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ON
SYMBOLS IN WORSHIP

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1853.

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BEERFELDEN JULII 2004

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ON SYMBOLS IN WORSHIP

„Τα μεν ιερα των νοητων απεικονισματα, και επ' αυτα
χειραγωγια και οδος.“

THE whole visible creation is a symbol. Man's body is a symbol of his being. His acts, his postures, his words, in all his social intercourse, are symbols of his thoughts. The institutions of this world teem with the symbolic use of the creatures. To require the exclusion of symbols from all religious exercises, is to require that man shall become not merely a new but a different creature, and live in a different world, before he can worship God. Forasmuch as man is body, soul and spirit, redeemed to God in all the three parts of his being, and is not only placed in, but set as lord over, and commissioned to use, the visible world, his worship must be offered in each part of his being, and must include his use of the creatures.

None but silent worship and unwritten word are strictly unsymbolical; for word is the symbol of thought. Even if worship is regarded as an attitude of soul, known to God without word, we symbolize that attitude by the words which we use. But the present questions are, first, Whether we may address God or man by other means additional to word? and, second, Whether we may express one transaction by another

accompanying it, or one truth by two or more transactions at once?

These questions are already practically answered in the affirmative. Every worshipper or minister, whether appropriately or not, suits his looks, posture, and gestures, to his words and acts. Every place of worship is filled with symbols, good or bad. The sacraments and ordinances of the Church all imply the symbolic use of man's body and of the creatures. The primitive Christians introduced symbolic rites as soon as they could, and in the order in which it was practicable, beginning, perhaps, with the sign of the cross - just as many good things were introduced subsequent to Moses. Threefourths of Christendom not only sanction symbols, but find the greatest aid to faith in their use. The present Apostolic Churches have, in the light of prophecy, already employed, not only symbols elsewhere recognised, e.g. unleavened bread and reservation of the Eucharist, but others also (such as the four patens and the seven cups used in the seven churches, and the seating of ministers in council and worship) more especially connected with their peculiar place and calling. Yet we are not bound or even entitled to wait for light of prophecy, on matters regarding which the light of nature, the dictates of propriety, and the practice of the Church, are so clear.

It is, therefore, too late in the history of the world, of man, and of the Church, to exclude symbolism altogether from religious services. Indeed, no one would seriously assume such an untenable position. The real objections against symbolism, whether as the results of argument or as the dictates of prejudice, rest on one or other of the four following grounds: viz., the danger of Judaizing; the danger of formality, superstition, idolatry, and ostentation ; the danger of anticipating the kingdom to come; and the absence of express authority.

As to the first, we must distinguish between a type and a symbol. A type points to a thing absent and future, a symbol to a thing present. When the antitype appears, the type is abolished. The shadow is banished by the substance. But the symbol cannot appear till the substance is there; and its continuance depends on that of the substance. Where the type ends, the symbol begins; and, therefore, symbolism can never be a return to types and shadows; nor does the previous use of a creature as a type exclude its present use as a symbol. God has made every creature with its own properties. His typical use of it accords with these. When the substance comes, the typical use, indeed, ceases for ever. But the use does not. The creature retains its qualities. It demands a use consistent with them, and therefore, more or less

analogous to its former typical employment. That former employment does not debar it from being afterwards employed by God. Were we to strike out from use in Christian worship every creature once used under the shadows of the law, we should mutilate the very sacraments. We may not repeat the laver and the candlestick, the breastplate or the vail; but we may use as symbols water, gold, oil, fire, jewels, incense, colours, and vestments, according to the standing properties of each.

As to the second, the fear is not ungrounded; for it is justified by too sad experience. But would not the same argument lead to the abolition of the sacraments, of attendance at church, of reading the word, of preaching, of prayer? They have all been abused much more than any symbols. And although the relinquishment of many symbolic rites may have been a most fit act of discipline at the time, it can form no argument for their permanent exclusion in altered circumstances. The right way to avoid formality is not to avoid the form, but to express and nourish life by it. The way to avoid superstition is not to abolish the means, but to use them in faith. The way to avoid idolatry is not to destroy the picture, but to perceive only that which is represented. The safeguard against ostentation is not to close the exhibition, but to exhibit before God. Christendom has become a vast

heap of rubbish; and if we will not pick the jewels from the heap, we must do without them. If the jewels were already in their right place, apostles were not needed. The real objection felt is not to symbols as a whole, but to a certain class of symbols, which are, or seem to be, false in principle, or which, from congenital prejudices or better causes, we think irrecoverably defiled.

