

# THE MINISTER'S SCARF, or the "SACRIFICERS" STOLE—WHICH?

Church Association Tract 267

CANON MacCOLL complains in *The Times* of April 11<sup>th</sup>, that "we all break the law laid down by the Judicial Committee. For that august tribunal declared the illegality of all stoles as well as the illegality of all chasubles, and all the clergy wear stoles." That is a typical sample of the habitual modesty and accuracy of Canon MacColl. The Privy Council never had the legality of stoles before them, and, of course, never "declared" anything whatever about them. The illegality of stoles rests upon a decision of the Rt. Hon. Sir R. J. Phillimore, who, as Dean of the Arches, in the Purchas case, held that stoles were *not* one of the "ornaments of the ministers" of the First Prayer Book of Edward VI. Ritualists should bear that fact in mind, since Sir R. J. Phillimore was not then following any previous decision of the Privy Council. If Sir R. J. Phillimore was a 'spiritual' judge, why do they not conform to his ruling? If he was *not* a 'spiritual' judge why did Dr. Pusey in his *Letter to Liddon* (p. 35) speak of him as "the Church's highest tribunal?"

In the next place, what the loyal clergy wear is *not* a "stole" at all. Unluckily the Tractarian revival made it fashionable to smatter "correct" (?) antiquarian terms; and Bp. Jenner and Canon Trevor tell us that it became the fashion about 1848 to call the old-fashioned scarf a "stole." Ignorant Evangelicals may have foolishly followed this fashion; but so far from being identical, the two things were constantly contrasted in the time of Elizabeth as being the badges respectively of the Protestant parson or the Popish priest.

The stole and the scarf are perfectly separate and distinct things. The stole was a narrow strip of coloured silk, expanded at the ends which were often embroidered and fringed, and hanging down to the knee. Before the Reformation it had ceased to be used in the "choir offices," and being thus identified with the Mass, was abolished together with it. The scarf, called also the 'tippet' (in Latin, collipendium,<sup>1</sup> liripipium), was a wider strip of folded black silk, hanging down to the ankles and 'pinkt' at the ends. It was worn with the gown in preaching and out of doors, as well as with the surplice. The Royal Advertisements of May, 1566, adopted certain rules laid down in the 24 Hen. VIII., c. 13, by which all clergymen whose benefices were of extreme poverty were forbidden to "wear in their tippets any manner of sarcenet or other silk" (like the rest of the clergy), unless the wearer were of the rank of B.D.

The 58th Canon of 1604 directs graduates to wear their hoods, "which no minister shall wear (being no graduate) under pain of suspension. Notwithstanding it shall be lawful (*permittimus*) for such ministers as are not graduates to wear upon their surplices, instead of hoods, some decent tippet (*liripipium*) of black, so it be not silk." Before that time non-graduate incumbents of small livings might not wear "tippets" at all. The modern fashion of inventing quasihoods for non-graduates has misled people into supposing that the "tippet" of the Canon meant an imitation hood. But the hood and the tippet were two quite separate things. This is seen in the Orders issued to the University of Oxford, and printed in Strype's *Life of Abp. Parker*, III.-127—

"That no graduate go out of his college or hall in the day time into the town, but in his gown and hood, or gown and tippet (if it be lawful for him to wear a tippet by the laws of the realm)."

And Abp. Parker himself wrote to the Prime Minister to complain that "some of your preachers preached before the Queen's Majesty without tippet, and had nothing said to them for it" (*Parker Correspondence*, p. 264). A little before this, Bp. Geste, by way of defending the ministerial dress from the charge of "Popery," urged—

"The lawyer weareth a typpit and a gown, like a papistical priest; yet no man judgeth him to synne, or to be a Papist therefore. The mourner weareth a capp like a priest yet no man reproveth him, or

thinketh him to be a Papist for it. The porter, the horsekeeper, sometime weare a lynnin garment, like a surplesse, yet no man judgeth them to do amisse, or to be Papists for it. Therefore it is not the fashion of the priests garments, that hath the appearance of evil" (Dugdale, *Life of Geste*, p. 208).

Archd. Mullins (1564) describes the tippet as "to wear about their necks," and Abp. Grindal mentions the stole, in his *Metropolitcal Orders* that *all* "stoles" be defaced; while at a later time in a letter to Zanchy he tries to give his foreign correspondent some idea of the customary scarf of the Protestant minister by describing it as "a *kind of stole (stola quædam)* round the neck, hanging from both shoulders, and brought down almost to the ankles." This latter, which was then required by statute as part of the out-door dress, was also worn "in addition to" (*præter*) the surplice, at service time (see Grindal's *Remains*, pp. 135, 159, 335).

