

THE SOUTHERN  
PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XXXVI.—NO. 4.

---

OCTOBER, MDCCCLXXXV.

---

ARTICLE I.

A TRUE CONSERVATISM.

In Church and State, in sect and party, the words *conservative* and *radical* have acquired a prominence and an emphasis, in the present, never accorded to them in the past. In the pulpit, the senate, and the forum, as well as in the columns of the journal and the pages of the essay or the review, these two terms are the recognised landmarks of every form of modern thought and disquisition. They are the poles of feeling, of taste, of opinion and principle. Every one who talks or writes at all, claims for himself that he belongs to one of these categories, and insists on referring an opponent to the opposite. In American politics we not only discover that the two great parties into which our population is divided are essentially different in the sense of these two criteria, but that each party is further divisible into a conservative and a radical section. There are Republicans who insist upon keeping their party rigidly in the line of its precedents, and others who maintain that its original mission has been fulfilled, and the time has come to propound new issues before the people. There are also Democrats who desire to continue the conflict on principles announced a century ago, whilst others urge the necessity of contending for the more practical interests of the present generation.

## ARTICLE X.

## CALVIN'S DOCTRINE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

We propose to state definitely the exact doctrine of Calvin on the Lord's Supper. He begins by referring to our Lord's saying, in John vi. 51, "I am the living bread." Of the invisible food we get from the body and blood of Christ, the bread and wine are signs. The secret union with Christ of the believer being an incomprehensible mystery, the signs chosen to set it forth are simple and familiar, because such are adapted to our capacity. The object of this sacrament, then, is to assure us of the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood to be our spiritual food, and God renews the promise every time the cup is offered us.

The force of the sacrament is in the words, "*Take, eat, this is my body and blood broken and shed for you.*" We are to *take*, because it is ours; to *eat*, for it is one substance with us; and it was not *for himself*, but *for us*, he took flesh and then sacrificed it.

The sacrament, then, is not a mere sign of these things, but a seal to confirm the promise in John vi. Christ took not the appellation "Bread of Life" from the sacrament; but as such he was given to us from eternity by the Father; and as such he took our nature and makes us partake of his; as such he bore our curse, was made our sacrifice, and raised our corruptible flesh to glory and incorruption. In other words, John vi. preceded, not followed, the sacrament which sealed and confirmed the promise it sets forth.

All these benefits we get by the gospel, and still *more clearly* by the sacrament, which assures us of what Christ said: "The bread which I will give is my flesh—for the life of the world."

Here, say some, the eating is *just believing*. It is indeed *by faith*, but faith is not the whole of it. It is rather a *consequence* of faith. Just as "the dwelling of Christ in our heart by faith" is not simple believing, but a *consequence* of it. Augustine indeed well says that we *eat by believing*, but all he meant was that the eating is not by *the mouth*, but *of faith*. Only Christ, it should

be added, is not far off; but we are united to him as members to the head.

Others say we do have some kind of communion with Christ, but it is spiritual, and not of his flesh and blood, whereas he says, "My flesh is meat indeed," and that we have no life unless we eat that flesh and drink that blood.

Here now is a mystery spoken by Christ, to be felt rather than understood, of which Calvin says that he always feels that he falls below the dignity of it whenever he does his utmost to set it forth. He can only break forth in admiration of what the mind cannot comprehend nor the tongue express. What, then, exactly is this sublime mystery of which he proceeds now to give a brief *summary*?

First, says he, the Sacred Scriptures teach that Christ is the eternal fountain of life. "He was the Word, and in him was life." Next, this life was manifested in human form, for as man had lost life by the fall, there remained no hope of life for him except as he might be restored to it through communion with the Word. It could avail us nothing for life to be in the distant Word, but if he comes nigh and takes our flesh and makes it vivifying for us—that is, joins Himself to our flesh and joins us to him by his Spirit—we may then hope. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven, and the bread I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." Life now is in our flesh, and we can reach it by the easiest access by just throwing open our hearts and embracing it by faith—that is, by faith we can become one with him both in flesh and spirit and enjoy all he is and all he has. Now, this flesh of Christ naturally was mortal, just like ours, and not life-giving, but he pervades it with life in order to transmit it to us. So he declares, "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself"—meaning, of course, to the Son as he has become *flesh*. Thus the flesh of Christ is become a reservoir of the water of life, constantly drawn from by believers through faith, and constantly replenished from the spring-head of his Godhead. It is for this reason we must be in communion with his flesh and be members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. "This,"

says Paul, "is a great mystery." He feels unable to utter it, and so expresses his amazement without explaining it to us.