As to the third, it is evidently wrong to use the creatures in their and our present fallen condition, as if they were already delivered from the curse. But the present subjection of all things to the curse does not abolish their properties and adaptations. The atonement of Christ has redeemed every creature to His use, and therefore to ours. We dare not use what is not redeemed. The word to Peter, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common," is of universal application. The redemption of the creatures is yet to be manifested; but it is already effected, and warrants their use in the worship of faith. Were the soul of man alone now redeemed, and did his body wait for a future redemption, and not merely for the manifestation of its present redemption, our souls would not only have no right, but no power, to use any one creature as a symbol, even in the sacraments. But if Christ has redeemed the whole of man's being, the right and duty of man to use his body - nay, his tongue, as a

thing redeemed, in the worship of God - imply his right and duty to use, in the same way, the rest of creation. The limit lies not in the want of warrant, but in the incapacity of that which is yet subject to vanity to serve God. Its use is lawful, as far as possible. As we do not refuse any earnest of the future glory which God may give us by any act of power and mercy in the Church, so it cannot be wrong to use the glory and beauty of creatures as symbols of that glory and beauty which lie hidden in the Church, and as earnest of their own future glory. Provided we remember that they and we are yet subject to vanity, any such use of them according to their natural properties, instead of satisfying us with our present position as a substitute for the future, will serve to kindle our desires for the future. Indeed, the use of symbols not only exhibits the perfect thing better than words, but is our great preservative against regarding that which we now have as the perfect thing. Moreover, it is in the highest degree inconsistent to refuse the use of things glorious and beautiful in God's house, and sanction it in the state, in the family, and in our own persons. For if our and their subjection to the curse is an argument against their use, even there where we have to do with the glorious promises and presence of God, how much stronger is it against that use in every other sphere of man's being! If we may lawfully use things glorious, according to our place and abil-

ity, at all, we may do it with least danger in God's house; and the danger is to be avoided, not by expressing nothing of the glory, but by being thereby led to press more on towards it as future; not by exhibiting nothing, but by exhibiting all before God.

As to the fourth, the express authority for some symbols is an encouragement and a guide in using others, not a prohibition. Where symbolic action is natural to man, and creatures have certain properties which he is at liberty to use for all other purposes, the burden of proof that they may not be used symbolically in worship lies on him who would prevent the use; and if we have added words to those of Christ in worship, we may equally add symbols to His, if true ones. But, in truth, although we rightly require express authority for a sacramental use of the creatures by which they are made efficacious, the demand for it as to uses merely symbolic is as irrational as the demand for express authority to laugh in joy or weep in sorrow. The literal imposition of a perfect symbolism at the first, would have both given it an almost sacramental place, and done violence to its true origin and use as an expression of devotion. Its gradual development is the natural result of circumstances, but, in its main features, not the less divine.

The use of symbols, then, is only the employment of means which our possession of the creatures and our knowledge of their properties afford us, to do the same thing in more ways than one, and thus obtain every collateral aid to our faith, and utterance to our feelings, in acts of worship. As no man should boast of being able to stand on one leg, but thankfully use both, so should we not pride ourselves on being edified in one way, but thankfully use all. Yet such things are helps only to the spiritual and well-instructed. They may hinder others. But the fault lies in the condition of mind which makes this hindrance possible. Every thing that in any language or by any act, tells out our faith and hope, must rejoice the spiritual. The more various the forms, the greater their joy.

The conditions of true symbolism are - :

1. That symbols be used as before God, to represent things presently existing or transacted in the Church.
2. That they be used consistently with the qualities of the creature, and the dictates of nature.
3. That they be used according to the express directions, or plain analogy, of Scripture.

