

Zeitschrift: Revue internationale de théologie = Internationale theologische Zeitschrift = International theological review
Band: 10 (1902)
Heft: 40

Artikel: The evolution of a pontifical
Autor: Firminger, Walter K.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-403550>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 07.09.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

THE EVOLUTION OF A PONTIFICAL.

By Rev. WALTER K. FIRMINER of Calcutta.

The Weekly Register. Vol. 103, 1901. — GASPARRI, *De Sacra Ordinatione*. 2 Vols. — LEHMKUHL, *Theologia Moralis*. 2 Vols. New Edition. — *The Indian Church Quarterly Review*. October 1901. "Some Ancient Ordination Ceremonies" by the Rev. WALTER K. FIRMINER. — LACEY, T. A., *Dissertationis Apologeticæ De Hierarchia Anglicana Supplementum*. Rome, 1896.

During the years in which the Abbé Portal and Lord Halifax waged their re-union campaign, a great number of works appeared on the subject of Anglican Orders. Then came the Bull *Apostolicæ Curæ*, the *Responsio* of the English Archbishops, the *Vindication of the Bull 'Apostolicæ Curæ'* by Cardinal Vaughan and his suffragans, and each of these representative documents was followed by its own array of satellite pamphlets, magazine reviews, and even books. After all this display of controversial activity, the subject has for a time dropped out of discussion. But, while the voices of the controversialists have been hushed, the voice of Christian antiquity has made itself heard. "Since the Bull *Apostolicæ Curæ*", writes Professor Collins in the *Guardian*, "it might seem that the Church of the Fathers has risen up to speak on our behalf."

Pope Leo the XIII., it will be remembered, condemned Anglican Orders on the ground of the alleged defect in the Anglican form. A valid form, he ruled, must "definitely express the sacred order of priesthood, or its grace and power, which is chiefly the power of consecrating the true body and blood of the Lord". It has been very successfully shown that the Anglican ordination forms by no means fail to express "the grace and power of the priesthood", but to this portion of the argument we do not propose to return. Neither can we at present enter upon a criticism of those passages from the Oriental ordination

rites which the Vindicators of Leo XIII. have arbitrarily selected, frequently mistranslated, and in some instances manipulated, with the purpose of drawing a contrast between Eastern essential forms and the Anglican¹).

At the time when the Pope drew up his Bull, or, what comes to much the same-thing, when the Bull was drawn up for him, there were two well-known Ancient ordination forms which might well have caused him to hesitate. There was firstly the Abyssinian form, in regard to which even Cardinal Vaughan and his colleagues are ready to admit that it "is the solitary exception of which it might possibly be said that the character of the order imparted is not stated in the essential form". And secondly there was the prayer found in the Canons of Hippolytus, into which by an extraordinary piece of literary jugglery the Vindicators forced the desiderated word "priest"²). It did not occur to the Vindicators to compare the Hippolytean prayer with the ordination prayer of a bishop in the Apostolic Constitutions: if they had done so, they would have hardly described the Abyssinian form as "solitary".

Since the Bull was issued, we have recovered an ordination prayer in the newly discovered Sacramentary of Sarapion, and yet another in the Syriac *Diathikia* which Mgr. Rahmani has brought into prominent notice. The prayer in the Sarapion Sacramentary entirely fails to meet the requirements which Leo XIII. seeks in a valid ordination form. It, moreover, is closely allied to the Abyssinian form, and consequently to the forms of the Coptic Jacobite ordinal and the Apostolic Constitutions. The Vindicator's endeavour to isolate the Abyssinian form thus becomes even more apparently desperate. The form in the *Diathikia* is evidently in close touch with the forms we have already mentioned, and if it mentions the "spirit of the

¹) The Vindicators actually confuse Armenians with Nestorian Syrians, giving a passage from a translation of the Nestorian form as a passage of the Armenian! In the same way Card. Patrizi in an often quoted letter to Card. Manning confused the Abyssinians with the Egyptian Copts. Dr Brandi in an attempted reply to the *Responsio* of the English Archbishops gave as the Armenian form for the Episcopate a passage, which if it is indeed the Armenian form, excludes the possibility of the passages which he quoted for the priesthood and the diaconate being the essential forms for these orders.

²) *The Vindication of the Bull Apostolicæ Curæ*. P. 97.

presbyterate", and the election by Moses of the elders, it certainly does not contain the word *sacerdos* nor does it specify the Eucharistic functions of the priesthood.

