realist language' either in the Scriptures or the Reformers. The Scriptures intend no such notion of impanation, and the Reformers, while they recognized the relation between the sign and the thing signified denied consistently any spatial conjunction and eschewed the use of the term 'real presence' for this reason. Their concern to be liberated from any notion of a 'local presence' in the bread and wine is the measure of the spiritual danger confronting those who unwarily use these expressions and admit this teaching.

It is fervently to be hoped that evangelical churchmen will not be satisfied with any such consensus as this statement purports to have achieved; that they will prefer sense before 'consensus' and find greater spiritual sustenance and intellectual delight in the teaching of their own Reformers and divines than in the concoctions of ecumenical statesmen.

[22] (III) Evangelical Catholicity

LOST IDENTITY

THE peculiar affliction of the Protestant denominations today is loss of identity. When an individual suffers from this complaint the symptoms are loss of memory and inability to recollect relationships or details of personal history that go to make up the continuity and identity of the person. When an institution suffers in this way it entails failure to relate to the true causes of its existence and refusal to acknowledge and accept its own history. A division and alienation is set up within the institution that prevents it from being truly itself and acting with integrity. For example, take the case of Methodism. The doctrinal position of Methodism is laid down in the 44 Standard Sermons of John Wesley. But how many Methodists, including its ministers, now pay any attention to these sermons? And if they do, it is more than likely they are antiquarians, who look upon them as little more than museum pieces, with no living relationship with contemporary Methodism, which seems like a wholly unaccountable phenomenon adrift upon a sea of modernity.

This affliction to which all the historic denominations have succumbed is present in a very acute form in the Church of England. It has lost its identity. On the part of many there is a failure to comprehend the facts which have contributed to its development. On the part of others there is a deliberate rejection of those facts, since they desire to make the Church of England something other than what it is. Perhaps one or two illustrations will serve to make this clear. The first that comes to mind is of a certain Chapter Meeting where the Rural Dean stated, in response to the inquiry of a member, that the Bishop had agreed that, on the Sunday following his Induction to his living, he might read the XXXIX Articles in the presence of his Churchwardens only, instead of publicly to the congregation as is normally required. The second was at an Induction Service where, though printed in the form of service, that the Bishop was to say that the nominee for the living was to state his public assent to the XXXIX Articles, this was ignored and words substituted to the effect that the clergyman would 'declare his allegiance to the Catholic faith'. Both these instances are symptoms of lost identity, an attitude

of mind which is widespread at the present time, and which is the culmination of a hundred years of growing estrangement by many churchmen from the real character of the Church of England. The question now, therefore, that needs an answer is, in what does the true identity of the Church of England consist?

THE TRUE IDENTITY

Anyone genuinely seeking the answer to this question cannot do better than turn to the republished edition of Griffith Thomas' *The Catholic Faith*. This book is a comprehensive survey of the true doctrinal position of the Church of England. He evidently did not set out to make this a theological treatise. It was intended to be a manual for the instruction of young people preparing for confirmation, and the average church member. But like that other work of instruction for the average Christian man, Calvin's *Institutes*, it grew, and has become a significant statement of the position of the English Church; an exposition of its Creeds, Prayer Book and Articles that has now become a classic.

Its value lies not least in its title and scheme. This is not intended to be an apology for some particular group or party within the Church of England. Griffith Thomas does not set out to justify Evangelical Churchmanship *within* the Church of England. His object is much bolder and more comprehensive. He is concerned to show that Evangelical Churchmanship is the Churchmanship of the Church of England, that the theology of English Reformation is Catholic. This is a defence of the faith of the Church of England, not of some school or sectional interest within it.

Thus if we turn to page 228, 'The Marks of the Catholicity of the Church of England', we see that they consist of these:

'(a) *The Christian doctrine of the Godhead* as laid down in the three Creeds, and as theologically stated in Articles I to V. This includes the doctrine of God as Creator and Father, as transcendent and immanent; of the Holy Trinity; of the Incarnation of our Lord; of the Atonement; of the Resurrection and Ascension; of the Deity of the Holy Ghost. About these fundamental truths there can be no question; they constitute the Catholic faith.

'(b) Arising out of this doctrine come the *special applications and implications* emphasized at the time of the Reformation . . . At that time certain distinctive principles were emphasized by the Church of England.

and these principles must be thoroughly understood if we would arrive at an accurate knowledge of true Anglican Catholicity. What then was distinctive about the English Reformation?

'(1) The first distinctive principle was the insistence upon *true spiritual authority*—Holy Scripture was declared to be supreme in all necessary matters of faith and practice; and whatsoever was not read therein, nor could be proved thereby, was not required of any man as an article of faith or as necessary to salvation (Art. VI). The three Creeds were to be received, not because of their usefulness or their antiquity or their universality, but because they could be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture (Art. VIII). The Church cannot ordain anything contrary to God's Word written, nor ought it to decree anything against the same, or enforce anything besides the same as necessary to salvation (Art. XX). General Councils have neither strength nor authority in things necessary to salvation unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture (Art. XXI). Doctrines concerning the sacraments, ministry and discipline are also deliberately subjected to the supreme authority of Holy Scripture (Arts. XXII-XXXIV).

'(2) The next distinctive principle of the Reformation was the *true spiritual access of the soul to God* as indicated by the phrase "justification by faith". The repentant sinner is accepted with God through faith in Christ, apart from all personal merit and work, and this acceptance carries with it access to God's presence at all times without the help of any intermediary, and guarantees constant, free and full fellowship between the soul and God.

'(3) The third distinctive principle of the Reformation was its insistence on the *true spiritual meaning of the sacraments.* The keynote of English Reformation and Prayer Book teaching on the sacraments is the necessity of right and worthy reception; the efficacy of these ordinances is conditional on faithful use. They do not "contain" grace apart from worthy dispositions in the recipients. No *opus operatum*, i.e. the administration of the rite alone, apart from spiritual conditions, can guarantee the bestowal of grace. Faith is the correlative of grace; the sacraments are visible signs to which are annexed promises. They appeal to faith, and only through faith are efficacious.

