## The Stole and the Scarf.

DURING recent years the employment of the stole and the scarf in Divine Service has prevailed increasingly among ministers of the Church of Scotland. These two vestments, the stole and the scarf, though sometimes made as to present a certain resemblance, are really quite distinct in origin and in history. Like other ecclesiastical vestments they were ultimately derived from contemporary outdoor garments in secular use. But their prototypes and periods of origin are entirely different, and their employment has been on dissimilar occasions and with unlike significance.

In the Church of Scotland a certain confusion has arisen in both the form and usage of the stole and the scarf. The two vestments have undergone a measure of assimilation, so that characteristics properly associated with the one have been applied to the other; considerable uncertainty has prevailed about the use and even the name of the resultant garment. If it be called a stole it must be confessed that it has sometimes been worn on occasions not traditional in the history of the Church.

This is merely a repetition of the confusion which took place in England in the early nineteenth century, when the stole, revived as a vestment, took on the form of the so-called "Black Stole", as in Scotland to-day.

But if the scarf and the stole are to be employed at all in the Church of Scotland it is surely proper that their usage and pattern be dictated in accordance with their historical meaning and purpose. It is true, of course, that the Church of Scotland is bound in no rigid fashion to the traditions of former ages. Nor is it called upon slavishly to imitate the customs of any other branch of the Church. It will even take the opportunity, when appropriate, to emphasise the characteristics of its Scottish and Presbyterian nature. But it will not deliberately scorn tradition or despise a widely prevailing custom. It will retain and borrow what may be desirable, adapting it to its practical and liturgical needs. It will not be fettered by the customs of the Universal Church and the traditions of the ages, but it will seek to reverence and understand them, avoiding the confusion which makes them vain and of none effect.

If no respect whatever is given to tradition in the usage and appearance of these vestments they become mere decorations and lose their value as significant symbols; but, as the latter, they can be both beautiful and appropriate.

The stole originated as an article of dress worn by the citizens of Imperial Rome and, as such, was worn by those who conducted the services of the Church in the early centuries of the Christian era. It may go back to near the time of the Apostles, or even to that of the Apostles themselves. For the Church of Scotland, a Reformed Church, with its insistence on apostolic beliefs as opposed to medieval accretions, the stole would seem to possess a fitting symbolism.

The scarf, on the other hand, came into use in the late medieval period and may have been derived from the hood. In the Church of England it came to be the badge of the minister as officiant, the mark of Orders at a service. For the Church of Scotland, which insists so strongly on a rightful ordination, it would not seem out of place that a vestment be worn which proclaims the officiant to be ordained.

It is in view of these facts that the writer thought it might be of interest to some readers of the *Annual* to sketch the origin and history of the stole and the scarf. The subject is involved in much difficulty and obscurity. Only a paucity of Latin texts exists to help in elucidating the origin and early history of the stole. How the scarf originally developed has been a matter of much dispute. Customs relating to both these vestments have differed according to place and time. Nevertheless there are facts emerging from the conflicting divergencies which permit certain broad principles to be enunciated. It is hoped that these principles may be of value to those who use the stole or scarf in the services of the Church of Scotland.

## THE STOLE.

The stole is a strip of silk or cloth placed around the neck and hanging over the shoulders in front. It has varied in length and, as we shall see later, has been arranged differently according to the Orders of its wearer and the occasion on which it has been worn. Its width was originally narrow, —about two inches—and was uniform throughout. Until the eighth century it was always called the "orarium", then the term "stola" also came into vogue. For some

centuries both appellations persisted, but by the eleventh century *stola* supplanted *orarium*.

The orarium imitated an adjunct of dress of the same name worn by the Roman people, a narrow strip of linen which hung over the left shoulder, passed across the body and was fastened in a loose loop beneath the right arm.