The "tippet" was regarded thenceforth as the distinctive badge of the reformed "Ministers" as contrasted with the "Mass-priests." It is true that the Puritans railed pretty impartially at "cap, cope, surplice, and tippet": and the Scotch ministers on December 27th, 1566, remonstrated with the bishops against these "dregs of the Romish beast," saying, "if surplice, corner cap, and tippet have been badges of idolatries, *in the very act of idolatry*," &c. This (though literally *untrue*) shewed that the scarf was regarded as resembling the stole, much as the surplice was confounded with the "sacrificial" alb. At the close of 1566 appeared also *An Answer for the Time*, complaining "you reject the stole and retain the tippet": again, in 1583, Robert Johnson told Bp. Sandys "you must yield some reason why the tippet is commanded and the stole forbidden." Mr. French quotes (from Cambden) a satirical writer of the period, who says, "the liripipes or tippets pass round the neck and hanging down before, reach the heels all jagged." Canon Robertson mentions a priest who "hanged himself in his tippet," and that a halter was called "a Tyburn tippet," and in Scotland "a St. Johnston's tippet" (*How shall we Conform*, p. 108, 5th edit.). When Cartwright attacked the tippet together with the surplice, &c., Abp. Whitgift replied, "the grey amice is taken away, because the use of it is not established by any law of this realm, *as the use of [the] other vestures be*" (*Works*, ii.-52).

Mr. Bloxam, in his *Companion to Gothic Architecture* (p. 252), gives a series of brasses from 1582 to 1712, shewing the "sarcenet tippet (the so-called scarf of modern days) according to the Advertisements." At p. 259 he mentions the effigies of Dean Wotton (1566) and Dean Bargave (1642), both of which shew the tippet and hood worn together. So Bp. Montagu in 1638 asks, "Does your Minister officiate divine service in one place, upon set times, in the habit and apparel of his order, with a surplice, a hood, a gown, a tippet?" (*Second Report of Ritual Commission*, App., p. 582). And Bp. Cosin in 1662 and 1668 asks his cathedral clergy, "Does every one that is bound to come to church put on his habit of surplice, tippet, and hood, according to his degree?" (*Granville Correspondence*, Surtees Society, I.-256, 270). "Hoods and tippets" are prescribed for graduates by Canon 74, shewing that the tippet is not in any sense a substitute for the hood. Bp. Jebb mentions that in Ireland tippet was the usual name for the scarf in his day; and the fourth canon of the Church of Ireland says, "every presbyter and deacon at all times of his public ministrations of the services of the Church shall wear a plain white surplice, the *customary* scarf of plain black silk, and being a graduate of a university he may wear the hood pertaining to his degree." The clergyman's scarf rests on precisely the same authority as the bishop's scarf. Laurence and Sampson, the leaders of Elizabethan puritanism wrote in 1566, "Popish habits are ordered to be worn out of church, and by ministers in general, and the bishops wear their linen garment which they call a rochet, while *both parties* wear the square caps, tippets, and long gowns borrowed from the papists" (*Z. L.*, I.-164; compare Geste's answer given above).

Another puritan tirade, called *The untrussing of one hundred Popish points*, 1642 (British Museum "E. 181/34") enumerates "the Popish apparel of the archbishop and bishops, the black chimere, or sleeveless coat put upon the fine white rochet . . . the tippet, the surplesse in little churches, and the cope in great churches," &c.

In short, the bishop's chimere, the preacher's gown, and the minister's scarf all alike rest for their legality upon continuous usage and custom, and none of these were in any way involved in the Folkestone or the Purchas Judgments. These were the only Judgments ever given by the Judicial Committee on the "ornaments of the minister"; but Evangelical clergymen betray ignorance and play into the hands of detractors like Canon MacColl by calling the scarf which they wear a "stole." Pert newspaper correspondents take occasion thereby to bring charges of "lawlessness," which, though wholly unfounded, deceive the multitude and create an unfounded public prejudice.

Even Mr. Percy Dearmer, the Ritualistic champion, in his *Parson's Handbook* admits (p. 85) that "there is no known authority for confining the use of the tippet to dignitaries and chaplains . . . the tippet should be worn by all the clergy. . . . There is no authority, English or Continental, for the use of the stole in choir, while the black scarf or tippet has come down to us from before the Reformation, and the authority for its use is unmistakeable."

Endnotes:

- 1) Two separate Latin versions of the Advertisements of Q. Elizabeth exist in the Zurich State Library. In one of these the English is rendered "siricia lirippia [*sic*] gerant," in the other, "adhibitibus insuper *tappetis*, ut vocant, sericis."