Our readers may be interested to know how this new evidence is regarded by a learned and candid Roman Catholic writer, who, while he finds himself bound to accept Leo the XIIIth's conclusions, sees clearly enough that the arguments upon which these conclusions are based require some revision. The reader, however, will probably from his experience of the Roman controversy be able to give an accurate guess as to the nature of the new argument against our ordinations. When the appeal to history or to the Fathers fails, our Roman friends think it sufficient to murmur the simple charm-word "development".

A recent writer in the *Weekly Register*, the Rev. W. R. Carson, has come forward to admit the force of the evidence supplied by such documents as the Hippolytean Canons, the Sarapion Sacramentary, and the Syriac Diathikia, "and if possible to find some new ground on which the attitude of the Roman Church to Anglican ordinations may be more securely maintained". "In the Hippolytan Canons", he writes, "the most ancient authority extant, the same prayer is actually used for the ordination of a bishop and a priest, the only change being that the word *episcopus* occurs in the one case and the word *presbyter* in the other. The Prayer-book of Sarapion contains a form for the ordination of priests which has no plain mention either of the *sacerdotium* or of the power of consecrating the Eucharist. A work dating from at least the middle of the third century—the *Testamentum Jesu Christi*, edited by Mgr. Rahmani—contains for form a prayer that the *ordinandus* may receive 'the spirit of the presbyterate', and rightly perform his duties... If the form mentioned in the *Canones Hippolyti* is sufficient, why not also the form contained in the Edwardine ordinal? That ordinal is undoubtedly bald and meagre in the extreme, but there so are most primitive ordinals. On what intelligible principle, we are asked, can the one be pronounced bad and the other good?"

In order to maintain the thesis of the invalidity of Anglican Orders, Father Carson has resort to the famous principle of development, or, as he would doubtless prefer to call it, the *law* of evolution. In accordance with the methods employed by

a rising generation of Roman Catholic writers, Father Carson would doubtless be ready to make a present of Catholic antiquity not merely to Anglicans or even Presbyterians but to Harnack and Reville. To familiarise the reader with this new position, we must quote Father Carson at length:—

“The Church begins with the utmost simplicity of design. Like the embryo of a living body, it is at first a formless, protoplasmic mass, with undeveloped potentialities. The Apostles—rough fishermen for the most part—a few unlettered disciples, and some peasant women, comprise the original elements that are to develope eventually into the world-wide company of the redeemed. The distinction between the various parts of the body, with their specific functions, is not at first clearly defined, although it is there in germ. It needs time and the working of embryological evolution for the separation between the Apostolate and the Priesthood, the Priesthood and the Laity, and the full specification of the powers of each, to be perceived in their unalterable lines. At Pentecost the Holy Ghost descended upon all alike, but Peter and John were sent, a few years later, to Samaria to bestow a similar gift. There was no distinct diaconate at the outset; its powers were *generalised*, until in the process of orderly development Stephen, Philip, and the rest were chosen to specialise functions which had hitherto been performed by the Twelve. The episcopate, as a further specification of structure—if it is, indeed, *in se* anything more than a mere extension of the priesthood, distinct from the Apostolate in which it was contained, in the same way that the powers of the diaconate were embodied in the priesthood—did not make its specific appearance until necessity arose for Paul to consecrate Timothy, Bishop of Ephesus, and Titus, Bishop of Crete. And it is not until well into the second century that the duties of bishops, priests, and deacons, are plainly separated as belonging to distinct orders. Father Hurter’s words are here to the point:—‘We can grant [he says] without harming Catholic dogma, that in the early days of the Church everything was not yet *so accurately disposed* as afterwards, when the Church had attained its youth. Accordingly, as long as the Apostles were alive and could take to themselves the supreme rule of Churches, it could happen that Churches were founded in which there were only priests and deacons, others

with only bishops and deacons; others, again, in which there were many priests, endowed also with the orders of the Episcopate.' Lastly, the Apostolic office was, in the beginning, common to twelve; all had universality of jurisdiction, all were preserved from error when teaching officially on matters of faith or morals. The Apostolate was—to use scientific terms—*generalised* as to its functions. It was not until the end of the first century, at the death of St. John, that one obtained, in full, the power which had hitherto been common to many. The successors of St. Peter became the heirs, and residuary legatees of the privileges of the Apostolic College. The whole of the especial power of the Apostolate was summed up in them, that is to say, the law of evolution was obeyed; a generalisation of functions became specialised."