The word " orarium " is with a high degree of probability derived from " ora ", the face, and the linen strip seems to have been first used for the purpose of wiping the face. References in Latin literature are very scanty but one of them says it was waved at the Games in the Circus by the onlookers to express their acclamation. Flavius Vopiscus, in his life of the Emperor Aurelian (d. A.D. 275) says that this monarch was the first to grant oraria to the Roman people for the purpose of indicating applause. " Sciendum . . . . illum primum donasse oraria populo Romano quibus uteretur populus ad favorem " (for applause). On the Arch of Constantine at Rome there is a sculptured group representing Constantine addressing his attendants. He stands with right hand upraised as if commanding silence. The figures to right and left wear bands resembling oraria, hanging across the left shoulder and passing across the chest under the right arm. Other statues have been found representing Roman citizens wearing oraria. Among literary references may be given one to S. Augustine who uses the word for a bandage to cover a wounded eye.

By the third century the orarium was worn during the services of the Christian Church. Whether it was first worn there simply because it was an adjunct of ordinary attire is a matter of conjecture. There seems no reason to doubt the likelihood of so natural a possibility. It has, however, been suggested that it was first deliberately adopted by the Church as a mark of distinction for the deacon. Whether that be so or not it is at least plain that no one below the rank of deacon was permitted to wear the orarium. The twenty-second and twenty-third canons of the Council of Laodicea—the first Christian reference to the vestment—forbade sub-deacons, readers and chanters to wear the orarium. The Council of Laodicea was held about the year 250. It is mentioned by Isidore of Pelusium, writing about the year 421. " The linen garment in which the deacons minister in the Holy Place is a memorial of the humility of Our Lord in washing and wiping dry the feet of the disciples." A later writer of the same century mentions the orarium as worn by deacons. The ninth

canon of the Council of Braga in Spain, held about 560 A.D., ordered deacons to wear their oraria over and not under their tunicles, so as clearly to distinguish them from sub-deacons. By the beginning of the seventh century the fashion of decorating the orarium had evidently become popular, for the Council of Toledo, held in 633, enacted among other things that the orarium of the deacon should be plain, and not adorned with any colour or with gold, " puro nec ullis coloribus aut auro ornato." The same canon of that Council, in mentioning that oraria were worn also by bishops and presbyters, is referring to a custom which had probably long prevailed. The Council held at Braga in 675 also mentions the orarium, specifying how it should be worn at the Eucharist, crossed in front and with the ends fastened under the girdle " ita ut . . . signum in suo pectore praeferat crucis." It is unnecessary to quote further in illustration of the early history of the orarium. A writer of the early ninth century says it was permissible to call the orarium the stole. The stola was a long flowing garment among the Romans—why the name stole was given to the orarium is unknown.

As already mentioned, the orarium was originally narrow and of uniform width. At first its colour as an ecclesiastical garment was probably white, though the secular oraria given by the Emperor to the people were likely coloured.

As time went on coloured stoles were adopted by the Church, and often richly embroidered in colour and gold. The embroidery was worked sometimes on the lower parts, sometimes on the entire length of the stole. A cross or some other distinctive device having come to be placed at the ends, led to a change in shape. The stole widened out towards the extremities, which might take on the form of a square, spade or trapezium to contain the device. In England it never seems to have been general in the Middle Ages to have crosses at the ends of the stole, and the practice of having a cross in the middle, at the back of the neck, is only a few centuries old. Stoles nearly always terminate in fringes. The stole of S. Thomas à Becket, which had crosses in its embroidered design and is still preserved at Sens, finishes off in three tassels at each end.

Sometimes stoles were ornamented in a gorgeous and even fantastic manner. The Inventory of Pope Boniface VIII. discloses the Pontiff's possession of a stole adorned with white pearls and little bells " campanellis." There

are records of other stoles with such bells. The practice doubtless arose in imitation of the bells on the robe of the Jewish High Priest. (Exodus, xxviii., 32.).

As already stated the stole was worn in different ways according to the Orders of its wearer and the occasion of its employment. The presbyter wore it crossed at the Eucharist, and at some periods of history perhaps on certain other occasions also. Normally, however, he wore it at other sacraments with the ends hanging straight down in front. This is also the fashion in which the bishop always wore it. The deacon wore it over the left shoulder, passing across the body and with the ends looped at the right side.

