

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND
TRANSUBSTANTIATION

THE student will be helped by a bird's-eye view of the first-hand material.

ROMAN PONTIFICAL	SARUM PONTIFICAL	
<p>Dost thou believe the one true Church to be Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, wherein there is given one Baptism and the true Forgiveness of Sins? <i>(Bishop)</i> I believe.</p>	<p>Dost thou believe the one true Church to be Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, wherein there is given one Baptism and the true Forgiveness of Sin? <i>(Bishop)</i> I believe.</p>	
<p>(Nothing)</p>	<p>Dost thou believe that the bread which is laid on the Table of the Lord is only bread before the Consecration; but in the Consecration by the unspeakable power of the God-head the nature and substance of the bread is changed into the nature and substance of the Flesh of Christ—and the flesh of no other than Him Who was conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary? <i>(Bishop)</i> I believe.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">COUNCIL OF TRENT (Sess. xiii, Cap. 4)</p> <p>By the consecration of the bread and wine there is made this change of the whole substance of 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 change is fittingly and properly called Transubstantiation.</p>

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ROMAN PONTIFICAL	SARUM PONTIFICAL
<p>(Nothing)</p>	<p>In like manner the wine which, mixed with water, is put into the chalice for satisfying, truly and essentially is converted into the Blood which by the soldier's spear flowed from the wound in Christ's side. <i>(Bishop)</i> I believe.</p>
<p>Dost thou anathematize every heresy lifting itself up against this Holy Catholic Church? <i>(Bishop)</i> I anathematize.</p>	<p>Dost thou anathematize every heresy lifting itself up against this Holy Catholic Church? <i>(Bishop)</i> I anathematize.</p>

Over and against these extracts may be set two other extracts from the Thirty-Nine Articles and the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England.

ARTICLE XXVIII	(BLACK) RUBRIC
<p>Transubstantiation (or the change of the Substance of bread and 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.</p>	<p>Whereas it is ordained in this Office for the Administration of the Lord's Supper that the communicants should receive the same kneeling . . . it is hereby declared, That thereby no adoration is intended or ought to be done, either unto the Sacramental Bread or Wine there bodily received or unto any Corporal Presence of Christ's natural Flesh and Blood. For the Sacramental Bread and Wine remain still in their very natural substance and therefore may not be adored. &c.</p>

A recent discussion in the *Church Times* on Transubstantiation raises so many fundamental issues that our readers

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may be interested in an aspect of the matter which seems to have escaped the notice of historians and theologians.

In a leading article on the discussion the *Church Times* (July 24), speaking of the condemnation of Transubstantiation by Article 28, said: "The Church of England *has in the most formal manner condemned and repudiated that theory,*" i.e. Transubstantiation.

(A) We are not qualified to say whether the thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England are looked upon by all sections of the Church of England as "most formal condemnations and repudiations" of false doctrine. Our past experience, going back over forty years, does not lead us to expect that this editorial statement is of general or even wide acceptance.

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(B) Another view of Article XXVIII is as old as Newman's *Tract 90*; and as young as to-day. It holds that this Article XXVIII does not repudiate the doctrine of the Council of Trent on Transubstantiation.

1. But anyone who sets the words of Trent beside the words of the Article will be struck by the similarity of the words. Their only substantial difference is "YES" and "NO."

ARTICLE XXVIII	COUNCIL OF TRENT
<p>Transubstantiation, or the CHANGE OF THE SUBSTANCE OF BREAD AND WINE.</p>	<p>There is made the CHANGE OF THE WHOLE SUBSTANCE OF BREAD into the Substance of the Body of Christ our Lord; and OF THE WHOLE SUBSTANCE OF WINE into the substance of His Blood. This CHANGE is fittingly and properly called TRANSUBSTANTIATION.</p>

The characteristically English mind of W. G. Ward professed to accept both these statements only by accepting the Article in "a non-natural sense."

2. We have not yet met any writer on this subject who has pointed out the significance of the dates.

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1551, October 11: Promulgation of the doctrine of the Council of Trent on Transubstantiation.

1553, May 24: (Forty-Two) ARTICLES. It will be seen that these Articles drafted by Cranmer and Ridley came after the Tridentine doctrine of Transubstantiation. They were such a repetition of the Tridentine vocabulary that their "NO" is a very emphatic denial of the Tridentine "YES."

3. In 1558-9, February 28, at the beginning of the fateful reign of Elizabeth, the Lower House of Convocation, having drawn up a series of Articles, presented them to the Upper House of Convocation. They "were practically in the nature of a protest against any contemplated reversion to Edwardine religion. . . . The Fourth upheld the Supremacy as vested in the Holy See. . . . The others dealt with the doctrine of the Real Presence, TRANSUBSTANTIATION and the real sacrificial and propitiatory character of the Mass."¹

The drafting and presentation of these Articles were the last, glorious act of a state-unfettered free Church in Convocation. Here, if anywhere, the Ecclesia Anglicana asserted the faith in the Blessed Sacrament which she had kept for a thousand years. Soon she was to seal and authenticate this faith with her blood.

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(c) But just as England had almost a unique influence in spreading devotion to the Immaculate Conception, so too, in defending the doctrine of the Real Presence and of Transubstantiation.

To feel convinced of the Church of England's alert loyalty to Transubstantiation let students examine carefully—and I would say, prayerfully—the scheme set down at the beginning of this article. It is taken from the rite of Consecrating a Bishop according to the Roman Pontifical and the Sarum Pontifical.

1. The two Pontificals are identical word-for-word, with three or four minor disagreements. Stated generally, the Sarum Rite is the Roman Rite for the hallowing of the sacred ministers.

¹ H. N. Birt, O.S.B., *The Elizabethan Religious Settlement* (Bell, 1907), p. 58—quoting Wilkins, *Concilia*, iv, p. 179.

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2. The one great substantial disagreement is in what stands at the head of this article. In both rites the Bishop elect is not admitted to episcopal consecration until he has satisfied the Church that he is capable and willing to fulfil the episcopal function of teaching the Faith. His brother Bishops, through their presiding Bishop, ask him dramatically a number of questions about faith and morals. These questions are identical in the Sarum and Roman Rite, with the especially dramatic exception of the two questions about Transubstantiation!²

3. Maskell is probably right when he says: "It is very probable that the particular interrogations regarding the change of the Bread and Wine in the Eucharist were in consequence of the teaching of Berengarius, and inserted into the English pontificals by the influence of Archbishop Lanfranc, his great opponent. In which case the Winchester MS. is possibly as early as any manuscript in which they are found; being nearly contemporary with that Archbishop."³

4. It will be evident that the English Pontifical has anticipated the wording of the Council of Trent.

5. But what is even more evident is that the Roman Pontifical even in the twentieth century has not reached the English test of loyalty to the doctrine of the Real Presence by Transubstantiation.

6. As this "most formal" doctrine demanded of its Bishops by the pre-Elizabethan Church of England is so diametrically opposite to the "most formal" doctrine demanded of its Bishops by the Elizabethan and post-Elizabethan Church of England, it may fairly be asked which is or is not the authentic, historic Church of England.

But it must be a matter of joy and even of pride for the English Catholics who would still answer the episcopal questions as they were answered for some centuries, that no Church in the world was so concerned for the true Eucharistic Presence through Transubstantiation as was the Church of Augustine, Lanfranc, Anselm, a'Becket, Warham and Pole.

VINCENT McNABB, O.P.

² *Ibid.*, p. 245, n. 6.

³ Maskell says that these two questions are absent from the Exeter and Bangor MSS. (*ibid.*, p. 250, n. 16).