Calvin's idea evidently is that we lost and dead sinners could never reach the infinite source of life, nor he us, except in this one way of his coming nigh to us *in flesh* and making himself one with us, so as afterwards in the same way to make us one with him—that is, partaking of our nature that he might make us to partake of his. We must, therefore, have communion of his life, which is lodged for us in the reservoir of his flesh. Life comes not to us from God, but from God-man. The Son of God is the eternal source of life. But the difficulty is for that life to reach fallen man. There is a legal difficulty which justification removes. But does there not remain a difficulty as to the vital connexion? Must there not be some natural tie of life betwixt the Redeemer and his people? Such there clearly was betwixt the first Adam and his members. He was their head, and they got their life through and from him. This was no figurative or imaginary tie, but a real vital one, necessary to his being their representative. And must there not be a vital union also between the second Adam and his people? Now, the way in which this comes about is that he takes our nature on him and then gives us his nature, and so we become indeed one. He takes our flesh and gives us his Spirit, and so establishes a real communion of life with us through his flesh and blood by the Holy Ghost.

Thus, he says, Christ's flesh and blood feed our souls as bread and wine our bodies, and these signs would have no aptitude as feeding our bodies if our souls were not fed by communion with the life which is in his flesh. And he calls on us now to let our faith conceive what our minds cannot understand, viz., that the Spirit can truly unite things separate in space. By a sacred communion of his flesh and blood, Christ transfuses life into us by faith, and this he testifies to us and confirms to us in the Supper through the efficacy of the Spirit, so that it is no empty sign. Only believers, therefore, get what is set forth in these signs.

It will not do to say that the language of Paul, "The cup

of blessing, is it not the communion of the blood, and the bread, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" is *only figurative*. It is indeed figurative, but there is a reality figured in this language. God does not deceive by holding forth an empty symbol. The Lord puts the symbol into your hand to assure you that you truly partake of him.

Passing from this discussion with the undervaluers of the sacrament, to show the absurdity of the doctrine of transubstantiation, and that also of consubstantiation (where he never minces words with the Lutherans), we find him setting forth what kind of presence of Christ there is in the Supper, viz., such as neither affixes him to the element of bread, nor encloses him in bread, nor circumscribes him in any way, nor divests him of his just dimensions, nor dissevers him by differences of place, nor assigns him a body of boundless dimensions diffused through heaven and earth. There must be nothing derogatory to his heavenly glory, nothing inconsistent with his true and real and proper human nature. In other words, it is not any physical presence of his body at all, but only his spiritual presence by faith. And then we come to his grand reiteration of his inability to comprehend the great mystery which Paul had not undertaken to explain. "I will not be ashamed," says the great because humble Genevese, "that it is too high a mystery either for my mind to comprehend or my words to express; and, to speak more plainly, I rather feel than understand it. The truth of God, therefore, in which I can safely rest, I here embrace without controversy. He declares that his flesh is the meat, his blood the drink, of my soul; I give my soul to him to be fed with such food. In his sacred Supper he bids me take, eat and drink his body and blood under the symbols of bread and wine. I have no doubt that he will truly give and I receive." Let transubstantiators and consubstantiators and all others who exaggerate the sacraments on the one side, and let Socinians and Rationalists and all other depreciators of them on the other, say what they will, we admire, more than we can express, the consummate skill and masterly power with which, with the Word for his rule and the Spirit his guide, Calvin steered betwixt Scylla and Charybdis, and framed for us

a statement of revealed truth on this difficult subject which makes it not level to our comprehension, of course, but yet not confused or self-contradictory.