4. That they be used in conformity to the best and widest practice of the Church, controlled by the natural properties and the scriptural use of the creatures.
5. That they be used intelligently, as part of a reasonable service, in which we know what to do, what we express, and why we so express it, and believe in the thing expressed.
6. That they be used as accessories, and not as essentials; as aids to devotion, not as its objects; and, although on fixed principles, yet only in that degree and manner which wisdom and charity dictate at the time.
7. That they be used in accordance with the present light of prophecy, by which the forgotten meaning of ancient rites is revived, and their distorted or imperfect form restored.

A due attention to these conditions will serve to deliver us from various errors - from the barrenness of Protestant, and the cumbrous superfluity of Greek and Roman rites; from the blind adoption of existing forms, and the invention of novelties; from the rejection of former light, and the exclusion of present; from that un-genuine humility, that morbid simplicity, and that pious slovenliness, by which God is robbed of His

honour; and from that parade und ostentation, by which the spiritual are grieved, and the fleshly attracted. It is a great mistake to think that symbolism must necessarily be found best where it is most largely employed. There traces of its great principles are still to be found, which the truly spiritual can detect und apply; but the great mass of priests und people no longer know the true import of the rites they use, and have no longer the faith or feelings which those rites should express. Their service is the very reverse of reasonable. It must be fraught with formality, superstition, idolatry, und ostentation; and the same practices which should edify the spiritual, defile und harden such worshippers; for they use the creatures, not only without intelligence, but often in ways at variance with the true properties of the same and with the place and use assigned to them in Scripture. They have thus justly offended many of the faithful, and prevented others from seeing the true excellence of such rites. And they are thus unprepared to receive that further light on the subject, which accords with altered circumstances, and which the approaching perfection of the Church demands. Of this perfection, symbolism frequently affords a purer expression, und fuller anticipation, than words can do.

The provinces of symbolism are chiefly four: first, the arrangement of the place of worship; second, the vestments of the ministers; third, the postures or actions of the worshippers; fourth, the substances employed in the service of God's house.

1. The Building. No one will deny that the place where God is worshipped, not by individuals or families, but by the Church, should be exclusively devoted to that end. And if so, then its form should indicate its use, so that no man can mistake it either for a private dwelling, a barn, or a ball-room, a court of justice, or a theatre, an exchange, or a palace. Without excluding other forms, we can say, that, if the form is to be significant at all, one of the most appropriate forms (due regard being had to practical convenience) is that of the cross, in which we are to glory, and through which we rise into life; so that we may bear about the dying of the Lord Jesus, even in our outward things. It should be lofty, or at least should, in all its forms, point upwards, to indicate aspirations of soul, and not transactions among men; and it should lie from west to east, to indicate our spiritual progress from darkness to light, and our hope of seeing the Sun of Righteousness at his return.

As all persons are not in the same ecclesiastical position, the building should be divided accordingly. For this practice, we have the example of Heathens, Jews, and the primitive Church, nay, an analogy from the very teaching of nature in worldly things. The heathen should be separate from the baptized; the excommunicate and penitents from the holy; and the catechumens from the perfect. No less should the priests, by virtue of their office, be separate from the laity, not because they are holier; not for the preference of men; not because their worship is distinct from that of the laity; but because their duty is different, and those who perform it should be distinguished from others. Those who contend against a separate priesthood, on the ground that all Christians are priests, and therefore worshippers, are remarkably enough those who take least part in worship, and understand it least. Of the priests, the ministers in the universal Church should be distinguished from those in the particular. And, lastly, the deacons should be in front of the flock, as their representatives towards God, and as their ears to hear what God shall speak.