This principle of development Father Carson proceeds to apply to the subject of ordination forms, which with an unproved assumption, he places under the sway of the scientific laws of embryology. "At the beginning", he tells us, "the form is found to be very simple, and to differ considerably in various Churches—that is to say, it is yet in an embryonic, structureless state, and is only gradually taking consistency, and uniformity. As time goes on, it becomes more settled, its parts more clearly defined, its essential characteristics unmistakeable, until at length it develops into the structure which it now possesses."

At the time when the Church of England put forth her new ordinal, Father Carson would have us suppose that in the Latin Church, of which the English Church was an organic member, the ordination form had passed through centuries of growth and elaboration, and at last was determinate, specialised, and clear in all its characteristics. What then happened?

"The Reformers, in direct defiance and open violation of the laws of evolution, ignoring the perfection of development which the pre-Reformation ordinal had reached, arbitrarily attempted to go behind the form, as evolved century after century through slow growth and upward progress from the vague to the determinate, from the generalised to the specialised, and deliberately adopted a new-fangled form, so simple and indefinite that it was more embryonic than the most primitive of ancient forms. By so doing they destroyed all the force and validity of their ordinal, which was as little able to claim con-

tinuity with early ordinals—however meagre—as a fully-grown organism, if its developed members were chopped off, one by one, and it were reduced in appearance to a formless mass, could be said to be the same as the unorganised, jellified embryo from which it was originally evolved. The law of organic evolution was disobeyed, and the loss of validity, which was the form's life, was the inevitable penalty for the disobedience."

We can scarcely take Father Carson seriously when he describes the Edwardian forms with their clear mention of the administration of the sacraments and their inclusion of the priestly power of absolution as "more embryonic than the most primitive of ancient forms", but at present we are reproducing our opponents case rather than criticising it. The acorn can become the oak, but oak cannot either revert to the simplicity of the acorn or live on what is sufficient for the life of the acorn. Such is Father Carson's analogy.

"A member's life is conditional on its connection with the organism—it cannot exist in a state of separation from it. Take from the human body—this unit—a single cell, or even several cells (supposing a limb to be amputated), and this cell or agglomeration of cells, cut off from the main structure, perishes. So also has been the case with the Edwardine ordinal. This ordinal might conceivably have been considered sufficient in the earliest stages of development, and had it existed in England from the dawn of Christianity down to the time of the Reformation, it might even be valid now, so far, that is to say, as the physiological laws are concerned, because it might then be likened to a cell which, having received all the development and perfection of which it was capable, had since remained stationary. But this is precisely what did *not* occur. All agree that down to the Reformation the Church of England, like all other Churches in communion with Rome, was subject to the same laws of evolution as the Roman Church itself. The Reformers, in the face of the physiological fact of the unity of structure and of life that dominates the completely-developed organism, cut off, as it were, a part of the Roman ordinal, and declared it alone to be sufficient. By so doing they destroyed its validity. Their mutilated fragment could not exist by itself, any more than a limb torn from the trunk could possess vitality. Just as a member, separated from the whole system in

the evolution of which it participates, can have no life or force, so also the dismembered part, retained from the old pre-Reformation ordinal, can have in itself no strength or validity."

We do Father Carson an injustice when we cite this passages without also giving the striking analogies which he draws from Darwin's *Evolution of Species*. It would be impossible within the limits of the present article to wander into a discussion of "single cells", "metazoa", "multicellular bodies". The Father's wealth of embryological illustrations seem to us to be designed to disguise the fact that the application of biological terms to human institutions is after all but an analogy based on an unproved assumption. Students of Sociology are now not quite so anxious to apply Darwinian theories to the history of human institutions as they were some fifteen years ago. If Professor Huxley's argument against the application of such principles as the "survival of the fittest", etc., to the secular state has been found convincing, the application of the law of unconscious organic life to a spiritual body, such as is the Church, must certainly be a method to be applied with extreme caution. While readily admitting the good service rendered to science by the use of the evolutionary theory as a working hypothesis, we do not think that evolution can even yet be described as a natural law. But be this, as it may, our objection to Father Carson's argument is that it rests on an assumption which has not been established. You cannot argue that is impossible for an oak to become an acorn, until you have proved that the simple and the elaborate forms of the Church are related as the acorn is to the oak, and that the spiritual life of the Church is under the same limitations as these which are observed in unconscious insentient nature.

