

The Communion Table and its Furnishings.

ONE of the great changes made at the Reformation was the putting away of the altars at which the mediæval priests had offered the unbloody sacrifice, and the substituting, for such altars, of tables at which the faithful sat down to partake of the Lord's Supper. The Roman conception of a sacrificing priesthood was replaced by the Protestant one of an evangelical ministry of the Word and Sacraments. New views of the Eucharist, really old ones revived, led to new orders for the communion service, and the idea of the ordinance as a feast took the place of that which made it a sacrifice.

Nor was it only among the extreme reformers that such views were to be found. The word "altar" finds no place in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, though it had a place in the First Prayer Book of King Edward VI.⁽¹⁾ Even in the Church of Rome there were those who thought that the "feast" side of Holy Communion should be emphasised, as the well known picture of the Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci shows. In Scotland, Archbishop Hamilton, in the Catechism he published in 1552, calls upon the people to come to the "baird of God."

Altars disappeared in Scotland⁽²⁾ as in England at the Reformation; but, whereas in the southern Kingdom they were replaced by more or less permanent wooden tables, in our land their place appears in many instances to have been left empty. It is possible, some might say probable, that in Scotland also a wooden table was set up where the former altar had stood.⁽³⁾ The first Book of Discipline enjoined that among other things which each congregation should possess were "Tables for the ministration of the Lord's Supper"; but these appear to have been usually temporary erections. Thus at Edinburgh, in 1561, we find the Dean of Guild paying for "ane dail to be ane tabill to the Communion" and also for nails with which to fix it up. At that time it was customary for the communicants to sit at the table, which was usually long enough to admit a considerable number.

As time went on there is no doubt that permanent tables were provided in some churches. Thus it was made a complaint against the minister of Melrose, in 1638, that he had made the old communion table into a wagon to lead his peats.⁽⁴⁾ In 1643 the Solemn League and Covenant was signed at "the Communion Table in" the Kirk of Carnock. The Presbytery book of Strathbogie mentions, under date 1642, that communion tables had been erected at his own expense by the Laird of Frendraucht in his parish kirk. In 1649 the Cromwellian soldiers burned the communion table and kirk seats at Castleton, in Roxburgh.⁽⁵⁾ There is ample evidence that permanent tables were in use during the first Episcopacy, 1610-1638, and what is probably a representation of one of these is preserved, as an engraving, on a communion paten belonging to Trinity College Church, Edinburgh. The paten, which bears the date 1633, shows a table with two communion cups and a plate with four slices of bread thereon. Underneath are two flagons. At Paisley, in 1637, it was