Now Dr. Cunningham says that Calvin makes an effort in all this "to bring out something like a real influence exerted by Christ's human nature upon the souls of believers in connexion with the dispensation of the Lord's Supper, an effort which was of course unsuccessful and resulted only in what was about as unintelligible as Luther's consubstantiation. This is perhaps the greatest blot in the history of Calvin's labors as a public instructor; and it is a curious circumstance that the influence which seems to have been chiefly efficacious in leading him astray in the matter was a quality for which he usually gets no credit, viz., an earnest desire to preserve unity and harmony among the different sections of the Christian Church" (Theol. Ref., p. 240).

Now, we have great respect for William Cunningham, but more for John Calvin. We hardly know any modern writer whom we esteem more highly than Cunningham, and this is perhaps the only blot we ever discovered upon any of his writings.

There are three points made against Calvin in this statement by Cunningham. One is that he errs in his doctrine of the sacrament; another, that his doctrine is as unintelligible as Luther's; and a third, that he was led into the error by a weak desire for peace and harmony. Let us glance at these in the reverse order.

*First.* As to the allegation that Calvin was misled into the error charged by overweening anxiety to please the Lutherans, the chapter we have just been considering bears us out in a denial of the correctness of the statement.<sup>1</sup> Calvin did, as we all know, earnestly desire to prevent the Lutherans and the Zwinglians from separating; but it is, we are persuaded, a gratuitous allegation that this desire led him to turn and twist his doctrine into such a shape as would please either party. This same statement, in a milder form, Dr. Hodge makes, saying in effect that one great object of his life was to effect a compromise between these

---

<sup>1</sup> See the strong and even offensive terms in which he speaks of consubstantiation in B. iv., cxvii. §§ 16-19; and also see the language he uses in his controversies with Westphal and Heshusius.



parties (Bib. Rep., 1848, p. 229). We have never fully examined what evidence there may be for this charge, but we are well satisfied from our acquaintance with his writings that it would not be difficult to defend Calvin's complete integrity in the premises and to show that he holds strictly and tenaciously to a doctrine which he considers to be written down in the word.

*Next.* As to the unintelligibleness of the doctrine, we have yet to learn that that quality is any absolute proof that a doctrine is not true. If consubstantiation, or if transubstantiation itself, were but revealed in God's word, we could not object to their being mysterious. Does Dr. Cunningham mean to say that he finds the Trinity, or the humiliation of the second Person, or the omnipresence of God, or the connexion of sovereignty and free agency, all very easy to be understood? For one we see no self-contradictoriness in Calvin's doctrine, and are not stumbled at its mystery. We find mystery above and beneath and around and within us, and if we were to abandon all the mysterious doctrines which are unintelligible to our weak comprehension, we should just abandon our whole faith. The whole of Christianity moves in the sphere of the supernatural.

*Thirdly.* As to the *falseness* of this doctrine, which is "the only blot on Calvin's teaching": if Cunningham, with his patience and his learning and his candor and fairness had gone into a statement of the grounds of this judgment which he pronounced, there would have been more satisfaction afforded us, and possibly we might have been convinced by the great Scotch divine. But as he only *affirms*, and that very briefly, of course we need waste no time in examining the point.

Touching the difficulty which there is in comprehending Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper, let it be remembered that the subject itself is mysterious. Hear Dr. Charles Hodge on this point: "The Lord's Supper is by all Christians regarded as exhibiting, and in the case of believers confirming, their union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever obscurity rests on that union must in a measure rest on this sacrament. That union, however, is declared to be 'a great mystery.' It has always on that account been called 'the mystical union.' We are there-

fore demanding too much when we require all obscurity to be banished from this subject. If the union between Christ and his people were merely moral, arising from agreement and sympathy, there would be no mystery about it, and the Lord's Supper, as the symbol of that union, would be a perfectly intelligible ordinance. But the Sacred Scriptures teach us that our union with Christ is far more than this. It is a vital union—we are partakers of his life, for it is not we that live, but Christ that liveth in us.”<sup>1</sup> Thus Dr. Hodge, and we may put now what Dr. Cunningham, said unwisely by way of objection to Calvin's doctrine about its being unintelligible with these wise and scriptural words of Dr. Hodge concerning the impossibility of its being an intelligible ordinance as symbolising a union which confessedly is not intelligible to any mortal mind.