The various acts done in the Church should be done in different places, for they are different exercises of the grace of Christ, who is now seen as the giver of life, now as the sustainer of it, now as our purifier, now as our anointer, now as our mediator, now as our enlightener, now as our hope. The font should be at the entrance, because by baptism we are brought into the communion of the Church. It should be well seen, that the sacrament may be honoured and remembered. Where holy water is used, it should also be at the entrance, that they which enter to worship or to hear may remember that they are washed through baptism, and are to be washed with the water of the Word, and may come, with sprinkled conscience, into contact with God's ordinances. The place for the relief of spiritual burdens by counsel and absolution should also be near the entrance, to indicate the ministry of help, and the removal of hindrance in approaching to God. And although it should not be prominent, it should not be hidden away so as to minister any occasion to the tempter or the slanderer. The organ, or other aid to singing, should be on high, not only on acoustic grounds, but because our songs are, in spirit, not sung on earth, where we are in a strange

land, but in heaven, where Christ raised His new song and the angels echoed the strain. The chancel or choir, where worship is conducted, should be separate from the nave; for the Lord, who offers our worship, is separated from us. Yet it should not be hid, for the way into the holiest is patent; and it should be elevated, not merely for the sake of seeing and hearing, but because our worship, although composed on earth, is presented in heaven. There are three grades of worship - ordinary prayer, intercession, and the eucharistic sacrifice, which is not only the highest act of worship, but the memorial of that on which all intercession, - nay, all worship, is based. Therefore, although the choir in itself is a unity, forming one of three divisions in the Church, with the nave and the porch, yet there should be stages in the choir, corresponding to the stages of worship. And as the service of the particular church is distinct from that of the universal, so should, in the choir, the sanctuary, wherein the latter (embracing the Eucharist) is performed, be distinguished from the two other and inferior stages of the choir, where the higher and lower forms of service are conducted in the particular church. But it should not be hid, as in the Greck Church, nor

should it be separated off, as the chancel is from the nave, because the worship of the particular church is as heavenly as that in the universal, and forms part of a unity with it.

In this matter we perceive that error in the symbolism, not of the Scriptures, but of the practice in the early Church, which resulted from the loss of Apostles and their companions in the universal ministry. In the primitive Church, the bishop's throne stood behind at the east of the altar, with those of his elders on each side. And were there no larger thing than the particular church - were each church independent, much could not be said against the symbol. But it is plain that, in thus representing the headship of the Lord by the bishop of each church, the ancients excluded the possibility of testifying for his office as the universal Bishop by any symbolism in the particular church, and exhibited no symbol of the union of all individual churches by the bond of Christ's universal episcopate, exercised and seen in the apostles and other ministers of the universal church. The arrangement of the particular church, instead of confessing, thus denied that all angels are, as stars, held through apostles in the one hand of the Lord. And the

vision in the Apocalypse, by which this has been attempted to be justified, is the very antidote to the error, inasmuch as the throne there seen is not that of the bishop in a particular church, but that of the Lord Himself, Bishop over the universal as a unity from Pentecost to the end, with His twenty-four apostles, as His elders, around him. Therefore, in the particular church, no one should sit behind the altar at all; and none should be on ist platform save the celebrant at the Eucharist, or perhaps the apostles (accompanied by their fellow-labourers) as elders of the absent Angel of the covenant.

As the elder is distinguished from the other three ministers, by sharing in the rule of the angel, so the bishop and his elders, although each has his separate seat, occupy, properly speaking, but one throne, within the embrace of which the fourfold ministry acts. True symbolism leaves place for the universal ministry, and the universal ministry admits Christ Himself.

Further: as the Eucharist is the highest act of devotion and communion, and forms the centre of worship, the altar must be the most

sacred part and the centre of the church, if there is to be any outward expression at all which shall answer to the things transacted. We should, therefore, look to it; and, as we should also look to the east, it should be at the east end of the choir, that we may worship towards the east. The very sin of worshipping the rising sun, alluded to by Ezekiel, is an argument not against, but for this practice. Antichrist, as the Son of the Morning, the Hope of his expectants, is the very mockery of Christ, and we are to contradict his false worship, not by turning from the east, but by worshipping the true Sun of Righteousness. And we may as well talk of worshipping together, without worshipping one God, as of worshipping one God in the faith of one altar, without reference to that altar. The shape of the altar may vary, according to the predominance given to one or other of the various things transacted there. If it is like a tomb, it indicates the resurrection of the Lord, and the safe keeping of the departed. It may also testify for the presence of Christ in the tabernacle above it, as in the ark of old. Regarded strictly as an altar, it indicates, that God, who elsewhere accepts our inferior offerings, there accepts and enjoys our sacrifice of Christ's body and blood. Regarded as a table, it