These three distinctive principles are as clear today in our Prayer Book as they were in 1552, for the simple reason that they have never been altered in any essential respect, and *all true English Church Catholicity*

must include and give prominence to these significant and unmistakable aspects of truth.'

There in a nutshell you have the true identity of the English Church, needing only to be garnished wth a note on episcopacy as an allowable but not essential form of church government. This is the high ground that Griffith Thomas and other Evangelical clergy contemporary with him took. This was their defence of the Catholic faith, their testimony to the true character of the English Church. They were not narrow party men, but the rightful heirs of the Reformation settlement, true sons of the Church of England. The Anglo-Catholics were usurpers. The Tractarian Movement represented a new departure, an innovation which was inconsistent with the previous character and development of the English Church. It betrayed a fundamental disloyalty to that position, which had not been in evidence before, for as Griffith Thomas states on page 246, 'This party (i.e. the Anglo-Catholic) is in no sense to be regarded as the lineal successors of the High Churchmen of the seventeenth century, and they are also to be distinguished from those High Churchmen of the nineteenth century who were absolutely opposed to Roman Catholic doctrines and ritual.' Indeed, High Churchman is a misnomer for the Anglo-Catholic, which has led to a great deal of misunderstanding. 'It is essential that the true position of the Church of England should be borne in mind, and the errors of the Tractarian and modern Ritualistic Movement kept in view. The movement does not represent a legitimate development of anything to be found in the Church of England since the sixteenth century, it rather represents an alien growth from germs that have been placed in the Church of England from the rise of John Henry Newman and his School' (page 247). This, of course, would be quite simple to substantiate from the writings of Newman, Manning, Robert Wilberforce and their friends.

THE NEW EVANGELICALS

Despite the disloyalty of the Tractarians and their hangers-on, the Evangelical clergy looked upon themselves as the upholders of the true identity of the Church of England. They had no doubt about their position and role, which was to maintain the true Catholicity of the Church, which was indelibly written into her formularies and Prayer Book. Needless to say, a great deal has happened since 1904 when Griffith Thomas wrote this book, or even since the last revision of it in 1952, and not the least significant from our point of view is the change which has

taken place in Evangelicalism in the Church of England. The watershed of this was undoubtedly the National Evangelical Anglican Congress at Keele in 1967. An article entitled, 'The New Evangelicals' in the *English Churchman* in 1971 drew attention to this change and singled out the point at issue which divides Evangelicals of the old school from those of the new, that is, their attitude towards Reformation teaching. I quote at some length from the article since it deals with this critical question.

'There has in recent years grown up a new type of Evangelical. This variation of the species was first formally marked at the Keele Congress. It has grown in numbers and influence since. One of the chief distinguishing characteristics is a new attitude towards the Reformation. Here the new Evangelicals have taken up a different stance from previous generations. They have done nothing so crude as to deny the validity of those teachings; but they show no desire to be bound by them.

'Their appeal they say is not to the XXXIX Articles, but to Scripture, and if need be they can do without the Articles, indeed they would prefer to do without them since they are a bit of a millstone around the neck in dialogue with other traditions. The need is to get away from entrenched positions to the openness of Scripture, the authority of which others are prepared to recognize.

'On the face of it this might seem an eminently reasonable position. After all, was not this the position of the Reformers themselves? Did they not appeal to Scripture? They had no Articles to fall back on. Do we need, then, to be hedged about and protected by the doctrinal formulations of the Reformation? As long as we have Scripture do we not have all we need?

'These questions must be answered, and in the first place it is fair to point out that a distinction is drawn, if not consciously then sub-consciously, in the thinking of these men between the doctrinal statements of the Reformation and the credal formulations of the Early Church. While they show every willingness to dispense with the former, they show no desire to speak in a similar vein of the latter. This would seem to highlight an inconsistency in their approach to the question of doctrinal formulae—an inconsistency which is, of course, by no means new—and suggests that it is governed less by any absolute validity these statements may have, than by their relative value in affording ecumenical manoeuvrability.

'Further, it has always been a source of puzzlement to us to understand why an appeal to Scripture should put one at variance with the Reformation, or make one sit more loosely to the Scriptural teachings of

that great movement of the Spirit of God in the Church. Surely it is precisely because the Reformers appealed to Scripture that those who wish to do the same today should find with them a concurrence of view, and that the doctrinal statements of the Reformation should be specially valued by those who love and respect the authority of God's Word. That a wedge should be driven in here, and that appeal to the one should invite departure from other fills us with amazement.

'The fact that the Reformers stood close to these doctrinal questions, examined them in such detail, and always formulated their answers with an eye to Scripture should give their statements a special standing among us. Why should we, then, arbitrarily set aside the results of their labours, when we shall be compelled, if we appeal to Scripture, to come to the same conclusions ourselves? Must the present generation set aside the wheel in order to discover for itself its importance and so invent it anew? But, what in the meantime of all the frustration and loss that should accompany so futile an experiment!'

Since 1967 we have seen a steady erosion of that Evangelical Catholicity that Griffith Thomas describes as being of the essence of the English Church. It might be illuminating to list the significant stages in this development in the order in which they have taken place, and compare what Evangelicals have 'achieved' with what Griffith Thomas regarded as of fundamental importance to the identity of the Church of England.

1967 saw the advent of Series II Holy Communion. The Rev. Colin Buchanan of the London College of Divinity was a member of the Liturgical Commission which produced this service, and it was endorsed by most leading churchmen. This service involved deliberate ambiguity in vital doctrinal matters relating to the Lord's Supper. This was openly acknowledged in the preface. It contained optional prayers for the dead; a significant rewording of the prayer of consecration so that the words, 'Grant that we receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine, may be partakers of his most precious body and blood', became, 'Grant that these gifts of bread and wine may be unto us his body and blood'; and a Memorial, viz. 'with this bread and this cup we make the memorial of his saving passion', which in view of its history could only have sacrificial connotation.