These are the customs in the Western Church. There is no space to enter into a detailed description of the stole of the Eastern Churches. Suffice it to say that in the Greek Church the priest's stole, known as the *epitrachelion*, is much broader than the Western orarium and hangs down in front and at the back, the head passing through an opening in the centre. It is worn on most occasions. The deacon's stole is called the orarion and hangs over the left shoulder.

Opinions have differed about the exact significance of the stole and the proper occasions for its employment. All are agreed that it was always worn at the sacraments. But opinion has varied about the admissibility of the stole at other services. Amalarius of Metz, a ninth century bishop, writes of the deacon and his stole: "Ipse enim semper utitur in opere ministerii." An Archbishop of Rheims of the ninth and an Ecclesiastical Discipline of the tenth century tell priests to wear their stoles when travelling, so that their sacred character may be recognised. The Council of Tribur (895) ordered priests never to go forth without the "stola vel orarium." All this, however, may mean only that they are to have it in their possession. As noted above the Eastern Church wears the stole on other occasions than sacraments. The Roman Church orders the use of the stole at all sacraments, at Benediction and at Exposition. It is prohibited at Vespers except when there is Exposition or when Benediction follows. It is also prohibited during the devotional parts of non-liturgical services. On the other hand the preacher may wear the stole during sermon even at such services. The general custom of the Roman clergy in England and Scotland is to wear during the sermon a stole of the colour of the day. In commenting on this fact

Dr Adrian Fortescue said: "There is no authority for the stole except recognised custom." It is interesting to note that the Pseudo-Alcuin, about the tenth century, says "Orarium, id est stola, praedicatorius concedatur." The common view in the Church of England seems to be that the stole should be used only as a sacramental vestment. The late Dr Percy Dearmer said: "A stole always means that a sacrament is being administered." This appears to be the view of most authorities at the present day. During last century Anglican clergy often wore the so-called "Black Stole" on other occasions. It must finally be noted that the stole, by a very ancient tradition, is the symbol of the yoke of Christ. (Matthew, xi., 29, 30.).

## THE SCARF.

The scarf or tippet is a broad band of silk or stuff, double, and serrated or scalloped at the ends. Placed around the neck it hangs down over the shoulders in front almost to the foot of the cassock. Its colour is black. It is not embroidered, though scarves of Chaplains to His Majesty's Forces are an exception to the rule. Yet, as we shall try later to maintain, there is no reason why Church of Scotland ministers should not depart from custom in this respect and adopt some characteristic embroidery for their scarves.

There are several theories to account for the origin of the scarf. Some authorities derive it from the medieval Canon's Cope, a black garment worn by the regular clergy both at service and out-of-doors. The cope, a sort of cloak, is supposed to have been curtailed in shape till it assumed a scarf-like form.

Another connects it with the almuce, a fur garment worn by regular clergy in the Middle Ages to protect them from the cold of their unheated churches. The almuce had pendant ends in front and in time assumed a scarf-like form. The almuce was worn by dignitaries, and in the late Middle Ages ordinary clergy not entitled to wear the almuce began to wear a scarf of cloth or silk. Various monuments show ecclesiastics wearing the furred almuce or cloth scarf. The Church of S. Botolph's, Boston, has a brass portraying a Canon with the almuce. Clay, Norfolk, has a brass of a Rector with the plain scarf (1510). There is an important brass of one of the sixteenth century clergy wearing the scarf, at Westerton, in Kent.

A third derivation of the scarf or tippet is from the academic hood, which in its turn descended from the hood used as a head-covering outside. The hood had an appendage at the end called the liripip, which sometimes took the form of one or two streamers that occasionally hung down in front. It is unnecessary to enter into details about the evolution of these streamers, It is enough to mention the view that eventually becoming independent of the hood, they so formed the scarf.