We prefer, however, to desert our Roman catholic friend in his wanderings through the province of embryology, and come down to the region of historical facts. In order to sustain his thesis on a basis of facts, Father Carson is bound to tell us which of the many formulas in the Roman Pontifical is *the* ordination form which has passed through the evolutionary stages he describes, and from which, according to his version of Church History, the English reformers made so many fatal excisions. Can he tell us which of the many formulas of the modern Roman pontifical is the historical essential form? Can he assure us that

the passage which he personally would regard as the form, would be so regarded, unanimously and authoritatively, by the Communion of which he is a member? This is precisely what no Roman writer can do. Roman Catholics cannot say for certain what in their Pontifical is *the* historical essential form. One school of theologians state that such and such a formula is the essential form; another school with equal insistence maintain that a quite different formula is the essential form; a third and more prudent school maintain that the rival formulas are “morally united” or that one is essential and the other is an “integral necessity”, and so on. Scholastic ingenuity is exhausted in order to cover the unpleasant fact that the Roman pontifical represents not an orderly development but confusion worse confounded.

The Roman pontifical as it exists to-day is, in fact, a kind of literary museum into which has been crowded a host of ancient formulas and ceremonies with the slightest regard—or perhaps with no regard at all for their original purpose and significance. To the minds of some the term “Evolution” suggests the materialistic theory that long continued process are brought to results not so much by intelligent directive energy as by the working of certain “blind natural forces”. In this sense, Father Carson might well apply the term to the singularly unintelligent processes by which the Roman pontifical has been formed. In the true sense of the term the pontifical cannot be described as an evolution, for the evolutionary idea is an attempt to count for the production of intelligible order and not for the fact of a blind confusion. To follow the line of thought which Father Carson has suggested, we may say that if evolution accounts for development of the human organs from an original simplicity, it does not take into account a human organism in which it is impossible to say whether the eye is not ear or the ear the heart. And this is precisely the case with the Roman pontifical.

Few modern Roman Catholic scholars would, we suppose, deny the principle that the essentials of the Sacrament of Holy Order is the imposition of hands with prayer. It is true that Father Carson, in company with an insignificant number of Roman writers, maintains the opinion that the Church has exercised a power granted to her by our Lord, and added the

tradition of the instruments to the imposition of hands as the *matter* of the Sacrament, but we may be excused if, in company with Benedict the XIVth ¹⁾, we treat this arbitrary theory as worthy of little else but bare mention. Assuming then the imposition of hands to be the matter of the Sacrament, where in the Roman pontifical shall we find this essential act?

For the benefit of the general reader, who in all probability has neither witnessed a Roman ordination nor studied the pontifical, we may say that there are three impositions of hands prescribed in the modern Roman rite, although, to speak more exactly, of these three “impositions” one (the second) is not an imposition of hands on the ordinands individually, but an “extention” of hands over the ordinands collectively. Of the first of these three impositions, it may be said that the first takes place in silence ²⁾, the second (as we have seen) is an “extention” over the candidates collectively, and the third is a very late addition to the rite of ordination. We do not think that it can be doubted that the first of these three impositions is the historical imposition of hands in the Roman rite, for although it takes place with no words of prayer, it is the imposition in which the assistant priests take part. Why, then, it may be asked, is this essential act separated from the essential prayers? We shall perhaps be reminded of the words of St Augustine: “Quid aliud est manuum impositio quam oratio super hominem?” True, but the scholastic theology which Leo the XIIIth has accepted and developed requires not only the imposition of hands, but a form which is to explicitly mention either the name of the order bestowed or its grace and power.

The great scholar Martenne has, however, argued that the second imposition of hands—or rather the extention of hands—is in point of fact a continuation of the first imposition. This may perhaps be conceded, but Papist writers are few who would grant so liberal a concession if the exigences of Anglican

¹⁾ *De Synodo Diœces.*, Lib. VIII, Cap. X, Tom. II, Mechlinæ 1823.