Of these things Griffith Thomas says, (i) 'In the Lord's Supper Christ is neither offered "to" God, nor "for" man; He is offered "to" man as Saviour and sustenance to be welcomed by faith. *It will be well, therefore, to get rid of ambiguous and misleading terms.* The Lord's Supper is not a commemorative sacrifice; it is the commemoration of a sacrifice;

and if the words Eucharistic Sacrifice mean some sacrifice that is offered only at and in the Lord's Supper, then we assert that no such idea occurs in the Bible or the Prayer Book' (page 277). (ii) Of those most important words, 'receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine', which guard against any suggestion of change in the elements themselves, he says, 'The Consecration, therefore, implies and involves a change of use and purpose, not of substance or material, for after consecration we pray that we "receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine may be partakers" of the spiritual blessing' (page 167). But, as we have seen, the words have been changed with obvious intent. (iii) Of course, of prayers for the dead he shows with no difficulty at all that such prayer was carefully and deliberately excluded by the Reformers, and 'one of the Homilies speaks with unmistakable plainness of the needlessness of prayers for the dead' (page 297).

Such, then, was the auspicious start of the new Evangelicals in their determination to make the full weight of their presence felt in the impending changes in the Church of England.

1970 came and with it the publication of that strange document *Growing into Union*. In this we had the spectacle of Anglican Evangelicals standing on their heads and receiving applause from many of their own constituency for doing so. Compromise was reached on all the basic Reformation teachings that Griffith Thomas lists as being essential marks of the Catholicity of the Church of England, viz. (a) *Supremacy of Scripture,* which he states 'must at all costs be insisted upon'. 'The Church of Rome puts Church tradition, i.e. Church customs, usages, beliefs, on a level with Scripture as a rule of faith. But the Church of England while valuing such testimony in its proper place refuses to co-ordinate the two, and puts the Bible high above all else as an authority in things essential' (page 212). *Growing into Union* was a simple appeal for the co-ordination of Scripture and tradition in view of what it regarded as the organic connection between them.

(b) *Justification,* which of course is the substance of Article XI. Of this Griffith Thomas says, 'Let us hold fast this great foundation fact of Justification. Let us study the Bible to gain a clear view of its meaning, and then, yielding ourselves to its blessed power and joy, let us make it prominent in our life, teaching and work as the secret of spiritual life, power, peace and liberty' (page 59). *Growing into Union* serves not to make clear, but to obscure this fundamental Article of the Church of England. What Griffith Thomas warns must never be confused, viz.

Justification and Sanctification, are deliberately confused when it is asserted that 'God's justifying word . . . creates subjective righteousness' (*G.I.U.*, page 48). All the time the authors of this work are labouring to throw sand in the eyes of those who would make the clear distinctions and analysis that the subject demands.

(c) *The Sacraments.* Time and again Griffith Thomas emphasizes the importance of right reception of the sacraments. 'The spiritual efficacy of these ordinances (Baptism and the Lord's Supper) is always conditional, and is not to be associated in any way with the simple administration and application of them. They have no spiritual power of themselves apart from the Spirit of God on God's side, and faith on our side' (page 103). But the authors of *Growing into Union* have a very different view. 'The language of Scripture about them (i.e. the sacraments) is the language of *sheer, unqualified efficacy.* If the outward celebration is performed then on the first showing the inward grace is mediated' (*G.I.U.*, page 55). And so the precious Reformation heritage, the true Catholicity of the Church of England, is bartered away by those who claim affinity and descent from the man who maintained that at all costs it must be preserved.

1971 brought the *Anglican-Roman Catholic Agreement on the Eucharist.* The Rev. Julian Charley, Vice-Principal of St. John's College, Nottingham, was a member of the Commission which produced the report. In his commentary on it he commends it to Evangelicals urging that in it is preserved all the essential points of their position. In fact it does nothing of sort. Its assertion that substantial agreement on the doctrine of the eucharist has been reached; its insistence upon 'realist' language, which means in effect that belief that a local change is brought about in the elements, as is evidenced by the statement, 'Through the prayer of thanksgiving the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ by the action of the Holy Spirit, so that in communion we eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood' (Section 8 Agreed Statement)—all this makes strange reading when contrasted with the plain, unequivocal statements of Griffith Thomas in *The Catholic Faith.* Of the possibility of agreement he says, 'Any attempt at reconciling the views of the English and Roman Catholic Churches on the subject of the Lord's Supper must remain impracticable and impossible as long as those statements (relating to Transubstantiation and the Sacrifice of the Mass) continue in our Articles'. Of attempts to identify the material elements and the spiritual gifts he says, 'The outward and inward parts of the sacrament are exactly

parallel and concurrent, but are never to be identified. The Lord gives His own grace, the minister gives the bread and wine. When we draw near with faith the two are always coincident in time, but if there is no faith, the elements are received and nothing more. "The wicked, and such as be void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ, but rather to their condemnation do eat and drink the sign or sacrament of so great a thing" (Article XXIX)' (page 167).

More could be said about the Commission and report on the XXXIX Articles, of which Dr. J. I. Packer was a member, of Series III Holy Communion, and so on, but enough has been produced to show quite conclusively that a yawning chasm has opened up between the new Evangelicals and men like Griffith Thomas. They assert things which are diametrically opposed. They move in a different direction, and are animated by a different spirit. The question arises whether such men are Evangelicals at all, whether the term is sufficiently elastic to include such disparate elements. To add to this confused and confusing situation we now have avowedly Evangelical Bishops going on Pilgrimage to Walsingham and preaching at that shrine of Mariolatry without uttering a word of criticism or condemnation of what goes on there.

'EVANGELICAL'—WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

What, then, in view of these things does the term 'Evangelical' mean any more in the Church of England? Is it not the case that by the words and deeds of its professors it has been evacuated of any significance at all? Because it has been divorced from any confessional standard, because it has lost its truly Catholic element in the Articles of the Church of England, Evangelicalism is now just what Tom, Dick or Harry make it to mean at any given moment. It is a nose of wax which may be moulded to suit the fancy of the wearer.

How are the mighty fallen! What has happened to the custodians of the true Catholicity of the Church of England? Quis custodiet ipsos Custodes? There was no one to guard the guards themselves, and they too have fallen a prey to the common affliction of loss of identity. They have succumbed to the popular clamour for pluralism in belief and practice—co-operation and accommodation to other traditions, which was the theme of Keele and the disastrous outworking of which policy we have traced. This course takes them further and further into the theological

wilderness. Pragmatism and rule of thumb are replacing any clear doctrinal position. The fundamental mistake was to assume that commitment to the Church of England meant commitment to what was going on at present, rather than commitment to an ideal—to the Catholic Faith. How such a profound change in how Evangelicals understood themselves and their role in the Church of England was so quickly and easily accomplished will remain perhaps one of the great mysteries of Church history, but it is unquestionably a fact.