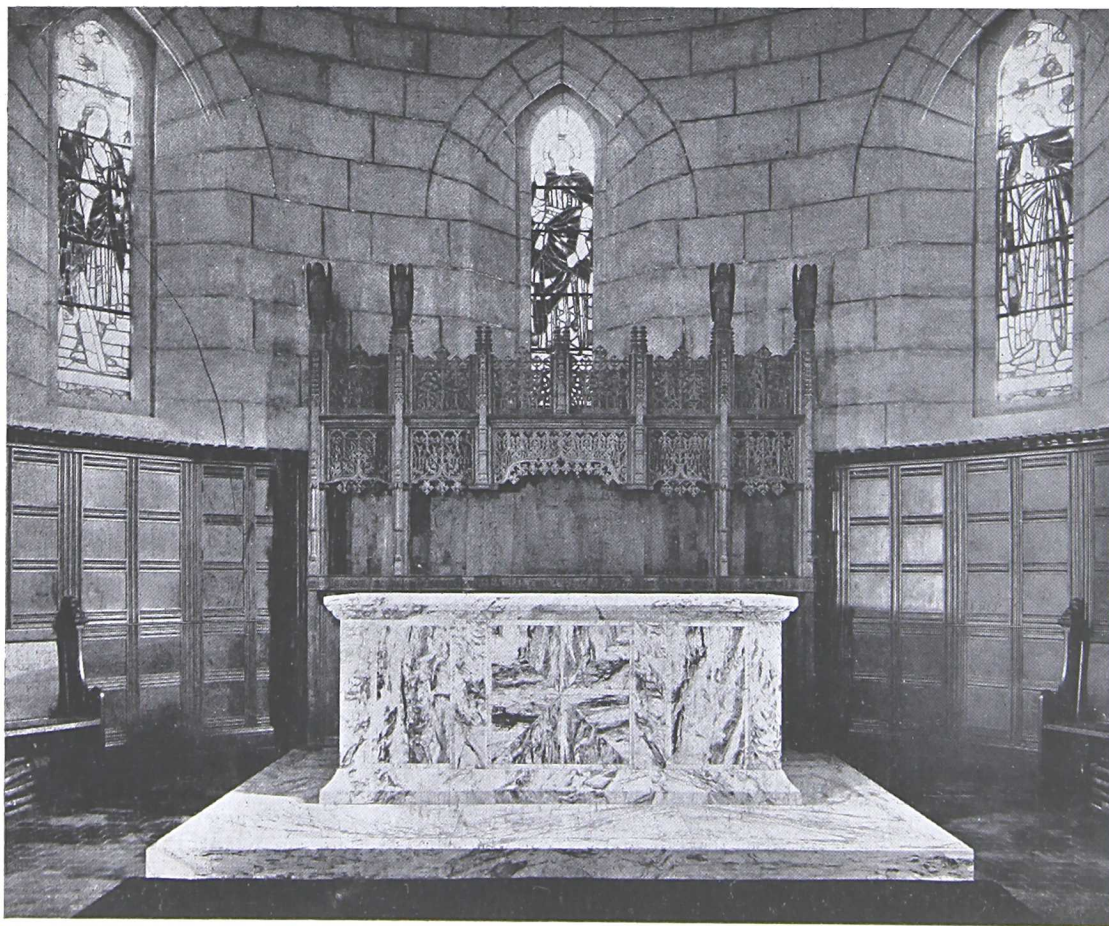
(1) It still appears in the English Coronation Rite.

(2) The writer knows of only one Scottish Mediæval altar still *in situ*. It is in the Chapel of Innerpefferay, near Crieff. The Chapel is in good preservation but it does not appear ever to have been used for Protestant worship.

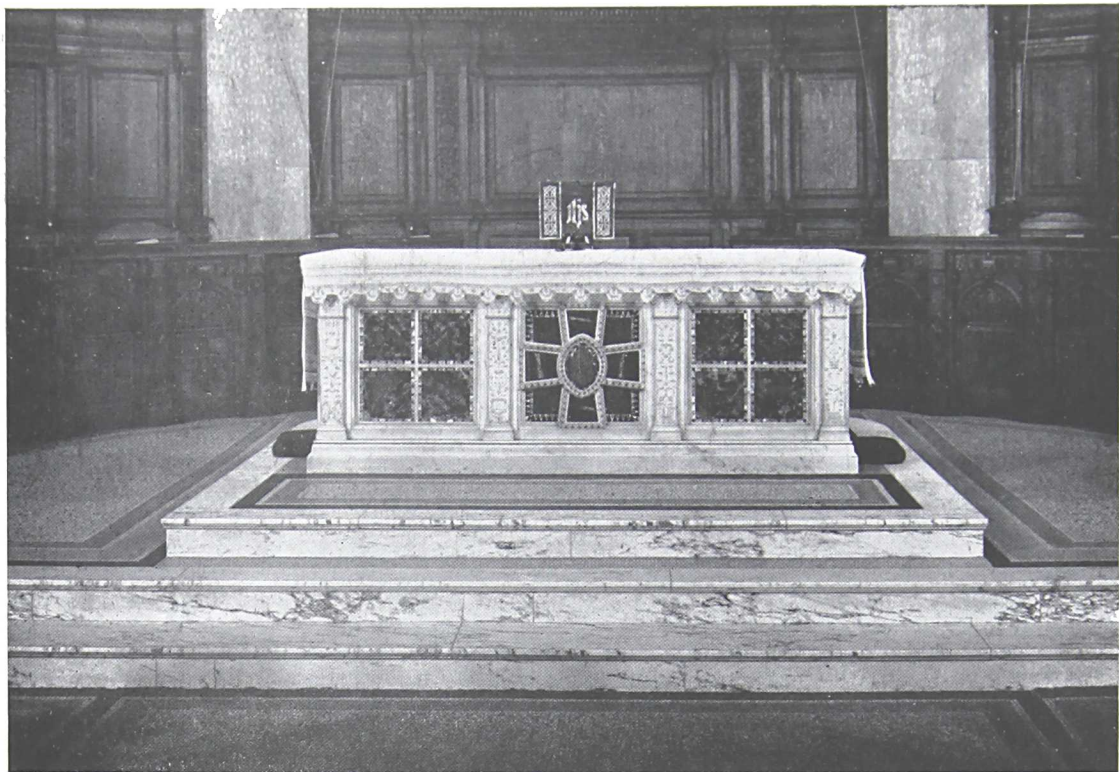
(3) The well known "Darnley Cenotaph" picture is dated 1567, and shows the interior of a church with a communion table standing against the wall. The table is draped all round with a patterned cloth, a plain one with small tassels attached being laid on the top. If we could be certain that the church is meant to be a Scots one, then the picture might give evidence of the existence of a communion table at the period indicated. This, however, is very doubtful, as the picture was painted in London.