²⁾ Mr W. H. Frere has suggested that the historical explanation of this imposition of hands in silence is that the Gallican *Statuta Ecclesiæ Antiqua* were first of all prefixed to the pontificals and then split up and the relevant passages inserted before the orders to which they applied. Thus a rubric was accepted which ordered an imposition of hands but prescribed no prayer to accompany the ceremony. *A New History of the Book of Common Prayer*. P. 655.

defence had stood in need of so subtle a plea. The difficulty is still quite as perplexing as it was before. The extention of the bishop's hands over the ordinands generally is not the same thing as the imposition of hands on each ordinand individually, and by the continuation of an act we generally mean the continuation of one and the same act.

The first imposition of hands, as we have noted, takes place in silence. Then comes an extention of hands by the bishop and his assistant presbyters while the old Roman formula is said by the bishop:

“Oremus, fratres carissimi, Deum Patrem omnipotentem, ut super hos famulos suos, quos ad Presbyterii munus elegit, cœlestia dona multiplicet; et quod ejus dignatione suscipiunt, ipsius consequantur auxilio. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.”

The bishop then turns to the altar, and his mitre having been removed, he says *Oremus*, and the responds follow *Flectamus genua*. R. *Levate*. Then having turned to the ordinands (no direction given for the hands), he says:

“Exaudi nos, quæsumus, Domine Deus noster, et super hos famulos tuos benedictionem Sancti Spiritus et graciæ sacerdotalis infunde virtutem: ut quos tuæ pietatibus aspectibus offerimus consecrandos, perpetua muneris tui largitate prosequaris. Per Dominum nostrum Jesu Christum Filium Tuum, qui Tecum vivit et regnat in unitate ejusdem Spiritus Sanctus Deus.”

The bishop then extends his hands before his breasts and commences the long Eucharistic preface in which occurs the ancient Roman prayer of consecration *Deus honorum omnium auctor*.

Which then of these prayers is the essential Roman form of Ordination? The Congregation of Rites have decreed that the extention of hands over the ordinands is to be made during the recitation of the bidding prayer *Oremus dilectissimi*¹⁾, but not during the *Exaudi nos, quæsumus*²⁾. Is the *Oremus dilectis-*

¹⁾ In a pontifical purchased at the shop attached to the College of the Propaganda at Rome, we find the word “carissimi” substituted for “dilectissimi”.

²⁾ See Lehmkuhl: *Theologia Moralis*, Tom. II, p. 415, Ed. 1886; Buceroni: *Enchiridion Morale*, pp. 181—182.

simi then the Roman essential form? We fancy that no Roman writer would answer this question affirmatively: the *Oremus dilectissimi* would seem to be too meagre for so great a purpose as the bestowal of Holy Orders, and it is after all a bidding to the congregation rather than a direct prayer to Almighty God. For these reasons, a school of Roman writers would couple the *Oremus dilectissimi* with the *Exaudi nos, quæsumus*, and either ignore the fact that the latter prayer is unaccompanied by an imposition of hands or else have recourse to the convenient doctrine of a moral unity. Liturgical science, however, bears record that the prayer *Deus honorum omnium* was in past times accompanied by imposition of hands, and consequently another school is ready to maintain that the *Deus honorum omnium* is still, although now unaccompanied by the imposition of hands, the Roman essential form.

But the full extent of the confusion is not apparent until we have taken into consideration the havoc wrought during the process of the fusion of the Roman and Gallican rituals. In the Gelasian Sacramentary, the Missale Francorum and the Rheims, Egbert and Noyon codices, the Gallican Ordination prayers are incorporated and placed immediately after the Roman prayers. In the Rochester, Jumièges, Ratoldi, and Cahors the Gallican prayers form an appendix. In the codices S. Eligii, Sens, Thuani, Leofric, and Rodradi, the Gallican prayers are absent. It would seem that the Gallican bishops, having adopted the Roman essential form, were at a loss to know what to do with their own *Sit nobis* and *Deus sanctificationum omnium*. In some instances the Gallican prayers were allowed to drop out. But in other pontificals the Roman *Deus honorum omnium* came to be described as the "Consecratio", the Gallican bidding prayer as the "Consummatio Presbyteri", and the original Gallican prayer of ordination as a "Benedictio". In the course of time, the Gallican *Deus sanctificationum omnium* wandered on a restless journey through the various pontificals. For a time it rested immediately after the ceremonies of vesting and unction, but when the tradition of instruments had at last become established, it fixed its abode between the vesting and the unction.

Now here, Father Carson may remind us that a state of confused functions is only a mark of the evolutionary process.