Let us add that Dr. Hodge thus states the points relating to this union of Christ and believers about which there is a general agreement amongst Christians: 1. A federal relation by divine constitution. 2. On Christ's part a sharing of our nature. 3. A participation by us of the Spirit of Christ and his indwelling within us. 4. This union relates to body as well as soul—our bodies are temples of the Spirit, and even in the grave they are still united by the Spirit unto Christ. All these features of the union are certainly not a little unintelligible, and yet *being revealed*, “almost all Christians,” says Dr. Hodge, believe them. He adds: “This union was always represented as a real union, not merely *imaginary*, nor simply moral, nor arising from the mere reception of the benefits which Christ has procured.” Dr. Hodge might have still further added that this union is no mere *figure of speeck*, for of course he means so. And to make his statement fully and thoroughly Calvinistic he should have added a fifth particular of the Christian faith, viz., that we all partake of his flesh and blood in the sacrament.

Dr. Hodge proceeds in the article whence we have drawn these statements to examine:

1. Those authorities which express the Swiss views.
2. Those which present the views of Calvin.

---

<sup>1</sup> Bib. Rep., 1848.



3. Those symbols in which both sides concurred. And then in conclusion,

4. He proposes to analyse and state their meaning. Let us accompany him in this investigation.

1. The Swiss Confessions referred to by Dr. Hodge are the Confessio Tetrapolitana, the first Basel and the first Helvetic. The last named protests against the representation that the Reformed look upon sacraments as mere badges of profession, asserting that they are also signs and means of grace. It calls the Supper "*coena mystica* in which Christ truly offers his body and blood, and hence himself, to his people," but says "the body and blood are not naturally united with the bread and wine, or locally included in them or sensibly there present." In "The Sincere Confession of the Ministers of the Church of Zurich," the Supper is said to be for "remembrance of the body and blood devoted and shed for remission of our sins." This is "by faith," which renders them "present in one sense to the soul of the believer." "To believe is to eat, and to eat is to believe." "There is no other life-giving food in the Supper than believers get elsewhere." "Christ's flesh has done its work on earth, no longer benefits on earth, and is no longer here." Observe now that every one of these statements Calvin accepts readily, and that they differ not at all from what he employs. Zwingle himself is quoted as saying that the natural substantial body of Christ is in heaven, and is not eaten "corporeally in the Supper, but spiritually only"—and this is "to rely on the goodness and mercy of God through Christ." Dr. Hodge distinguishes, in a note, betwixt the doctrine actually held by Zwingle and the name *Zwinglian*, which is popularly applied to the Socinian doctrine of the sacraments being mere signs.

2. Let us pass to the views of Calvin and of the Confessions formed under his influence. In stating Calvin's view of this matter, Dr. Hodge naturally goes to the Institutes, Book IV., C. XVII., but he quotes from § 10, instead of from §§ 8 and 9. The consequence is not a full and clear statement, but an imperfect, partial, and unsatisfactory one. The reader will remember that Calvin says Christ is the eternal source of life, was mani-

fested in our nature to restore it to us when lost, and to bring it nigh when afar off; that his flesh, naturally mortal like ours, was pervaded with life, in order to transmit life to us, and is a reservoir constantly drawn from by all believers, but replenished continually from the eternal spring-head of his divinity; that we must be in communion with this flow of life coming down from the very throne of God itself or else have no life in us; that we must be members of his body and of one spirit with him or be dead. Now, this union, Paul says, is a great mystery, and the great Genevese humbly professes that he feels, but does not understand it. There is certainly, however, no great difficulty in apprehending his statement of the mysterious doctrine. Surely the prince of the Reformers does not talk any unmeaning jargon. His views, derived directly from Scripture, he puts into plain and simple words. It is possible, however, of course, to misapprehend and to misrepresent him, and this can hardly be avoided if one gives only a partial statement of his doctrine. What we have to say, therefore, touching Dr. Hodge's account of Calvin's views is [Hibernice] that it could not possibly be clear or complete, seeing that it is so very incomplete. Undertaking to set forth the view Calvin gives of this mystery, Dr. Hodge unfortunately begins near the close of Calvin's brief summary, and the result of course is that we have no intelligible account of his doctrine.