indicates our heavenly nourishment. The chief thing is to hold fast and express the two great transactions of worship and feeding. And in reference to them we can say, that while every altar is also a table, every table is not an altar. As to the reverence fit to be made towards the altar, the Church of England, although she does not acknowledge any eucharistic offering of the body and blood of Christ, or allow that the altar is more than a table, does still require that all who enter the church shall reverently bow towards the altar, on the ground of its being the place where the highest mysteries of the faith are celebrated. The Romish and Greek Churches (although the former has so grievously erred through carnal attempts to make the real presence intelligible) have retained the additional and higher consideration, that the body and blood of Christ are offered there. And we know that the Romanists devote their monstrosity solely to the exhibition of Christ's presence in the Sacrament. Therefore, having taken one of the greatest of all the steps by which God has led us, in reserving the Holy Eucharist on the altar, for proposition in worship, and in asserting the real presence without transubstantiation, we have a double reason, both the Romish and the Anglican, for

reverently bowing to the altar, as to the place where the tabernacle testifies to Christ's presence with the Father in the holies of all, where the memorial of His priestly sacrifice is laid up and proposed, and whence we are fed with the bread of God, and strengthened with the wine of the kingdom. For this cause, it is better that the Sacrament should be reserved on the altar, and not elsewhere, that there may not be two centres of honour in the Church, but both combined in one. If, then, we believe that the altar is especially the place of God's presence, to which we flee for shelter, and cleave for safety, we see why it should be adorned with every symbol of dignity, covered over as His pavilion under which we are protected, and furnished out with every expression of hope, and glory, and joy. Finally, the ornaments of the Church should not be such as gratify mere classical taste, an exhibit artistic display and worldly gorgeousness, but such as minister to faith, and therefore should be so framed and disposed, as to be in keeping with the parts of the Church where they appear, the services which they adorn, and the feelings which should be experienced. There is nothing in which all Churches, especially the Roman, have more erred than in this. If the direction of

the Church from west and east indicates our progress to the end of our calling, and if the altar is the utmost limit of our attainment in this world, then the ornament of the building should increase as we go eastward. The paintings, sculptures, or other decorations at the west end, should exhibit the things that we have passed - the fall, and its consequences; the flood; the old covenant; the beginnings of the Christian life; or the past history of the Church. The nave should exhibit present grace in its simpler forms; the choir, the same, in its highest mysteries; and the space beyond the altar, the heavenly or future things in which we believe, or which we expect. What can be a greater violation of such a principle than altar-pieces, exhibiting the nativity, the crucifixion, the Baptist, the Virgin and Child, the Law, or the Old Testament Prophets - nay, the Ten Tables, the arms of kings and patrons, or tablets in memory of the dead? The very crosses seen at the altar should be such as indicate victory; and a crucifix on or near the altar, or beyond it, is an anachronism which can only confuse, depress, or render morbid the worshippers.

2. The Vestments are the garments in which the ministers are to appear, not before man, but

before God. Here nature and usage, which dictate the clothing of the naked body, and a variety of dress for various occupations and places - for the workshop, the chase, the saloon, the court - are our first guides. Without ecclesiastical dresses, the ministers are as it were naked, and, without suitable dresses, uncivilised.

The vestments should not be our usual garments in the world, but set apart to the house of God, confined to it, and distinguished by their form from those used elsewhere. They should, by their texture, their colour, their form, and their number, express the peculiar service in which they are worn, and the position of the wearer. They should be catholic, and not borrowed from any one party or place, or expressive of any mere fancy in religion. On this head, we must be greatly on our guard against substituting taste for principle, or authority for truth, against being led by habit, or deterred by prejudice. The simple surplice or rochette, for the lower, and the ornamented rochette for the higher orders, indicate ministry in general, and, by their white colour, the purity of the same. The white alb betokens the holy priesthood; the girdle, the strength required for its exercise; the stole, obedience in

bearing the burden of ministry; the cope, dignity, presidency, rule, headship, or mediation; the chasuble, the unity of the body covered by the sacrifice and glory of Christ; the gold, the truth; the silver, the love; the jewels, the glory and beauty, of ministry; the colours of cloth or jewels, the species of the ministry; their changes, the diversities of days and seasons, and services, and the expression of mourning, hope, or joy; the cross, the pre-eminence in following the Lamb; the ring, the marriage with the Church; the mitre, if worn, the truth and dignity of spiritual headship and representation.