In the end, he would tell us, the functions of the organism become orderly and distinctive, but this is precisely what has not happened in regard to the Roman pontifical. And it is here that the doctrine of intention intervenes to cut off Father Carson's line of retreat. According to that doctrine, we understand that the minister of a Sacrament must employ the Church's form as *the* form. For instance, if the words of Institution of the Blessed Sacrament occur in the Gospel or Epistle at Mass, the priest is not held to have consecrated the bread which is already on the altar, because he has not the intention of using these words as the form of consecration. The Vindicators of the Bull *Apostolicæ Curæ* in vain urge the plea of Morinus that if the Roman Church has indeed added new elements to her pontifical, she has yet retained the old. She has indeed preserved the old, but she has not used her ancient forms consistently as essential ordination forms, but has employed them with an intention which strips them bare of their original purport. The wonderful instrument, the "Eureka" in Lytton's *Last of the Barons*, was after the alchemist's death, preserved and used, only not for the transmutation of species but for the boiling of eggs. That the Roman pontifical contains at least half a dozen different prayers which would in themselves suffice as ordination forms is sufficiently obvious, but the doctrine of intention seems to require that the form employed must be not this prayer or that which may be found here or there but a definitely appointed prayer which is used with full intention as the Church's form. It is the evolution of that form which can alone be of fundamental importance. Evolution, as Father Carson holds, means specification of function, and that is precisely what we fail to find in the Roman pontifical.

But Father Carson adds to the general perplexity. He holds that the Church for the sake of greater definition has added the *porrectio instrumentorum* to the matter of the sacrament, and the formula accompanying the porrection to the form. Now, we are all well aware that a school of important Roman theologians held a much stronger view than this. Eugenius the IVth was but quoting S^t Thomas of Aquin almost word for word when in his *Instructio ad Armenos* he defined the matter of the sacrament of Holy Order to be the *porrectio instrumentorum* and the accompanying words to be the form.

The Roman theologians at the Indian Council of Diamper ¹⁾ assert precisely the same doctrine, and this view was maintained even at the cost of denying valid orders to the Greeks by not a few representative writers in the XVIth century ²⁾. In order to harmonise the utterances of Eugenius the IVth with the results of modern liturgical study, some Roman writers have attempted to argue that Eugenius was defining not the matter and form of the sacrament but an accessory or partial matter and form, which, for unity's sake, the Armenians were called upon to adopt ³⁾, but this explanation not only fails to account for the fact that Eugenius was quoting S^t Thomas in whose system the imposition of hands is certainly of secondary importance as compared with the *porrectio*, but, as Father Billot S. J. has pointed out, does violence to the text of the Decree. Some have argued that Eugenius, exercising the plenitude of his power, *substituted* the *porrectio* for the imposition of hands. Father Carson would say that Eugenius *added* the *porrectio*. Is this evolution or confusion?

Father Carson's argument requires us to believe that at the time when our ordinal was compiled, the tradition of the instruments and the accompanying formula had, in the course of an orderly evolution, become so closely united to the ancient matter and form of the sacrament that the excision of the tradition could not but end in total loss of life for the more ancient element. Apart from some such thing as this, Father Carson confesses, the thesis of the invalidity of the Anglican ordinal cannot be maintained.

Now it is, in the first place, very significant that Card. Pole on his arrival in England in the reign of Queen Mary, found it necessary to publish the decree of Eugenius the IVth. This fact seems to imply that the extreme doctrine of the traditions was not so widely held as we have been accustomed

¹⁾ Quoted in *Indian Church Quarterly Review*, Oct. 1901, Vol. XIII, p. 451, Note.

²⁾ For instance, Thomas a Jesu in his important but now exceedingly rare treatise: *De procuranda salute omnium gentium*.

³⁾ The traditions are found in the Armenian Ordinal, and were probably introduced there (for the mayor orders) during the time of the Crusades. The Armenian deputation to the Council of Florence was most probably not a genuine affair.

to suppose. Tyndall in his *Obedience* of a Christian man mentions the controversy which existed on the score of the essentials of the sacrament of Holy Order, but he does not allude to the traditions. The Bishop's Book in 1537, the King's Book in 1543 speak of the imposition of hands and prayer as the essentials, but make no mention of the traditions. In the replies of the Henrican Divines to the questions of the King in 1540 there is mention of the imposition of hands, prayer, and fasting, but even the men of the old learning—Lee, Redmayne, Oglethorpe, and Bonner—say not a word as to the traditions.