In conclusion, what future is there for the Catholic Faith in the Church of England? Is there any possibility of the Church recovering its sense of identity and purpose? One thing can be said with absolute certainty; it is no good looking for this in the direction of the present Evangelical leadership. It is probably as far now from this position as any other section of the Church of England. But having acknowledged that, it is still true to say that this understanding of the Church is still adhered to by a number within it. We are after all speaking about the genius of the English Church. It is a powerful scheme of religion that is taught in the Prayer Book and Articles. It would be strange if none felt its power today. It may be buried at the present time, or derided by the whizz-kids as old fashioned, but a book like Griffith Thomas' displays its true strength and reality, its clarity, force and beauty. There is no real alternative to this position for those who regard themselves as sons of the Church of England. What it needs now is an articulate and forceful advocacy by men who believe in it, and are capable of presenting this image of the Church again to Anglicans. Perhaps what is needed is a new Orthodox group (I use that term to distinguish them from the spurious Evangelicalism that has developed), men who are committed to the Catholic Faith of the Church of England, not to ephemeral movements and changes in the Church; men who are prepared to stand in the true Anglican tradition of Ryle and Thomas and churchmen of their persuasion. The future of Evangelical Catholicity lies here, not in some other direction.

Appendix (I)

'GROWING INTO UNION': A REPLY TO SOME CRITICISMS

By J. I. Packer

ONE mark of a true Evangelical (using that word for the moment to signify simply a biblical Christian) is that he has a conscience about truth. He believes in a God who has not only shown His hand in works of power, but has also spoken His mind in the prophetic and apostolic words of Holy Scripture. He takes note of how Paul and John (among other New Testament writers) demand fidelity to their message about Christ and grace, and anathematize all who sit loose to it. For himself, he is resolved to hold fast and hold forth 'the sound doctrine'.

This evangelical conscience about truth is something which *The Evangelical Magazine* seeks to strengthen in its readers. It is part of the magazine's regular ministry to spotlight current issues involving doctrine over which Christians seem confused and divided—both straightforward issues of what the Bible does and does not say, and trickier issues involving attempts to judge and interpret present situations by Scripture teaching. Since the book *Growing into Union*, of which I am a joint-author, has caused some uncertainty in evangelical circles, I am glad that the magazine should carry discussions of it—even when the first such discussion is as unfavourable as that by David Samuel,[1] who wrote the book off as a load of old and indeed noxious rubbish. I shall deal with Mr. Samuel's points in due course, but I propose to move towards them by my own route.

WHAT IS AN EVANGELICAL?

The question, 'What is an Evangelical?' has been much in the air recently, and one line of reaction to *Growing into Union* has been to

declare portentously that on this showing the two evangelical authors are Evangelicals no longer. Here is where I propose to start. I used the word 'Evangelical' in my opening paragraph; let me now try to define it. It is, of course, used today as a brand-label for many different things, *e.g.* Lutheran churches in Germany, Reformed theologians in Switzerland, and preaching missions in England ('an evangelical campaign'); it is also used for a total understanding of the Christian faith and life which many who claim to be 'evangelical' demonstrably do not share. In this potentially confusing situation I must start by making clear that it is only with the last of these meanings that I am concerned. I ask: what are the ingredients that make up this 'evangelical' view of Christianity? And I reply that the essential ingredients are six in number, as follows:

1. Belief in *the authority of the Word of God*—that is, the divinity, sufficiency, and clarity of the canonical Scriptures as the source of our knowledge of God, the means whereby God instructs us, and the rule of faith and life.

2. Belief in *the finality of the gospel of Christ*, both as God's last word to the world and also as a message to which one cannot add without subtracting. An evangelical Christian will hold that anyone who ascribes salvation to the work of Christ plus our works, or to the mediation of Christ plus that of other priests, or to the sacrifice of Christ plus the church's eucharistic sacrifice, or to the Christ of Scripture plus extra-biblical revelations, is making Christ out to be less of a Saviour than He is in the apostolic gospel, and so robs Christ of glory and Christians of assurance; and the Evangelical will appeal to Galatians, Hebrews, and Colossians to prove his point.

3. Belief in *the priesthood of all believers*—that is, their equal access to God, as His justified and adopted sons; which is the true foundation-principle (so the Evangelical maintains) of fellowship, worship and ministry in the organized church.

4. Belief in *the primacy of evangelism*, i.e. of winning others to conscious faith in Jesus Christ the Saviour, as the first priority at all times for the church on earth.

5. Belief in *the necessity of conversion*—that is to say, the necessity, not of a particular conversion experience (for experiences vary), but of convertedness, in the sense of a quality of life which shows signs of faith and repentance, and thus of new birth.

6. Belief in *the lordship of the Holy Spirit*, as inspirer and interpreter of Scripture, author of faith and assurance, instructor and

enlightener of darkened hearts, prompter of prayer, life-giver in worship and preaching, creator of fellowship, energizer for holiness, witness, and service, and bringer of revival to dying churches.

This is my evangelicalism; is it yours? I hope so, for I am sure that this is the kind of Christianity to which the New Testament points us. And I hope you will agree with me that the question whether a person is an Evangelical is to be settled by reference to how he stands on these six points—by reference in other words, to what he is *for* rather than what he is *against*. What a man is or is not against may show him to be a muddled or negligent or inconsistent Evangelical, but you may not deny his right to call himself an Evangelical while he maintains these principles as the basis of his Christian position. Agreed? Very well; let us move on.