(4) Similar accusations were made against a number of the supporters of Episcopacy at that period.

(5) *Session Records*. The statement is made that the soldiers were "commanded by Colonels Bright and Pride—the latter the hero of 'Pride's Purge'—and under the conduct of General Cromwell on their return to England." In addition to destroying the furniture of the Church, they stole the minister's library and destroyed "the books of Session with which they lighted their tobacco pipes." So much for the "godly men" who formed the English Puritan Army!



THE HOLY TABLE, CRATHIE PARISH CHURCH.
(The King Edward VII. Memorial, presented by King George V.).



THE HOLY TABLE, ST CUTHBERT'S PARISH CHURCH, EDINBURGH.

(With runner and super-frontal of fair white linen).

alleged that the minister had cast away the long table and set up a smaller one "altarwise with a fixed rail about it," from which he delivered the Elements to the worshippers. It is probable, however, that this was a somewhat exceptional case, and that while there were small tables introduced, sometimes known as head tables, the long tables were also retained.

The combination of the small "head table" with the long communion tables continued up to our own day. An interesting example of the practice of the Covenanters can still be seen on the moor of Irongray, in Galloway, where the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was celebrated at a conventicle in 1678, the congregation numbering over three thousand. The "tables," which are now grass covered, "consist of four rows of flat irregular blocks of stones disposed in straight lines. . . . At one end is a circular pile of stones about four feet in height whereon the sacred elements were placed." At Galston, in 1678, there was evidently a "head table," for among the properties of the congregation were two long communion "cloaths," together with a short one "for the mid-table." At Rothesay, in 1718, three communion tables are mentioned, one being square, "on which the elements stand." Two years later, we find that at Cardross the possessions included a table in addition to "two communion tables," evidently only the long ones being dignified with the latter title.

Dr Leishman⁽¹⁾ remarks that, towards the end of the 18th Century, "the separate table for consecration began to be introduced (in Scotland) not without murmurs," and some of these older tables are believed to be still in existence. When the mediæval church at Sanquhar was renovated in 1824, the communion table was removed to the parish school.⁽²⁾ It was a well made oaken table with a solid front. A new table was provided, and it is somewhat surprising to know that it was enclosed within rails.⁽³⁾ At Carnock, when the new church was opened in 1840, there was placed in it a communion table and chair made from the panels of the 17th Century pulpit which had been removed from the pre-Reformation church.⁽⁴⁾ It is worth while noting that the minister at that time, Rev. William Gilston, refers to these as "an ecclesiastical chair and table for the communion elements."⁽⁵⁾

From that time onwards it may be said that in the majority of Scottish churches what we call communion tables found a place. These were very often plain, and anything elaborate was in danger of being frowned upon by church courts. In 1875 the minister of Duns, Rev. John Macleod (afterwards of Govan) had to answer a charge of having a table like an "altar";⁽⁶⁾ but such objections are now rarely, if ever, heard, and in many of our churches the communion table is such that it would not be out of place in a parish church in England. In one respect we have more liberty; for in Scotland the Holy Table may be of stone or marble. In England, however, only side altars may be of stone; the high altar must be of wood, stone being illegal.