3. The Posture. The stretching out of the hand is an act of power or indication; to sit, is the act of a lord and ruler; to stand, that of ministry, attendance, or triumph and praise; to kneel, that of a suppliant or servant; to bow, that of homage, fealty, reverence, and worship; to lie prostrate, that of penitence, humiliation, entreaty, or agony. Our posture, therefore, should be regulated by our occupation. Our Lord's own example is our warrant for stretching out the hand to bless. The indication, nay, the contact of the hand should be used in consecration; the lifting up of the hand in attesta-

tion and appeal. We should not sit when ministering, save from the place of rule; we should stand when hearkening to the Word, at least to the Holy Gospel, which relates Christ's words and acts; we should not sit or kneel in thanksgiving, praise, and triumph; we should not stand either in presidency and judgment, or in confession and supplication; it is comely to bow the head as an expression of reverence for the names of the adorable Trinity, or before the symbols of Christ's presence; we should bow the knee, - nay, it may be, on certain occasions, prostrate ourselves, in acts of adoration; we should especially bow the knee (as the Scripture saith) at the name of Jesus, whenever it is introduced in solemn confession of His name and honour, or in solemnly relating His words and acts; for He is not only our God, as the Father and Holy Spirit are, but the revealer of the Godhead, and, as Son of Man, our Lord. And we may learn from the Greek Church, how suitable prostration is to many passages in the Church's experience, and to many parts of her holy rites. We have not yet learned to cast ourselves down in good earnest before the offended presence, or under the mighty hand of God.

The sign of the Cross is partly a private, partly a public rite. In the one case, it is entirely voluntary and optional, dictated by personal feeling; in the other, it may be enjoined. But in both cases, it has the same import - dedication, pardon, preservation, confirmation of good, banishment of evil, through appeal to the power of Christ's cross. Tertullian, and the other earliest fathers, show us how universal was the use of this sacred sign, both in the domestic affairs of the saints, and in the defence against, and deliverance from, calamity and evil spirits; and, as in baptism, so in receiving the communion, and in acts of consecration and blessing, the sign of the cross is most appropriate, claiming all things for Christ, and His protection for us.

4. The use of other creatures. Seven creatures used in the tabernacle service have an abiding application to seven offices of Christ - bread to the life; wine to the joy and hope; oil to the unction; water to the cleansing; incense to the intercession; light to the guidance; salt to the covenant standing, of the Church in Him.

The first is Light. We here speak not of light by which to read or move about, as a mere substitute for

the absent light of day, nor of light with which to create a mere glare or to form beautiful objects in the eyes of men, but of light to be used in the day-time, a symbol of our walking in a different light from that of nature; as the poet saith, "Nocte dieque micant." This even the heathen sought to set forth. The Jews did so in their divinely-appointed rites. And the earliest hymns of the Christian Church, the decisions of Councils, and the records of spoliation in churches by the wicked, all take the use of lights in the worship of the early Church for granted. God, who dwelleth in the thick darkness, is light. Christ, the Incarnate Word, is the light of the world, and much more of His Church. We, through baptism into Him, are illuminated or made light in the Lord; so that, as we confess that there is one Holy, and we in Him, so there is one Light, and we in Him. The kindling of light, therefore, in the church is to symbolize the presence of Christ, not as He is in heaven, but as He is on earth; not as He is in the world, but as He is in the Church. How is He, then, present in the Church? In four forms:

1. By the Sacrament of His body and blood. This is one sacrament, though in two species. His presence here is indicated by one lamp burning before the Holy Sacrament when kept in the tabernacle on the altar, or in the sacristy.

2. By His Word, and especially by the word of the Gospels, which testify directly of Him, and record His words and deeds, and are therefore called in distinction from other inspired Scriptures the Holy Gospels. His presence in this form is indicated by one light burned at the reading of the Gospel, reminding us not only of the Divine illumination which we require to understand it, but also of Him to whom the Gospel testifies.