THE REASON WHY

Why should two Anglican Evangelicals, who for many years have been known—in some cases, indeed, have been notorious—as opponents of Anglo-Catholicism, now consent to combine with two professed Anglican Catholics in a book which sets forth theological agreements and, on the basis of them, joint proposals for united action? Does this indicate that in middle age they have grown muddled, negligent, or inconsistent? The question is a fair one, though even to formulate it is unpleasant, and some of the discussions of it in print during the past few months have been pretty unpleasant too. The true answer to the question is in fact simple and, I trust, honourable. What made this collaboration seem a duty was precisely the evangelical conscience about truth: the conviction, that is, that the revealed truth of God which must be held fast against attack must also be acknowledged when maintained by others and must be held forth consistently for the guidance of God's people.

The collaboration came about as follows. In their separate opposition to the 1968 Anglican-Methodist proposals, both pairs of authors had found themselves making at least one parallel point: namely, that the theological basis for the action proposed (joining in the Service of Reconciliation as the means of entering full intercommunion) was not adequate, so that the action itself could not be validated to the Christian conscience as obedience to God's revealed truth. Mr. Samuel errs when he says that the debate showed the Church of England to be two churches, one Catholic and one Protestant; the Church of England actually appeared as three churches—Catholic and Evangelical minori-

ties, both for the most part opposing the scheme on grounds of conscience and theological integrity, and a majority of 'other Anglicans' who supported the scheme, as it appeared, for reasons which were pragmatic and prudential, and not theological at all. Eventually the four authors met to talk, and found their minds moving on unexpectedly similar lines —so much so that they soon found that without any compromise of personal conviction they could say enough together on doctrinal matters to lay a basis for union proposals which they could all commend as obedience to the truth. Now what were they to do? Keep quiet, lest their friends be upset at their 'fratting' across party barriers? Or had they a responsibility to speak, whatever their friends might say? As stewards of truth entrusted to them, they felt they had no choice. They were convinced that what they had to say was something which the churches of England currently discussing union badly needed to hear [particularly their points that (*a*) a united church must have an adequate basis of faith and (*b*) the decision whether a congregation united with others must be the congregation's own]; and they did not know who would make these points if they themselves did not. As part of their Christian obedience, therefore, they felt bound to speak together, to acknowledge publicly the truth they had found in each other, and to announce the way to godly union which they believed it had been given them to see.

In entitling his article 'the real significance of *Growing into Union*' Mr. Samuel presumably meant to contrast the actual effect, as he saw it, with what the four authors claimed and intended. But he entirely misrepresents them—which is why the present reply has to be written. I have no quarrel with any of the positive doctrinal convictions expressed in the article, indeed I share them; but the mishandling of our book is another matter. Here the record has to be put straight.

APOLOGIA

Mr. Samuel assumes (why? the book does not claim it) that our purpose was to resolve the differences about authority, justification, and eucharistic sacrifice which divided Protestants from Romanists in the 16th century, and he further assumes (again, I ask why) that we actually believe we have done this. He makes merry about it: 'Can it be that . . . the world has had to wait, until the breakdown of the Anglican-Methodist conversations for the differences that have divided Christendom for four hundred years to be resolved by four Anglican clergymen, and that all within the space of six months?'—and, he might have added,

in less than a hundred pages? Then he pokes away at our treatment of each theme as if it offered itself as a new synthesis transcending old disputes, and each time he comes up with the verdict that as such it is not much good—'Hasty, ill-considered'; 'no real or significant rapprochement'—etc. Triumph!—or is it? No; it is a major misfire.

For the fact is, as any reader of Introduction will see, that the doctrinal chapters were not written with anything like the grandiose intention that Mr. Samuel imagines. They do not claim to settle any disputes with the Church of Rome, yesterday or today, nor do they probe the roots of division between one Anglican and another. They merely set out some limited lines of thought on basic issues which both pairs of authors go along with. It is not claimed that these lines of thought treat anything completely; each of us has much more to say on each issue than is stated here. Nor is it claimed that these chapters represent or commit anyone save the four authors themselves; how far other Evangelicals and Catholics agree or disagree is something which they themselves must now tell us. Nor do the authors claim that no major differences between them now remain (the exact opposite is, indeed, expressly affirmed on pp. 19 f.). Nor, again, do we attempt to evaluate the long-term significance of our being able to affirm so much more together than we might have expected; should a critic query how deep or far our agreement really goes, on points not discussed in the text, we should have to reply that we cannot ourselves fully assess this at present. All that is claimed—*all*, note—is that what we say on the subjects dealt with is sufficient as a basis, first, for church fellowship today and tomorrow and, second, for the particular union plan which we propose.

It is a pity that Mr. Samuel did not heed the warning on p. 19: 'The whole book . . . stands as a single whole. It is impossible to turn to one chapter, select one line of thought, and treat it as a piece of theological flotsam which might be driven up on any or no shore.' Though recognizing that the book is not a treatise, but a tract—that is, a word for the times, an occasional contribution to an ongoing discussion—he, like a number of others, has elected to look at the doctrinal statements in isolation from the practical proposals which conditioned their scope and limits. (You could not, indeed, gather from his article that the book contains any practical proposals at all.) Thus he has lost sight of the actual purpose of the doctrinal chapters, and read into them a purpose which they did not have, and delusions of grandeur of which they are innocent.

If asked what good *Growing into Union* can do, my answer is, first, that I think it injects some needed correctives into current discussions of church union in England (England, note, not Wales or Scotland or any other part of the world) and, second, that I think it helps to show how the historic and now, alas, broken-down comprehensiveness of the Church of England ought to be reconstructed in the united church of which the Church of England is likely sooner or later to become part. Some Evangelicals, of course, object to the ideals both of organic church union and of a doctrinal comprehensiveness which at all times insists only on what the Bible declares to be fundamental and conscientiously maintains openness to 'think and let think' on everything else. Some hold, as a principle of theological method, that people are not really agreed about anything in theology till they agree substantially about everything, and on that view any comprehensivist ideal is a great and ruinous mistake. But since Mr. Samuel does not take this line, I shall say no more about it here. I shall only record my regret that Mr. Samuel, like many others, should have interpreted our exploration of comprehensiveness (*i.e.* our enquiry into existing common ground) as an essay in compromise (*i.e.* manufacturing agreement by concession).