There is only one "furnishing" for the communion table known to the standards of the Church of Scotland,—the white cloth, usually of linen, with which it is covered at the celebration of the Sacrament. This, it need not be said, is a pre-Reformation survival, and, among the questions put to the Reformers by that stalwart upholder

(1) *Westminster Directory*, p. 352.

(2) When the school was re-built in the seventies of last century, the old table fell into the hands of a man who used it as a counter in a little shop he had opened. It was taken down about twenty years ago.

(3) Rails in England were introduced by Laud. A set of them of 17th Century date can still be seen in the Parish Church of Polwarth, where their survival is due to the fact that they formed a front for the Marchmont family pew.

(4) The pulpit bore the date 1674.

(5) Evidently he did not approve of the term "Communion Table" being applied to the small table, thus showing himself more "puritanical" than his distinguished predecessor, John Row, a strict Covenanter.

(6) This led to the squib by Professor (afterwards Principal) Story—

"There was a tall priest called Macleod
Of his altar and font justly proud,
But the sophists of Dunse
Were upon him at once,
And shut up this Popish Macleod."

of the old ways, Ninian Winzet, was one regarding the Scriptural authority, or rather the want of it, for such a covering. We should, perhaps, take into account the fact that in the 16th century this practice was all the more noticeable because of the fewness of domestic table cloths in those days.

As early as 1561 we find the Treasurer of Edinburgh paying for twenty-eight ells of "blechit clayth to cover the tabillis," and in 1576 the Council of Canongate bought seven ells of linen cloth "to eek oot the communion claes." The practice of so covering the Holy Table has never ceased and, though Scotsmen differ ecclesiastically on many points, all are agreed that the table should be covered with a white cloth at communion.

There are two forms of that covering in use. The one form, probably the earlier, covers the table down to the floor level on each side and in front. This is probably the earliest form, and may be seen in more than one early mosaic, including a 7th century one at Ravenna. The other covers the top and sides, but not the front. The former pattern, which was at one time almost universally used in Scotland, is regarded by some members of the Anglo-Catholic party as "Protestant," and one of these, writing in 1866,⁽¹⁾ says that in England it was only introduced in "recent times," and was an innovation which had come into being "at a time when all such arrangements were left to pew-openers and sextons," a statement which can only be attributed to ignorance. Dearmer, in his "Parson's Handbook,"⁽²⁾ has an illustration, taken from a book published in 1555, showing the communion of the people on the Continent, somewhat earlier than the date given. The altar is completely covered with the "fair linen cloth," as is also the desk at which the communicants are kneeling. F. C. Eeles⁽³⁾ says that "the form of linen cloth covering the front as well as the ends of the Lord's Table is not of post-Reformation introduction, but equally ancient and wide-spread with the other kind, which only covers the top and ends."⁽⁴⁾

As has been noted the white cloth is the only "furnishing" of the communion table according to Scottish usage; this was actually affirmed by the General Assembly in the Barnhill case in 1903, when it was decided to forbid placing upon the table anything other than the white cloth and the communion vessels.⁽⁵⁾ If this was ever the law of the Church, it may now be regarded as being in disuetude. There is no doubt that, long before 1903, communion tables had been covered in other ways. Often where the drapings of the pulpit and precentor's desk were red—and the majority of parish churches in the 19th century were so decorated—the table was also covered with a red cloth. An interesting case arose in Whitburn in the seventies of last century, when the minister bought a red covering for the table, which up to that time had been left bare. This displeased one of the members, who took it off and carried it home. A threat to inform the police led to its being speedily replaced. About the beginning of the present century a newly inducted minister found that in his church the communion table was used by members of the choir as a book board. He did not wish to forbid the practice, but he procured a fine purple cloth and put it on the table. Never again did the choir members offend. It is not common to see a table with top and front covers in a parish church in Scotland. Usually such coverings cover the top only. Only in a few churches are such draperies changed according to the ecclesiastical seasons.