The Confessions, formed under Calvin's influence, which Dr. Hodge refers to, and from which he makes quotations setting forth the same views which he held, are:

(1) The Gallican, adopted by Protestants of France in 1559; (2) the Scotch, adopted in 1560; and (3) the Belgic (or Dutch), adopted in 1561. The testimonies of these Confessions are all as direct and strong as possible in favor of the doctrine of Calvin. And they constitute the most important symbols of the Reformed religion, representing the doctrines held by the French, the Scotch, and the Dutch Churches. There were no more important sections of the Reformed than these three.

It may be worth while to refer just here to testimony from another most important quarter, though dating nearly one cen-

tury later. We refer to the Westminster Confession, which is acknowledged at this day by untold numbers of the descendants and followers of the Reformed. Its language is: "Worthy receivers outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this sacrament, do then also inwardly, by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually, receive and feed upon Christ crucified and all the benefits of his death: the body and blood of Christ being not corporally or carnally in, with, or under the bread and wine, yet as really but spiritually present to the faith of believers in that ordinance as the elements themselves are to their outward senses."

3. We come to those Confessions in which Zwinglians and Calvinists agreed.

The first one referred to by Dr. Hodge is the *Consensus Tigurinus* or the Agreement of Zurich. It was published with the title "Consent of Ministers of Zurich and of John Calvin, Minister of Geneva." Dr. Hodge says very truly that "in these articles there is not a word which any of the evangelical Churches of the present day would desire to alter" (p. 238). But he also alleges that Calvin's view is excluded from it (p. 251). This is a remarkable statement. Let us recur to the history of this document. Let it be observed first and foremost that there were no *very great* differences betwixt the Swiss Churches of Geneva and Zurich touching the sacraments. There were at this period (twenty years or so after Zwingle's death) some differences—the remains of the wide separation between Zwingle and Luther. It was easy to exaggerate these, and most desirable that they should be composed. In 1549, therefore, Calvin, accompanied by Beza, goes to Zurich to confer with Bullinger. He had previously written these articles with his own pen. Bullinger and the others accept them. Beveridge, the competent translator of so many of Calvin's works, describes the conference between these brethren as one where personal intercourse drew their hearts together, and they found themselves far better agreed than was supposed before, but he observes, "If any who subscribed the agreement must be understood by so doing to have changed the views they had previously entertained, *he* [Calvin]

was not of the number, as there is not one of the articles which he had not maintained in one or other of his works." He adds that the effect of it was to convince many Lutherans how unjust it was to say that the Zwinglians held to no sort of real presence at all, and it was confidently expected that out of it would flow the realisation of Calvin's constant hope—a *great Protestant League* on the basis of that agreement. In view of these facts, which cannot be denied, it is preposterous to say that Calvin had left his own view of the sacrament out of the Consensus. For of course if he thus yielded everything to the Zwinglians, what hope would have remained of his satisfying by any such statement the Lutheran expectations? It is manifest, of course, that having Lutherans, as well as Zwinglians, to convince, he could not have failed to insert something considerable touching the presence of the body and blood in the sacrament. But we have further proof of this to offer. In the midst of all the bright hopes that a great Protestant union was about to take place, Joachim Westphal, minister of the Lutherans at Hamburg, a man unequal to the discussion of such a question, but scurrilous and virulent, attacks the Consensus, and amongst other points makes this very one that Calvin had abandoned his own opinions. For reasons, which we have not time to detail, Calvin thought best to stoop so far as to reply to this man, and publishes his "*exposition*" of the agreement. And here he shows in forcible terms how and where the Consensus did set forth clearly, though mildly, his peculiar views.

Second in the class of Confessions accepted by both Zwinglians and Calvinists, Dr. Hodge has put the Heidelberg Catechism. He might with just as good reason precisely have put the Gallic, Scotch, and Belgic Confessions, which he calls strictly Calvinistic, for they are no stronger than it is in declaring Calvin's view. The truth is, as is evidenced in the Consensus Tigurinus, that there was a substantial harmony between Calvin and the Swiss, notwithstanding their differences. Calvin would have had little trouble if what he aimed at had been to unite with himself merely the Zurich brethren. But his great idea was a grand union of all the Protestants, and the difficulty was to bring the extremes to meet. He stood in the true Scripture middle

with his doctrine of the real spiritual communion, while Luther had gone to one extreme and Zwingli to the other. But Zwingli is dead. Most of the Swiss (see Henry, II., p. 76) have already adopted Calvin's higher views—if indeed Zwingli did not himself forsake his own lower ones. Out of regard to Zwingli, however, they do not openly confess the change as yet. There is no proof, however, that Bullinger was what Dr. Hodge represents (p. 242), “the great opponent of what was considered peculiar in Calvin's views.”