But do not the authors themselves tell the world that collaborating has changed their position? No, they do not; they deny any such thing. What we say is, 'we have found our Christianity to run deeper as a common position than we ourselves might have thought . . .'—and in virtue of this discovery about each other's position 'we are not what we were' (pp. 20, 17). But appreciating what is true in someone else's position is a different thing from shifting one's own. Yet reviewers persist in refusing to take seriously our denial of having changed our ground, and in declining to interpret our theological statements in the light of that denial. One respected reviewer, after noting our testimony that we remain 'strong and uncompromising' Evangelicals and Catholics, went on to say: 'We judge *from this last statement* (*i.e.* "we are not what we were") that they are not merely more knowledgeable but that, *despite their plea of "no compromise"*, the views they formerly held have been *more or less modified and adjusted*.' This is to accuse us point-blank of being either knaves or fools, according to whether we trimmed our sails consciously or unconsciously! How far this is fair and justifiable dealing I leave to the readers of our book and of this article to decide.

But is it not a fact that the doctrine of *Growing into Union* shows defection from evangelical and scriptural standards? I think not, and when Mr. Samuel says otherwise I believe him to be mistaken. To be

sure, he is very confident in affirming that what our doctrinal chapters attempt has all been tried before (I should like proof of that), and that it is impossible anyway, and only muddles things up; but since, as we saw, he quite misunderstands the purpose of these chapters, and interprets them on a quite false principle, I do not take his comments as the last word. It is true that our expositions are positive rather than polemical, and that the coverts of alternative views are nowhere fully drawn. It is also true that some of our chapters deal with theological questions which Evangelicals rarely discuss among themselves, and approach familiar issues from unfamiliar angles (*e.g.* the chapter on Scripture and tradition discusses tradition in relation to the Bible rather than vice versa). It is further true that our joint literary style is at times compressed, and that familiar slogans and battle-cries which douse light and raise heat are deliberately avoided. In view of the origin of our book and its purpose, as described above, none of this ought to occasion surprise. But none of it involves defection from evangelical essentials. For proof of this, let us take another look at the three doctrinal passages which Mr. Samuel selects for treatment.

(i) *Scripture and tradition.* The first thing to point out is that what the book says here is limited by its purpose in dealing with this subject: which was no more than to explain the principles of theological method that produced the three chapters following, on grace, church and sacraments, and the Christian ministry.

The second thing to point out is that the main contentions of the chapter are as follows:

1. Both Scripture and tradition are forms of witness to Christ, though not co-ordinate.

2. Scripture, being inspired, is 'normative for the Church's faith and life for all time' (p. 36).

3. Tradition 'is not infallible as a mode of transmission, and needs constantly to be tested by the Scriptures whose witness to Christ it seeks to convey' (p. 38). 'What is written in the biblical documents should be viewed in the first instance as the archetypal and normative tradition, the authentic apostolic *paradosis* which must both form and, where necessary, reform the later *paradosis* in order that the knowledge of Christ should not be obscured' (p. 37).

4. One aspect of sound theological method is 'to take with full seriousness any theological justification of traditional positions and institutions that may be offered on the basis of the biblical witness . . .

and . . . to take with equal seriousness any plea for such justification, or complaint of lack of it, that may be pressed upon us' (p. 39).

The third thing to point out is that the reason why Mr. Samuel finds the chapter confusing is his failure to adjust to the fact that 'tradition' is used throughout in a broad sense, to cover *both* the church's transmitting of Christianity *and* the Christianity transmitted, whereas he himself prefers to use the word in a narrow sense, referring only to particular post-apostolic and non-biblical 'traditions'. Any reader of the chapter will find that Mr. Samuel's statement, 'the meaning of tradition changes with every paragraph', though made I am sure in good faith, is quite untrue.

Professor Klaas Runia notes that what is said in the chapter effectively defuses the view of tradition usually credited to Anglo-Catholics; his only query is whether the two Catholic authors can really mean it!

(ii) *Justification.* The scope of our treatment of this point, as of the last, is limited by its purpose, which in this case is to dispel the suspicion that Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics disagree so deeply about the gospel that they lack a proper basis for church-fellowship, whether in the Church of England today or in a united church tomorrow. The main concern of our eight theses is to spell out the proposition that, though justification (change of status) and regeneration (change of nature) go together, both flowing from union with Christ, they are nonetheless, as Mr. Samuel rightly says, 'logically distinct', and the latter is not, as Roman Catholics have commonly held, the meritorious ground of the former. Mr. Samuel's attempt to catch us throwing 'the dialectical bridge . . . across the logical chasm' in order to line up with historic Romanism here is a complete mare's nest, as a fuller quotation of the passage he mangles (review, p. 8) will show.

'*The divine act of grace in which the declaration that a believing sinner is justified is central and basic* ("basic" means "fundamental to everything else") *is in its totality an act of effective and vital union with the living Christ, and hence* (*i.e.* "in consequence") *is constitutive of a new creation.* Thus it can truly be said that God's justifying word (which is a creative word, effecting union with Christ) creates subjective righteousness; though it must always be emphasized that the word of acquittal and acceptance is pronounced on the basis of Christ's vicarious obedience and suffering for us (*i.e.* active and passive obedience), not on the basis of any aspect of the new creation itself (so that historic Romanism must be judged wrong). This is simply to say that justifica-

tion through Christ, and regeneration in Christ, belong and are given together (though both by grace alone) . . .' (*Growing into Union,* p. 48).

What evidently tripped Mr. Samuel up was his assumption that when we said that the doctrine of justification should be set 'in the context of' incorporation, we meant that it should be thought of 'in terms of' incorporation—that is, that our thought of God's gift of a righteous status should somehow be made logically dependent on our thought of His regenerating action, though we had previously said that the two thoughts were logically distinct. Seeing that this makes us contradict ourselves, he does not question his understanding of our meaning, but immediately concludes that overnight we have all become dialectical theologians, for whom logical contradiction is the truest form of truth! It is hard not to smile. In fact, as the flow of our argument clearly shows, what we meant when we said that justification should be thought of 'in the context of' incorporation was just this—we must remember that justification is given in Christ (Galatians 2: 17), and that the gift of subjective renewal, which is also given in Christ, comes with it. Or as we say in the text: 'the new status and the new life are complementary and inseparable aspects of what it means to be in Christ. Thus it is ontologically impossible that a man whom God has justified should not also be a man who is united to Christ by the indwelling Holy Spirit, and consequently a man in whom the fruits of new life are appearing' (p. 48). Our point was not logical at all, but ontological—a point, that is, not about *thoughts,* but about *things*—in this case, the good things that God has prepared for His chosen and believing people.