Draping the communion table was objected to by the Puritans as being "popish," and the same objection has been heard in our own day. But whatever validity there

(1) Blunt. *Annotated Book of Common Prayer*, p. 370.

(2) 1909 Edit., p. 395.

(3) *Prayer Book Dictionary*, p. 449.

(4) In last year's *Annual* (article on *Liturgical Colours in Scottish Parish Churches*) by a slip of the pen I stated that the form which covered the sides and top only was regarded by Anglo-Catholics as "Protestant." What I should have said was that the "full" form covering the whole table was regarded by that party as "Protestant" and so to be avoided.

(5) *The Scottish Book of Common Prayer (Laud's Liturgy)*, 1637, states that the Holy Table at the time of Communion was to have "a carpet and a fair white linen cloth upon it, with other decent furniture meet for the high mysteries there to be celebrated." Possibly the "other decent furniture" refers to the frontal and super-frontal, which were usually of embroidered work. A cross and two candlesticks were to be found on contemporary English communion tables, and it may be that Charles I. and Laud wished to introduce these to Scotland.

may have been in such an objection in former times, it is without foundation to-day. It has become the custom both in this country and on the Continent (except in Italy) for the altar in Roman Catholic churches to be left bare except during the time of Mass. A similar custom, it may be added, is now being followed by some of the extreme Anglo-Catholic party south of the Border. There are some who object on quite other grounds to the table having on it a "carpet," as it is called in the Book of Common Prayer (Scottish) of 1637.

It has been stated that there is more dignity in a table that is left bare than in one that is covered. Personally, I have never been able to accept such a proposition. True, there are coverings that would be better hidden, and there are communion tables so beautifully carved that it is only fitting that their beauties should be revealed; but it is quite another thing to assert dogmatically that there is necessarily any lack of dignity in a table which has a seemly covering. There are few pulpits in our land which do not have frontals or "falls," and I have never heard it suggested that they lose dignity thereby. In the home it is still the custom to use coloured table cloths without any suspicion of a lack of good taste. There are those who object to the introduction of colour into our churches in any form. (I have known a good minister who thought that, while the ordinary black gown and white bands of the preacher made a most dignified dress, the introduction of a coloured academic hood spoiled the effect). My own view is that there is in many of our sanctuaries a lack of colour, (how different is the temple of Nature!) and that it can be supplied, to some extent at least, by a proper covering on the Holy Table. Whether the cloth should cover the whole of the "mensa" or top of the table, or whether it should be in the form of a "runner," depends on circumstances which vary from church to church; but it may be said that, from the standpoint of the Church of Scotland, the one is as "correct" as the other.

FRONTAL.—The frontal is the cloth which covers the front of the communion table,⁽¹⁾ the "carpet of silk or other decent stuff" which the canons⁽²⁾ of the Church of England enjoin should be placed thereon. The bare table, at least at service time, is illegal south of the Tweed.⁽³⁾ Frontals date from early times, as their use is mentioned, quite incidentally, by St John Chrysostom in the 4th century. Such a covering of purple, at Apamea in Syria, is referred to in a letter sent to a Council which met at Constantinople in 536.

When the writer went to his present parish he found that the white cloth for placing on the Holy Table at communion seasons did not cover the front, but only the top and sides. As it had been presented by one of the elders he did not wish to discard it; so, in order that the table should be covered in the older Scots fashion, he had a white frontal made. It is of "fair linen" and bears the Alpha and Omega in gold embroidery, the work being done as a gift to the church by a lady member of the congregation. The cloth shown in the mosaic at Ravenna (see *supra*) has something embroidered on the front, but it is too indistinct to be identified.

Coloured frontals are not unknown in the Church of Scotland. In a list of the properties belonging to a congregation on the East Coast, I find the following: ⁽⁴⁾ "There are four frontals, all stretched on frames. One in plain green serge of a good shade, with orphreys of velvet to match and a gold cross with rays, is for everyday use. A second in Venetian red broadcloth and Francis I. velvet, richly embroidered with mediæval roses, in silk and pomegranates in gold, and on the central panel I. H. S. surmounted with a crown, is used on Sundays, except in Advent, Lent, and Feast days. A third of violet cloth and velvet, with a plain gold cross, is for Lent and Advent. A fourth of white and gold is kept for use on the great Festivals and at Holy Communion." The orphreys mentioned in the above description are strips of material which hang down in front of the frontal, and are sometimes attached to it.