It is often assumed that in late mediæval theory, the tradition of the instruments was of essential importance and that this view was maintained until at last Morinus discovered that the traditions are totally absent not only from the Oriental ordinals but from the ancient service books of the Western Church as well. Father Carson seems to have fallen a victim to this misapprehension. The truth is that the Thomist teaching on this subject was never anything more than a fashionable ultramontane fad. The statements of S^t Thomas could be at all times challenged by a reference to the writings of Peter Lombard, Hugh of S^t Victor, S^t Bonaventura, and others. The *Kings Book* bears witness to overwhelming confidence placed by the English Divines in the document now known as the *Statuta Ecclesie Antiqua*, which they regarded as the canons of a Council of Carthago at which S^t Augustine himself was present. The *Statuta*, it is needless to say, prescribes the imposition of hands at the ordination of priests, but gives the traditions for the minor orders on the express ground that they are given without any such imposition. A scarcely less authoritative guide would have been the *Cælestial and Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* of the pseudo-Dionysius which Collet had translated and lectured on at Oxford. Nor must we forget the influence of the Paraphrases of Erasmus and the recently edited works of Gregory the Great.

At the very time when S^t Thomas was propounding his highly systematic but unhistorical theory, it would even seem that the *porrectio instrumentorum* must have even yet been a very young institution, and in some dioceses it was employed in a manner fatal to S^t Thomas' theory. In the time of Durand de S^t Pourçain, the tradition of the book of the Gospels had

not found acceptance in the use of the diocese of Puy. Not a few pontificals give the familiar form "Accipe potestatem" in the plural, and the suggestion is obvious that in these cases the tradition was made not to each candidate personally, but to all the candidates collectively. And this we find to have been the case at the great Metropolitan Church of Mainz. A very late thirteenth century Mainz pontifical has this rubric: "Post hæc episcopus offert calicem cum hostiis et vino, duobus vel pluribus ad tangendum, dicens 'Accipite', etc."

We are, however, indebted to the Church of Mainz for some evidence to which little or no attention has as yet been paid. A later Mainz pontifical than the one to which we have just referred preserves for us some important information. It has been seen that according to the modern Roman pontifical, the first (the historic) imposition of hands takes place in silence. Martenne has printed a Mainz Ms. which presents a very different custom. After the interrogation of the candidates, it is prescribed:

"Hoc per ordinem expedito, surgens (episcopus) de sede sua accedat ad sacerdotes ordinandos, et mediocri voce incipiat antiphonam, et clerus prosequatur antiphonam *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum*. Hoc incæpto, et clero totiens prosequente donec episcopus circuitum perfecerit, imponat episcopus ambas manus capiti cujuslibet sacerdotis, et dicat: *Spiritus Sanctus superveniat in te et virtus Altissimi sine peccato custodiat te*. Et prælati seu presbyteri huic officio assistentes in religione omnes sequentes episcopum, similiter sacerdotibus ordinandis manus imponant, quo completo episcopus dicit *Oremus dilectissimi*¹⁾."

In the year 1549 a council was held at Mainz under the presidency of Archbishop Sebastian Von Heussenstamm. As a result of the council there appeared a few months later an authoritative manual entitled *Institutio ad Pietatem Christianam in Concilio Provinciali promissa*. In this treatise we are taught that the visible sign of the Sacrament of holy order is the imposition of hands; there are other ceremonies, such as the unction and the tradition of instruments which must be attended

¹⁾ *De Ritibus Antiquis Ecclesiæ*, Tom. II, pp. 79—80. We follow the English Archbishops in their spelling of the author's name which is that used by Dupin *Nouvelle Bibliothèque* XIX, 254-264.

to. “Episcopus igitur in conferendis ordinibus, ad supradictas Domini promissiones et mandata attente respiciens, tali verborum forma utitur, quæ ad promissiones huiusmodi et mandata quam proxime accedit, eaque proprie ac diserte exprimit. Traditurus enim ordinem sacerdotalem, *Accipe, inquit, Spiritum Sanctum, quorum remiseris peccata, remittuntur eis et quorum retinueris, retenta sunt.*” “In ordinibus maioribus, Diaconatu et Presbyterio, internæ virtutis et gratiæ accipiendæ externum signum et sensibile elementum adhibetur manuum impositio, quam ex Apostolica traditione descendere diserte Lucas in Actis Apostolicis testatur. Cap. VI, 13, 14. Ad hunc autem externum manuum impositionis ritum in verbo Dei et orationibus exhibitum, internam et spiritualem gratiam consequi, quæ in ministerio ordinati efficaciter operetur, et ad suscepti muneris executionem reddat idoneum, aperte Paulus indicat. *Noli, inquit, negligere gratiam, quæ data est tibi per prophetiam cum impositione manuum Presbyterii, Et ut resuscites gratiam Dei quæ in te est per impositionem manuum mearum.*”