Now the history of the Heidelberg Catechism may be given thus: Frederick III., the elector of the Palatinate, after a very violent disturbance in his kingdom, created by one Tilemann Heshuss, a Lutheran whom Calvin had severely castigated, had this Catechism drawn up by Casper Olevian, a disciple of Calvin, and Ursinus, a friend of Melancthon—the object being to state the moderate Calvinistic view of the real presence as against the Lutheran extreme, there was no question raised in all the agitations and conflicts which gave rise to this venerable symbol, concerning the *reality* of Christ's presence in the Supper, but only concerning the *mode*. Was it *by the mouth* that Christ was received in the Supper, or was it *by faith*? Heshuss is so violent that Frederick, who succeeded to the electorate in the midst of his fierce denunciations, not only dismisses him from office, but determines to establish a rule of faith on this question for his subjects. He consults Melancthon, who condemns Heshuss, Luther being now dead and gone, and Frederick decides for the mild or Calvinistic view, and resolves to have the Palatinate become *Reformed*.

In these circumstances he causes the persons named above to draw up the celebrated formulary which, being adopted by a Synod at Heidelberg in 1563 and published as a confessional standard, has been translated into all modern tongues, honored with countless commentaries, and exalted by general consent to the highest authority for the whole Reformed Church (Nevin's *Myst. Pres.*, p. 83).

Now this famous symbol is perfectly clear in expressing the peculiar doctrine of Calvin. It says Christ “feeds and nourishes

my soul to everlasting life with his crucified body and shed blood as assuredly as I receive from the minister and taste with my mouth the bread and cup of the Lord as certain signs of the body and blood of Christ." And it says "to eat the crucified body and drink the shed blood of Christ is *not only* to embrace with a believing heart all the sufferings and death of Christ, and thereby to obtain the pardon of sin and life eternal; but also, *besides that*, to become more and more united to his sacred body by the Holy Ghost, who dwells both in Christ and in us, so that we, though Christ is in heaven and we on earth, are notwithstanding 'flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone,' and that we live and are governed for ever by one Spirit as members of the same body are by one soul." Also that we are through the Spirit as "really partakers of his true body and blood" as we receive the signs by the mouth. Ursinus also wrote a commentary on this symbol, in which he expresses in the strongest terms Calvin's peculiar doctrine—which we again call peculiar, inasmuch as it separates him from the Lutheran, and what is popularly called the Zwinglian doctrine.

Now this Heidelberg Catechism is the symbol of the German Reformed Church, and has received also the endorsement of the Reformed Dutch Church, being solemnly approved by the Synod of Dort in 1618. It is just another Calvinistic symbol, though Dr. Hodge chooses to represent it as one of those where Zwinglians and Calvinists met.

Third and last in this class comes the Second Helvetic, drawn up by Bullinger after Calvin's death in 1562, but not of public authority till 1566. The Elector, Frederick III., anxious to meet the extreme intolerance of the Lutherans at this time against all the Reformed, but him and his subjects particularly, and desirous to make at the imperial diet which was at hand as fair a showing as he could for the side he has espoused, writes to Bullinger for some such statement as might serve to repress the cavils of the Lutherans. Bullinger sent to him this formulary, which, to give it more authority, was subjected to the other Helvetic or Swiss Churches, and being generally approved, it comes to be known as the proper Swiss Confession. Now, as Bullinger



wrote this symbol, Dr. Hodge says of course we must expect to find in it nothing but what the Zurich ministers could cordially adopt, seeing that Bullinger was Zwingle's successor at Zurich, and the "great opponent of Calvin's peculiar view!" (Pp. 242 and 250.)