(1) Sometimes the pulpit "fall" is termed the pulpit "frontal."

(2) Canon 82 of 1604.

(3) "There is," says Tyrer, "no authority for the bare altars sometimes seen in Western Churches." On the other hand, the *Catholic Dictionary* says that a covering "may be dispensed with if the altar is of costly material or fine workmanship."

(4) *Transactions. Scottish Ecclesiological Society. Vol. IV., p. 262.*

The frontal may, as has been said, be part of a covering which goes over the top of the table. More commonly, it is made so that it may hang by rings from hooks under the table top. Those mentioned above are on frames, but in many cases frontals are simply "backed" with linen, which allows them to be folded when not in use. Dr Dearmer⁽¹⁾ thinks that it is better that frontals should not be embroidered. I don't agree with him, provided the embroidery is good and not simply something bought from the nearest "ecclesiastical furnisher." He says, with much truth, that "nearly all ecclesiastical work (embroidery) is thoroughly bad; fussy, vulgar, weak, and ugly. . . . A real artist must be employed."

FRONTLET.—This, sometimes termed the super-frontal, is the strip of material which hangs over the top of the front of the table. Where the frontal is hung from the top of the table the frontlet is a necessity, if the "join" is to be hidden. It should not be more than six or seven inches in depth and, according to liturgical scholars, it need not be changed with the frontal to mark the different seasons. Sometimes the frontlet is called the "antependium"; but this is inaccurate, the "antependium" being the "altar cloth," otherwise the frontal.

FLOWERS.—While there is evidence that flowers were used to decorate churches in mediæval days, there is none to indicate that they were ever placed on the altar; so that the practice of so doing can fairly be claimed to be "Protestant." That flowers continued to be used in the period after the Reformation is undoubted. In 1595, one finds five shillings being paid for "ane burding of flouris" for the decoration of St Giles' Church, Edinburgh, on the occasion of a marriage, at which the Queen was expected to be present. Some thirty years later we have a reference to flowers being placed on the communion table (which stood on a stone platform) in Greyfriars Church in the same city. Our Scottish custom can, therefore, claim a respectable antiquity. Mrs Dunlop, writing to Robert Burns, mentions that in her girlhood, *circa* 1740, it was customary to decorate the Church of Ayr with flowers on the first Sunday in May.⁽²⁾ It is usual now-a-days to have the flowers in brass vases, and it is almost an article of faith, with some people, that only such should be allowed on the Holy Table. This is a mistake, for sometimes the hard glitter of the brass is repellant, and vases of other materials may often be more in keeping with the surroundings. There is no reason why flowers should follow the colour of the season; though the writer confesses to a liking for white flowers at Easter.

DESK.—In olden times it was customary to have the missal placed on a cushion or desk on the altar. In all probability, however, the desk is earlier than the cushion⁽³⁾ and may indeed go back to the days of the Primitive Church. Illustrations dating from the 14th and 15th centuries show desks placed on altars. Table desks, or lecterns, are often made of brass; but there is no reason why they should not be made of wood, which often fits in better with the other furnishings, and of which the earlier ones seem to have been made. The oldest lectern in the possession of the Church of Scotland⁽⁴⁾ is, however, a table one made of brass, presented by William and Mary to the Scots Kirk in Amsterdam in 1689. It bears their initials on the front, intertwined with the letters R.R. and the date surrounded by a laurel wreath, surmounted with the royal crown. The foot is formed like a lion's foot, while a beautifully modelled heraldic lion *salient* fills up the space between the royal monogram and the top of the lectern. It is (or was until recently) still in use; not according to the original plan, however, but affixed to the pulpit to form the book board.