3. By His ministers in the universal Church. Of these, the two chief are apostles and prophets, symbolized in the Old Testament by two pipes, two staves, two cherubim. The lighting of two lights, one at each side of the altar, is our acknowledgment that Christ, the one light of the body, is present in His catholic ministries. The Church of England, in her better days, allowed these lights, although her reason for doing so was very inadequate. She proposed to symbolize by them merely that Christ was the true light of the world. But she did not confess Him as the light of His Church. She did not confess that He was so through His ministries. And she attempted no explanation of the number Two. The Lutheran Church has retained the lights, without a vestige of understanding as to

their meaning. And she has set them on the altar, where no minister ever is, save the Pope. And the Roman Catholic Church, even where she has two lights, is perfectly ready to have as many more as the purse of the flock may supply, or ostentation may demand; and thus shows, by the very multitude of her lights, her ignorance of their symbolical meaning and her harlot love of show.

4. By His people, and the ministers of the particular Church. We who are baptized, and abide in Christ, are the φωτισμενοι, or enlightened. This truth is shown forth, although unconsciously, when, on certain occasions, every person who comes to Church carries a small taper in his hand, confessing thus to his standing as an individual in Christ. But in the worship of the Church, the standing of the faithful as an aggregate must be shown forth; and this is done by the kindling of that number of lights which expresses ecclesiastical unity and completeness namely, the number 7. The unity of the flock, both in its members and in its ministries (seen especially in the angel and six elders), is thus shown forth, either by seven lights for both, or by seven in the choir, and seven in the nave; and is, in either case,

contrasted with the two which testify of Christ's light for the universal Church; and the constant testimony is given that our worship proceeds not only from the new creature, but also from one body. The number 8, the symbol of that new dispensation into which we are brought by baptism, as by circumcision on the eighth day, has also its application. Although the newness of life which it does express is already expressed by light itself, yet it may find a fit place in the nave, when seven lights are in the chancel. Lastly, all these lights are to be sustained by pure vegetable oil, not by turpentine, wax, animal oil, or gas - for oil is the symbol of that anointing with the Spirit of life and blessing, in the power of which all worship and ministry are performed; in which sacraments are rightly administered and enjoyed, and Holy Scripture rightly read and understood. We are, in one sense, the oil, which, by the fire of God's presence, is converted into light, and rendered ethereal and heavenly.

Incense is used, not in a mere indefinite act of homage to God's majesty, and still less in homage paid to men or creatures, nor to produce a sweet odour in the nostrils of men; but to symbolize that which is a sweet odour unto God. And that is not the

mere sweet savour of the burnt-offering, on its proper altar, the acceptable self-dedication of the faithful, but the expression of their desires, as on the altar of incense, according to the will of God, after they have already dedicated themselves. The ground on which our prayers are accepted is fourfold, - 1st. That they are agreeable to God's will; 2d. That they are uttered by His Church; 3d. That they are accompanied by the intercessions of the Holy Ghost, who prayeth in the body of Christ, and who, by His sanctification, maketh our prayers such as Christ can present. 4th. That they are embraccd in the intercession of Christ, who prayeth for His body, and presenteth all that cometh up from it, sanctified by the addition of the intercessions of the Spirit. As, in itself, the incense has no sweet odour till kindled on the burning censer, when its smoke ascends on high, so are the desires of the saints burned, as it were, on the priestly fire, officially brought to the knowledge of God, by the priestly ministry of prayer, when taken up into the mouth of the priest. And the intercession of Christ in the Church, taking up into itself, in due proportion, every element of prayer, does not remain on earth waiting to be afterwards carried up to heaven, but passes directly thither, presented in His name who mediates as one that has overcome, and who is our Advocate with the Father. Therefore is the use of incense not in place when mere supplications and prayers are made,

but only when these are crowned with intercession, the symbol of Christ's voice in the holiest, in entering which he completed all previous approach of men to God. As the ingredients in the incense of old indicated the constituent parts of intercession, there may be a similar analogy in the symbolic composition of incense now. But, at all events, the burning of incense, compounded or simple, which, as if by instinct, has been withheld from scarcely any heathen deity, and was expressly commanded in the Jewish law, cannot, on any tenable ground, be withheld in the Christian worship of the true God. Our earlier ecclesiastical records bear witness to the practice and the vast majority of Christendom have retained it, although they have perverted it by much false symbolism and idolatrous use. The only exceptions have been those times when it was identified with the acknowledgment of the heathen gods, during persecution, as in the days of Tertullian, and these later times in which men have thought to worship God as mere souls, without using either their bodies or the visible creation in His service, and have held material and carnal to be synonymous words.