The scarf continued in use after the Reformation, being worn over the cassock or surplice on all occasions. It is mentioned in the early days of the Reformation both by those who denounce it as a popish vestment and those who defend its use. It is also referred to in enactments and decrees of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Ecclesiastical Canons of 1593 permit non-graduates to wear the tippet " so that it be not of silk." In the Articles for the Common Apparel of Persons Ecclesiastical, Queen Elizabeth enacted that " all Doctors of Cathedral Churches, Masters of Colleges, and all having Ecclesiastical Livings " should wear the tippet. The regulation refers to " Common apparel abroad ". In the 85th Canon of the Church of England (1604), it is stated: " All deans, masters of colleges, archdeacons, and prebendaries in cathedral and collegiate churches (being priests or deacons), doctors of divinity, law and physic, bachelors of divinity, masters of arts and bachelors of law having any ecclesiastical living, shall usually wear gowns with standing collars and sleeves straight at the hands, or wide sleeves as is usual at the Universities, with hoods or tippets of silk or sarsanet, and square caps, and that all other ministers admitted or to be admitted into that function shall also usually wear the like apparel as aforesaid except tippets only."

There is no difference between the scarves of the dignitary and that of the ordinary clergyman, save that the former is sometimes slightly broader. The scarf can be worn at all services ; it is not worn by laymen.

As mentioned above, Chaplain's scarves are embroidered. Formerly the Army Chaplain's scarf was embroidered with the letters C. F. and a crown. Some years ago a device was substituted displaying a Cross encircled with a wreath, surmounted by a crown, and bearing the words: " In this Sign Conquer ". The scarves of Navy and Air Force Chaplains are also embroidered at the ends with appropriate devices.

## THE STOLE AND THE SCARF IN THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

For some years the stole and the scarf have been adopted by many Church of Scotland ministers. Sometimes the vestment has been a plain black scarf or tippet with serrated or scalloped ends. Sometimes, while still black, it has had characterisitcs belonging to the stole, embroidery and fringed ends. The latter article has been imitated from the so-called English " black stole ", which came into use in the early nineteenth century. The English or Scottish " black stole " is really an assimilation of the stole and the scarf. The colour, black, was borrowed from the scarf, the embroidery and fringed ends from the stole. The black stole of the Middle Ages was used only at funeral services and requiem masses.

The Scottish " black stole " is approximately 1½ yards long, 7 inches wide at the foot, and 2½ inches wide at the neck. It is made of black silk and terminates in fringes usually about 2½ inches deep. Sometimes these stoles are left plain, but they are usually embroidered at the ends, the favourite emblems being a Celtic or a S. Andrew Cross, the latter, as a rule, in purple.

The scarf has the same dimensions as the " black stole." It has three pleats at the back of the neck showing three panels. This narrowness at the neck is of modern origin. Ancient pictures show the scarves falling loosely. As a rule the scarf is not embroidered unless the wearer is a Chaplain.

There are no rules and no definite custom to guide in the employment of these two vestments, the " black stole " and the scarf. Either of them seems to be worn in the Church of Scotland at any religious service, the Lord's Supper, Baptisms, ordinary services, ordinations and inductions. As there has been mixture and assimilation in the vestments, there have been confusion and uncertainty in their use.

From the study of the use and appearance of the stole and the scarf in the past it may be possible to get some help for the present. Certain guiding principles must first be laid down.

(1) The stole and the scarf should not be confused. They have had a separate origin, a divergent history, and a different meaning. The distinction should be preserved.

(2) They should not be used as mere decorations. There is no purpose in re-introducing ancient vestments without

reference to their historic meaning, and so running contrary to all the traditions of the past. If it be merely a decoration that is required, any other suitable type of decoration might as well be invented and used.

(3) With these provisos the Church of Scotland should at the same time make such suitable adaptations as may be appropriate to her particular type of service and polity. While the distinction between, and the relative meanings of the stole and scarf should be preserved, adaptations might well be introduced to meet the needs and to stress the characteristics of our Church.

With these principles in mind let us consider what might seem to be the appropriate nature and employment of the stole and the scarf in the Church of Scotland.