ALMS DISH.—The alms dish is another Protestant innovation, being quite unknown to the mediæval church. There the offerings were placed in what was called the Offerand Stok, which was usually placed near the altar, but never upon it. There is reason to believe that every altar, where there was more than one, had its own stok. Two Scottish offerand stoks still survive. One, which belonged to the altar

(1) *Parson's Handbook* (1909), p. 89.

(2) Can this be the survival of a pagan custom?

(3) In the Roman Church to-day desks must not be placed on the altar. Cushions are used instead.

(4) If it has not been stolen by the Germans.

of St Eloi, in St John's Church, Perth, is made of wood, some thirteen inches in height and about half that in breadth. The other, which belonged to the weavers of South Leith, bears the date 1554, and was attached to the altar of St Serf, in the Church of our Lady there. It is octagonal in shape and is carved out of a solid block of oak, twelve inches in height. It is bound with iron and has been painted.

The English Reformers retained the mediæval usage for some time. In the First Prayer Book of King Edward VI., the rubric relating to the offertory says that all who were so disposed should put their offerings into the "poor men's box, every one according to his ability," while the "Clerks do sing the offertory" sentences. Evidently this method did not work out as was expected, for, in the Second Prayer Book of King Edward, the rubric was altered and the taking of the offering remitted to the churchwardens, who were to gather the same and put them "into the poor men's box." The first mention in these islands of an ecclesiastical alms bason is to be found in the *Scottish Book of Common Prayer*, (*Laud's Liturgy*, 1637), where it is enacted that the "devotions of the people" were to be collected in a "bason provided for that purpose." When all had offered, the bason with its contents was to be brought to the Presbyter "who shall humbly present it before the Lord and set it upon the holy table." It is possible that here we have some indication of a Scottish contemporary custom. The only reference which is made to the offering in the *Book of Common Order* (*John Knox's Service Book*) is that the office of the Deacons is to "gather the alms diligently"; but from Calvin's practice and that of Pullain, we learn that the custom was to gather the offerings after the sermon and before the great prayer, thus retaining the collection of the alms in the old Catholic position. Whether the offerings so collected were laid on the table, in sight of all the congregation, is not known; but it certainly was the custom a little later, on communion Sundays, to take an offering from the people, after they were seated at the Holy Table. The General Assembly of 1648 tried to put an end to the practice of taking the collection during the service, "as being a great and unseemly disturbance of Divine Worship"; but, in spite of these efforts, the old custom was continued in many places.⁽¹⁾

There are quite a number of fine 17th century alms dishes, chiefly of brass, in the possession of Scottish congregations, though only a few of them are of native manufacture, most of them having been imported from the Low Countries.⁽²⁾ A favourite subject embossed on such was the two spies bringing back a cluster of the grapes from Eshcol. Another was Adam and Eve standing beside a tree in the Garden of Eden. There is a very fine one, with the *Agnus Dei*, at South Queensferry. It is probably contemporary with the church bell, which was made at Middleburg in 1635. Another, still preserved, has the head of King Charles I. embossed in the centre. In all likelihood it belongs to the period after the Restoration of 1660, and may have been originally meant for domestic use.⁽³⁾ In 1698 there were two silver collection basons in the possession of the Church of Dumbarton. One is sorry to record that they were sold the following year and two plates of "tinn" provided instead.

Alms dishes should be specially made for the places they are to occupy, as, indeed, all church furniture should be. The ecclesiastical furnisher has often proved a snare; and a fair amount of the stuff provided by well-meaning but ignorant benefactors would be better "scrapped."

Dr Dearmer declares that few ornaments offer a better opportunity for the art of the skilled metal worker than do alms dishes.⁽⁴⁾ Two known to the writer are splendid specimens of the artist's work. The one, of polished silver with four enamels

(1) Including a number of parishes in Galloway where covenanting influence was specially strong. At Balmaghie, where that stalwart Covenanter, John McMillan, was minister, the practice was still being followed well into the 18th century. At Killearn, in 1790, it is reported that the poor's money "is collected in boxes handed by the elders through the church immediately before pronouncing the blessing." *Statistical Account*. Vol. XVI.

(2) It should be said that in some cases these are not placed on the communion table.