(iii) *Eucharistic sacrifice.* Here I have only three things to say. First, Mr. Samuel's grasp of the issues in debate between Evangelical and Catholic Anglicans is admirably acute and exact. Second, Mr. Samuel's assumption that what we say is offered as a new synthesis transcending old differences has led him to misread pp. 59 f., just as it led to misreadings elsewhere. There is more excuse for his mistake here, since the Appendix on Eucharistic Sacrifice really does attempt an on-the-spot rapprochement; but that Appendix is the responsibility only of those who signed it. Third, if Mr. Samuel looks again at pp. 59 f., he will see that the formula, we offer to God 'ourselves as reappropriated by Christ', is only a re-statement of the concept of responsive self-offering in the Prayer Book 'prayer of oblation', put in a way which avoids all suspicion of Pelagianism and brings out the fact that the rubric for this self-offering is Romans 12: 1.

CONCLUSIONS

More questions have been raised about the teaching and tendency of *Growing into Union* than can be discussed here. More can, of course, be written if necessary at a later stage. But I hope that what has been said may help to make credible the proposition that *Growing into Union* might be as faithful and responsible an evangelical effort after the renewing of the church as is (for instance) any public activity of the British Evangelical Council, and so may help to clear away some of the cruder and more painful suspicions that the book has aroused. And I hope too that it may help pave the way for a genuine meeting of minds some day between those who espouse different hopes for the future of evangelicalism in English church life—for such a meeting is, in my judgment, long overdue, and has not yet begun. During the past five years, alternative strategies have been formulated, and there has been a lot of propaganda, browbeating, appealing to prejudice, and playing to galleries—but fear, mistrust, and various fixations have effectively kept the parties involved from the sympathy that leads to mutual understanding. The great advance of the past decade has been a dawning realization among Evangelicals generally that tomorrow's strategy must centre, not on inter-denominational 'movements', but on the church itself. Is this gain to be lost in a new outbreak of sectarian bitterness? 'If you bite and devour one another take heed that you are not consumed by one another' (Galatians 5: 15). Will this warning be heeded? It is a major question today.

Appendix (II)
WHAT, THEN, DOES DR. PACKER MEAN?

By David Samuel

I

ANY extended discussion of *Growing into Union* must now be looked upon by many as a work of supererogation, and rather resembling that celebrated dispute over the body of Moses. For though this volume did not exactly fall still-born from the press, being of a rather weak constitution, it expired soon afterwards, and I believe is no longer regarded as a practical option in the on-going ecumenical debate. The President of the Methodist Conference with scant regard for ceremony called in the undertaker and read the burial service over it without even taking its pulse. If, therefore, unity with other denominations, including the Methodists, is the principal object of the book it must on its own achievement be judged a signal failure.

All of which makes the point much more eloquently than I ever could that the real significance of *Growing into Union* lies not in the field of ecumenical politics at all, where on its own showing it has made little or no impact—despite its practical proposals, but in the much more frequented paths of Protestant/Catholic controversy. If it has significance at all it has significance for this controversy, and that is why Evangelicals have debated it with greater interest than ecumaniacs, because they feel that here something vital is at stake.

Now, however, Dr. Packer informs us that it has nothing significant to contribute to this controversy either. It does not set out to achieve a rapprochement between Catholics and Evangelicals. To assume this is to be unfair to the book and its authors, and to attribute grandiose intentions where they did not exist. No, the book does no more than explore the existing common ground between the authors who remain what they were before, staunch, uncompromising Evangelicals and Catholics.

If this be so, how can we explain the impression created in so many minds that some kind of rapprochement was being attempted? Can they all be mistaken? And if the authors did not wish their efforts to be so construed why did they use language which would seem inevitably to imply it? For instance, 'Towards a Resolution' is the title of the concluding

section on 'Scripture and Tradition'. And again on page 29, 'The spectacle of a group of Catholics and Evangelical Anglicans testifying to what they believe to be *important* agreements will naturally prompt readers to wonder how deep these agreements really go'. And yet again in the section on 'Justification': 'We now propose to set out eight theses of our own which we believe show *significant agreement on the major issues*', and so on throughout the book. The underlying assumption seems to be that definite progress has been made and significant new agreement arrived at between Catholics and Evangelicals. We may then be forgiven a natural misunderstanding that the book was setting out to achieve some sort of rapprochement.

Dr. Packer's protestations also confront us with a new problem. If this was not the purpose of the book, what, then, was its purpose? If it were not concerned with rapprochement what possible significance could it have? If the book were to be worthy of the attention which its authors clearly hoped it would receive it was necessary that it should have something significant to say. It does not require a secret conclave of divines to tell us of the things that Catholics and Evangelicals hold in common. If, indeed, the book sets out to do no more than this then it is trivial. I am reminded of the altercation between the teacher and the pupil. 'Tommy, what are you doing?' 'Nothing, Sir.' 'Then come out to the front, because you should be doing something.' I, with many others, assumed that the authors were doing something about a rapprochement. 'Ah!' says Dr. Packer, 'we were doing no such thing.' To which our rejoinder must be, 'But you should have been doing something about it, because otherwise we cannot see what possible meaning your book can have'. Surely, it cannot be pretended that what Catholics and Evangelicals held in common was shrouded in darkness until the light of *Growing into Union* was shed upon the world. Since it naturally did not occur to us that they were engaged in so pedestrian an operation as that of stating what is obvious we may be forgiven, I hope, the mistake of thinking that they were doing something significant. It would appear that Dr. Packer by assuring us that the book confines itself to stating the grounds of existing agreement has stuck a pin in the balloon of what was *Growing into Union* and in its deflated form it looks much sadder and less interesting than it did before.

Indeed, if we take Dr. Packer's protestations at their face value there is no more that can be said. All discussion is precluded, for we have no wish to quarrel with a simple, straightforward statement, without addition or subtraction, of what Evangelicals have always held. But in saying this I cannot help feeling that Dr. Packer has overstated his case.