**The Stole.**—The chief distinction between the stole and the scarf is that the former is coloured. In course of time the colours became those of the Christian Year—white, violet, red and green. Some of these colours were also used on special occasions; for example, white was used during the latter part of the baptismal service. When only one stole is used in all services the colour, according to the Sarum Use, is red.

If only one colour were used, white would seem appropriate for the Church of Scotland. It was the original colour of the stole as used in the early Church, and the use of white by the Church of Scotland would symbolise its reverence, as a Reformed Church, for primitive Christianity. The stole should be embroidered at the ends or throughout, and should terminate in fringes.

As traditionally it has been a sacramental vestment, it is best reserved for use at the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. It is thus the mark of a sacrament, the vestment employed when a sacrament is celebrated.

**The Scarf.**—The scarf should always be black and have serrated or scalloped ends. It can be worn at all services. It is the mark of the ordained minister, the badge of ordination. It should, therefore, not be worn by a probationer.

There seems to be no reason why certain adaptations should not be made in the pattern of the scarf as used in the Church of Scotland. As already pointed out, scarves, except Chaplain's scarves, are not embroidered. But in the Church of Scotland there seems no need to adhere rigidly to this tradition. A plain black scarf, prominent and distinctive against the white surplice of the Anglican clergyman, loses its effect against the black cassock and gown.

Moreover, if the scarf were embroidered it does not seem essential to place the emblems at the ends, where they are hidden by the pulpit. They might be placed three-quarters up, where they would be visible.

These emblems might be made specially distinctive and appropriate. As already pointed out, the scarf is the badge of the ordained minister. Now, in the Church of Scotland, a minister is ordained to a particular charge or sphere of office. Could one of the emblems not signify the parish to which the minister was inducted or the town in which that charge was situated? Thus adorned the scarf would indeed be an interesting symbol. It is customary for congregations to present pulpit robes to their new minister. It would add to their pleasure in gifting him a vestment which was not only his badge of ordination but which, by its emblem, symbolised the parish. On the other side, the emblem might be significant of the Church of Scotland, for example, the Burning Bush or a Celtic Cross.

In this way the scarf in the Church of Scotland might become not only a vestment attractive in itself, but an appropriate and distinctive piece of symbolism. It would, moreover, retain its own characteristics. Its colour, black, and its serrated ends, would distinguished it from the stole. The position of its embroidery would also obviate confusion between it and the stole.

## CONCLUSION.

This article is not a plea for the use of the stole or scarf. All that the writer has tried to do has been to maintain that, if they are to be used at all, they should be designed and employed in a way consistent with their historical meaning and purpose, but with allowance for adaptations peculiarly suited to the Church of Scotland.

The regulations of obscure councils and the opinions of shadowy authors of far-off days may seem to us to be utterly trivial and unimportant. We would not wish to stress the minutiae of ancient rules, but it is only by exploring archaeological details that we can obtain guidance for contemporary principles. The use of these vestments must not be meaningless, but significant. It can be significant. The stole and the scarf can in their own way indicate different aspects of the beliefs and practices of our Church. The stole links the Church symbolically to apostolic days, and declares the adherence of the Church of Scotland

to primitive Christianity. As the special mark of the sacraments it speaks of the reverence held by our Church for Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The scarf, the badge of Orders, symbolises the stress always laid by the Church of Scotland on a duly ordained ministry. It is an emblem of the local sphere where its wearer exercises his ministry.

Viewed in such a light the stole and the scarf may fulfil a purpose in the Church of Scotland.

NOTE.—The writer acknowledges with gratitude the kindness of his friend, the Rev. E. Iliff Robson, B.D., formerly Head Classical Master at Felsted School and Vicar of Little Dunmow, Essex, who read over the manuscript and gave several valuable items of information. Thanks are also due to Mr F. C. Eeles, D.Litt., Secretary for the Central Council for the care of Churches, for assistance in elucidating some difficult points; and to Messrs J. Wippell & Co., Exeter; R. W. Forsyth, Edinburgh; and Stark Bros., Edinburgh, clerical robe-makers, for valuable information about present customs in the design of stoles and scarves in England and Scotland.

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