Oil is the symbol of lustre, health, and joy. Among the Heathens and Jews it was used at the anointing of kings and priests. And if we are kings and priests unto God, we should have not only the

anointing, but the symbol of it; not sacramentally, not as a channel of grace, but as a fit accessory, and a confirmation of faith; the work done on the body being the correlative of the work done on the soul, as Tertullian says, "Caro ungitur ut anima consecratur." If the gift of the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of apostles' hands, is the anointing of Christ, oil should be used at the services for sealing the faithful and for ordaining the called. And we have a full sanction for the principle of its use under the Christian dispensation, in the express command of Scripture to anoint the sick. We need further light as to chrism and its constituents.

Holy Water may or may not be the water previously used in baptism. Where it is, its use, although, of course, without the sacramental efficacy, stands somewhat in the same relation to the sacrament of baptism that the communion on the reserved elements stands in to the Eucharist. But, independent of the actual reservation of water used in baptism, the sprinkling with holy water is a symbolic act, whereby the remembrance of our baptism is refreshed, our continued cleansing by Christ is realized, and our hearts are prepared for faithful worship and the hearing of His word. In addition to this, the washing of the hands of the celebrant previous to the celebration of the canon at the Eucharist, is the fit visible counter-

part of the words sung while the elements are placed on the altar for consecration.

Salt, which actually keeps from corruption, was used by Moses to purify water, and directed to be offered with every offering under the law, as the sign of preservation and acceptance through the covenant of God. The command of Christ to have “salt in ourselves“ plainly implies that the symbolic use of salt is still legitimate; and a large portion of the Church has employed it, both dry and dissolved in water, although sometimes in ways at variance with its proper meaning, often with much superstition, and generally with little or no intelligence. Its appropriate place appears to be whenever special reference is made to the covenant of God. Although it is not admitted into the bread of the Eucharist, and although the Greek Church has refused to dissolve it in water for baptism, as the Romish does; there seems much propriety in its being put into the water with which we sprinkle ourselves, or are sprinkled, on entering the Church; as, on that occasion, we do not enter into the covenant, but appeal to it for grace and blessing. An additional, but minor, consideration, is the prevention of the water from becoming foul by standing.

Lastly, Music. It is remarkable how many who are jealous of symbolism are, in this matter, the

greatest of all symbolists, not only by admitting instrumental music, but by neglecting, through indolence or wandering of heart, to utter those responses of which the music is but the symbol; thus not only admitting a symbol, but banishing the reality. Instrumental music should encourage and guide the use of man’s voice, and should cease if it works otherwise. For, although those who have no voice and ear should not sing, yet, where those who have do, the harmony and melody in the hearts of all are expressed by some, as in all those other cases in which the whole body acts by certain members. And care should be taken that the character of the music be in agreement with the season at which it is used, and the meaning of that which it accompanies, and that it do not interfere with the full liberty of singing in the power of the Holy Spirit. If everything that hath breath should praise the Lord, all creatures are also summoned to do so. Man is set at the head of the inanimate creatures, that he may, by the skill which Gos gives to him, make them vocal towards God. And if every heathen idol and worldly conqueror is praised with instrumental music, much more the living God, in the congregations of those who make melody in their hearts unto Him.

The above remarks must not be taken as pretending to exhaust the subject of Symbolism, or es

giving a full catalogue of the creatures capable of symbolical use in God's service, but merely es pointing out some of the more prominent features of the subject, and the materials to be employed, and as a contribution to help further inquiry and to facilitate the use of symbols in worship; in which use, as in all things, the Apostles should set the example to the Churches.