It is quite clear that in this teaching the imposition of hands is the matter of the sacrament of holy Order. It is true that there is a passage in which it is said that by the tradition of the instruments the bishop bestows the power (tradit potestatem) of offering to God a “Hostiam sanctam et placabilem pro totius ecclesiæ incolumitate”, but in the sentence immediately preceding we find that the grace of consecration is described as bestowed previously to the unction: “Post hæc manus eorum inungit, ut intelligant sibi *concessam esse gratiam consecrandi.*” The expression “idoneus” indeed recalls the language of St. Thomas, but the Council is evidently quite clear in its mind as to the visible sign or element of the sacrament of holy Order being the imposition of hands, and although it by no means fails to recognise the importance of the unction and traditions, it apparently distinguishes the greater orders (the diaconate and priesthood) from the inferior by the fact “In reliquis ordinibus pro elemento sunt instrumenta quæ pro ordinis varietate episcopus singulis porrigens, simul admonet eos, in suscepto munere rite et diligenter ministrare. Ex ipso autem instrumento quodammodo ordinandus intelligit quæ sunt futuræ suscepti ordinis partes et officia¹⁾.”

¹⁾ Quotations from Lacey (T. A.): *Dissertationis Apologeticæ De Hierarchy Anglicana Supplementum.* Rome 1896.

It is worthy of notice that the *Instructio* speaks of the imposition of hands with the words *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum, etc.*, as taking place at the commencement of the ordination rite (*principio*). This confirms what we have already learned from the Mainz pontifical. The words "Accipe Spiritum Sanctum" were at Mainz associated immediately with the imposition of hands by the Bishop and Presbytery.

It seems to us incredible that the compilers of our ordinal could have been totally ignorant of the customs of the great Metropolitan Church of Germany. In any case, it would be impossible to condemn the first Edwardian ordinal, which by the way preserved the traditions, and allow the Catholics of Mainz to escape censure. The point, however, on which we are concerned to dwell, is that the traditions were not in the judgment of an undisputed provincial council held to be what they have so often been supposed to represent in XVth century opinion.

A recent writer has laboured to prove that the tradition of the chalice and paten with their contents is historically a development of the ceremony of vesting the newly ordained priest in the robes of his office, and that when developed it superseded the more ancient practice (still followed by the Greek Church) of giving to the neophyte a consecrated Host¹). The more ancient custom was Roman rather than Gallican: its successful rival was Gallican rather than Roman. The various local bishops incorporated the traditions into their pontificals when it occurred to them desirable to do so. The directive influence of the Roman See in this matter has yet to be discovered. There is simply not a shred of evidence to support the theory of Father Carson that "the Church" added to the essential matter and form of the sacrament the *porrectio instrumentorum*. What we do find is that first one diocesan and then another accepted the traditions as a laudable accessory to already sufficient rites.

In conclusion, we would say that the English ordinal does on the whole answer to the requirements of a claim to historical evolution. Its preface afford clear evidence of its intention to perpetuate the historic past. Its use of scriptural words for its

¹) Or in some Greek churches an unconsecrated bread. The Rev. W. K. Firminger in the *Indian Church Quarterly Review* for Oct. 1901.

form makes good the promise of its preface, and the compilers would not have given us that preface had it been their intention to cut themselves off from the past. It is open for a loyal English Churchman to regret, as Canon Dixon so candidly regretted, the loss of much that was both pathetic and valuable in the unreformed ordinals, but such losses are but slight as compared with the value of the possession of an ordinal free from the historical ambiguities in which the Roman pontifical is so hopelessly involved. The Anglican Marriage Service is perhaps the clearest witness against modern doctrines of divorce, and we are inclined to think that the Anglican ordinal has on the whole proved the soundest possible safe-guard against Presbyterianism.