The assumption throughout the book is that Evangelicals and Catholics can now go together as a result of what *Growing into Union* has achieved, and I think a number of Evangelicals have already acted upon this assumption. There must, therefore, be some *new* basis for thinking this way, since in the past it has been thought impossible. If this book is to escape the charge of triviality, there must be in it some new element of thought, some new degree of understanding and agreement which had not existed before and which becomes the basis for union. I need hardly add that this new element in the situation must be something more than camaraderie, for however much the four authors got to like each other as people this has no significance for the world at large unless it is capable of conceptual and doctrinal formulation. The question now, as before, is, what is this new element and is it capable of being isolated in such a way that we can examine it and determine whether it is significant or no?

II

Since Dr. Packer seems shy to talk about it we must do the best we can ourselves and I think we shall discover that in 'Scripture and Tradition' the new element (give or take a hundred years) is Newman's concept of the development of doctrine, and in 'Justification' it is Hans Küng's concept of the justifying word that also creates subjective righteousness. The supposed agreement and understanding of the doctrinal chapters is built upon these concepts and the ensuing confusion and ambiguity they introduce into what are otherwise clear issues.

In the matter of 'Scripture and Tradition' for example, I am aware that the term tradition is being used in both a dynamic and static sense, and that here to circumvent the difficulties of the past it is used primarily in the former sense, but to speak of Scripture and tradition in the same breath and relate them in an organic way is still, I contend, to introduce an element of obscurity and confusion. What exactly is Dr. Packer committing himself to in accepting this concept of tradition? Does it really represent no defection at all from Evangelical essentials? Much is made of the fact that Newman was the first since the Reformation to introduce the dynamic conception of tradition. But is Newman a trustworthy guide in this difficult terrain? To be sure Newman did not look upon tradition as a static secondary source of doctrine, but simply a process by which the 'truth' that is implicit in Scripture is made explicit. But then he went on from this very position to justify purgatory, the mass, penance, invocation of saints, in a word, the whole traditional Catholic position. His dynamic concept of development which is more than hinted at in this section proved to be a veritable Pandora's box, and we

wait to see what will emerge when our Evangelical friends this time take the lid off. It will greatly surprise us if the result is not the same as before. How, for example, will it be judged what is legitimate development and what is illegitimate? At the moment it would appear that the Bishop of Willesden can worship at the shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham and Dr. Mascall celebrate Mass. These, I suppose, they defend as the valid working out of the traditionary process from the one source—the Scriptures! If these are regarded as illegitimate developments, how is it to be shown that they are? As Newman himself pointed out, this notion of development cries aloud for some external authority to determine what is a legitimate development, and that, of course, is none other than the infallibility of the church.

As I see it the dynamic concept of tradition creates more problems than the static and in view of its history is hardly one that should commend itself to Evangelical churchmen. Anyway this doctrine has been kicking around for over a hundred years and has until now held little attraction for Evangelicals. Why should it excite great interest now and be regarded as a significant step forward. Step forward to what? is surely the question we must ask.

The Evangelical position is clear. It is that not only is Holy Scripture supreme but *sufficient*. It contains all things necessary for salvation. We have no necessity to adduce from it by a doubtful traditionary process things which cannot *plainly be found in it*. If this be a wooden and static view of Christian doctrine, so be it. It is necessary for the purity of the Church.

On the question of 'Justification' the new element introduced into the debate is the view put forward by Hans Küng in his book on justification, that the declaration of acquittal is not merely a forensic pronouncement but is also a creative word which effects subjective righteousness. This view is nowhere to be found in Scripture. In fact it is entirely out of key with the whole forensic conception of justification, and can only serve to obscure and confuse what is clear in Scripture. It is a perfectly obvious case of trying to have it both ways at once, in that justification is *both* a pronouncing righteous and a making righteous, and this is always what Catholics have desired and what Evangelicals have resisted. Furthermore the drift of Küng's argument is clear, for the doctrine of imputed righteousness which is the Evangelical doctrine par excellence he dismisses as mere extrinsicism. That the justified man is also a regenerate man is not in question between us. The real question is whether this kind of subtlety and ambiguity employed by Küng and clearly fundamental to the argument of *Growing into Union* reveals or obscures the

true teaching of Scripture. I believe that if this prop of Küng's were removed from the section on 'Justification' the supposed agreement arrived at would immediately fall apart.

III

On 'Eucharistic Sacrifice' Dr. Packer is kind enough to acknowledge that I have grasped the issues and that the criticism I have to make has some point since his colleague was rash enough to attempt an on the spot rapprochement. I hope I have shown that there is an attempt at rapprochement of some sort throughout the doctrinal chapters of the book. If there were not it would surely be insignificant and of no importance. The new elements have been isolated and examined and I hope Evangelicals will not be misled. The great danger of this book lies in its obscurity and the general sanction it has given to Evangelicals to accept Catholics, not as people, for I hope we do that already, but to accept their system as in some way another aspect of Christian truth which we all confess, but in different ways. In this way I feel it has done a positive disservice both to Catholics and Evangelicals in obscuring the errors of sacerdotalism, and in exposing Christians to another Gospel which is not another.

With the positive things that Dr. Packer says and with his own interpretation of certain passages of the book I find myself in agreement. But the question is, how do the Anglo-Catholic authors interpret them? If Dr. Packer's interpretation is the only one then he must claim for his book something much more significant than rapprochement, and that is the conversion of his two Anglo-Catholic colleagues to Evangelical views of the doctrine of justification. But to quote that incredulous man in the Old Testament upon whose arm the king leaned, 'If the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?' We may, I trust, be forgiven the weakness of our faith in this matter, for we also have to remember that they are still 'staunch, uncompromising Anglo-Catholics'. But if Dr. Packer's interpretation is not the only one, then what can we say? except that despite their asseverations to the contrary they have produced a thoroughly ambiguous document in the grand ecumenical manner.

Dr. Packer's Evangelicalism I do not doubt. His six points are ones with which I entirely agree. That is my Evangelicalism. But he reminds me of the driver who makes all the right signals indicating very carefully that he is about to turn to the right, but at the last moment he disappears round a corner to the left—and I am amazed!