(3) A number of our earliest communion vessels were also of domestic origin. I have seen 18th Century pewter communion plates upon which the marks of the knives used at table could still be discerned.

(4) *Parson's Handbook*, p. 112. (1909).

set in silver vine leaf settings, is in a church in Fife. The other, of plain hammered silver, lies on the communion table of Ecclesmachan Parish Church. In another church known to the writer, quite a good alms dish has been made out of a disused communion plate. It is of pewter, a metal which can only be handled by one who is specially skilled. Another fine one of beaten brass is in Winchburgh Church. In it is an enamel panel representing St Margaret. It was specially designed for the place it occupies.⁽¹⁾

In a recent number of the *Annual* it was stated that the alms dish should not be placed upon the Holy Table until after the offerings had been placed in it. "The dish without the offerings," said the writer, "is meaningless," and therefore out of place. I have heard exactly the same argument used about a permanent communion table. "It is only used for communion and therefore should not be seen at other times." The communion table, as has been well said, should be set centrally in sight of the people, "so that it may, at least, be a visible reminder of the central Facts and Mysteries of the Faith."⁽²⁾ It is equally valuable to have the alms dish upon it, at all times, that it may remind the worshippers that they are required to worship God with their substance, as well as in other ways. If this could be brought home effectually to the hearts of our people, many financial worries would disappear. The ancient custom was to have the dish on "God's Board" throughout the service. I have seen a 17th century engraving showing the interior of a church during "sermon," the minister wearing a black gown with white bands and also a pair of black gloves. The alms dish,⁽³⁾ apparently of a large size, is placed on the table.⁽⁴⁾

CROSS.—Our Reformation fathers would have objected to the placing of a cross on the communion table, as the General Assembly did in 1903, in the Barnhill case; but they would have objected to a cross being placed anywhere in or on the church at all. Now that the symbol of our Christian Faith is used freely on the outside of our places of worship, (I have seen it on more than one Original Secession Church), there is no reason why it should not be used inside as well. In a few churches known to the writer, a cross appears on the communion table. One of these is a brass cross, gifted as a memorial to one of the band of Scots nurses who served in Serbia with Elsie Inglis in the last war. Another one of silver (used only at communions) was gifted in memory of an elder. In other two churches, one in Fife and one in Angus, there is a cross behind the table, so placed that to the congregation it appears to be set thereon.

It should, perhaps, be said that, although altar crosses were known in late pre-Reformation days, their use was by no means general. The majority of pictures of chancels before the Reformation show the altar with nothing set on it except two candlesticks. Crosses on the table were in use in the 17th century in England;⁽⁵⁾ but at the present day there is a school of thought which says "there is much to be said, both from the ceremonial and from the theological point of view, against their use on the altar."⁽⁶⁾

RIDDELS.⁽⁷⁾—It is difficult to know why such should be found in a Scots parish church, for their primary purpose was to shelter the lighted candles on the altar from draughts, and, as we do not use such candles in the Church of Scotland, there is really no reason why the communion table should have a curtain on either side.

WILLIAM M'MILLAN.

⁽¹⁾ Copper alms dishes are not unknown. There is one made of this metal in St Margaret's, Barnhill, and another, known to the writer, was made out of old pennies of the reign of George III. for Dunnottar some twenty years ago. This way of using old money was not altogether a new thing in the Church, for in the 17th century the Kirk Session of Cruden resolved to have a lot of bad money which had been put in the box melted down to "make cups for collecting the poor money at the Sacrament."

⁽²⁾ *Annual* (1932-3), p. 11.

⁽³⁾ Picture in Addison's *Introduction to the Sacrament*. (1695).

⁽⁴⁾ Dr. Dearmer states that in England the ceremonies associated with the presentation of the alms "at the altar . . . are often of a rather idolatrous nature." *Parson's Handbook*, p. 280. The same could occasionally be said in Scotland.

⁽⁵⁾ They are not allowed in the Church of Ireland.

⁽⁶⁾ Dearmer. *The Parson's Handbook* (1909), p. 95.

⁽⁷⁾ "Riddels" is the anglicised form of the French "Rideaux" Curtains,