Referring then to the Second Helvetic, we find it full and clear in the statement of Calvin's peculiar doctrine, albeit written, as Dr. Hodge says, by the chief opponent of it! It says: "Believers receive what is given by the minister of the Lord, and eat the Lord's bread and drink of the Lord's cup; *inwardly*, however, in the meantime, by the work of Christ through the Holy Spirit, they partake also of the Lord's flesh and blood, and are fed by these unto eternal life. For the flesh and blood of Christ are true meat and drink unto eternal life, and Christ himself as delivered up for us and our salvation is that which mainly makes the Supper," etc. It proceeds to explain what it calls *spiritual manducation*, which is not "of a merely imaginary, undefinable food, but the body of the Lord itself delivered up for us, which, however, is received by believers, not corporally, but spiritually by faith."

We have gone far enough with Dr. Hodge, and the remarks which he offers on all these various Confessions are, in our judgment, so confused and erroneous that we pass them over in silence, except to say merely that, whatever objections he makes to Calvin's doctrine, he never once signifies that it is not possible to be understood, or that he does not understand it. And thus we set him over against Dr. Cunningham on this point, and flatter ourselves that we can knock down the Scotch theologian with his American brother. We may also refer to Schleiermacher, confessedly a great master of ratiocination, as professing that he saw nothing absurd in the Calvinistic theory. We may refer to another great master of it, Dr. R. J. Breckinridge, as testifying strongly (Subjective Theology, pp. 606, 607) to the consistency and scripturalness of the same doctrine. We may also speak of the celebrated Walter Marshall, one of the Puritan ministers ejected in 1662 for non-conforming, whose treatise on "The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification" was so strongly recom-

mended by the Erskines and by Adam Gib, and is so highly esteemed amongst Calvinists, as setting forth in the fullest and strongest manner this same doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

We can also give our personal testimony to Dr. Thornwell's having averred that he agreed with Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

So, too, one shall find in various portions of John Owen's works, that prince of theologians, very clear and forcible statements of the doctrine taught by Calvin. See his *Sacramental Discourses*, x., xxiii., xxv.

And we can refer, on the other hand, to passages in the works of modern theologians of more or less repute for soundness in the faith, who have evidently fallen away very much from the Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper—as Edwards, Ridgley, Hopkins, Bellamy, Dwight, Ashbel Green, Dick, and Barnes. The tendencies of the age, especially in New England, are rationalistic, and even Presbyterians are often too much inclined to suffer a disparagement of the supernatural.

Recurring, however, to the facts brought to view in this article, the reader perceives that whereas Luther, on the one hand, and Zwingli, on the other, were wide apart, and the former especially obstinate and virulent, as well as extreme, yet the successors of Zwingli were never far apart from Calvin; and that accordingly the First Helvetic Confession itself (which Dr. Hodge counts as anti-Calvinist, that is, Zwinglian) uses language which contradicts his representation of it, while the Gallic, Scotch, and Belgic Confessions, the Consensus Tigurinus, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Second Helvetic Confession, all of them, are decidedly Calvinistic in their utterances. And he will not forget that the great Genevese Reformer (great because humble) only undertakes to set before us, what he does not claim to comprehend, *the sublime mystery revealed in the word of God*. It seems to follow that, in accepting his views, we are not only following in the footsteps of the flock, not only accepting the creed of the Reformed Churches—which we believe to be right and true on so many other points where other Churches wander—but we shall be accepting also the very word of God upon the

ineffable mystery of the union of the Head and the members. Calvin insists on nothing whatever except the sublime truth of *life for us in the incarnation*. There is life of course in the God absolute—it is infinite and superabounding and everlasting, but not *for us*. We are creatures and cannot get access to it; we are sinners, and it is impossible for us to receive it, if we could come near to it. And so that life of the absolute God is to us as though it were not—nay, it is against our life, and dooms us to death for ever. But the incarnation is a wondrous divine plan which procures for us justification and a share in the life of God's own Son. But the life which it procures is inseparable from itself. Not God's Son *as such* gives it to us, but God's Son as he is in human flesh. He is not only our representative Head, but we are likewise vitally one with him. He partakes of our flesh, and we partake of his Spirit. His humanity is the connecting link between his Godhead and our manhood. The flesh of Christ is a reservoir full of life, constantly drawn upon by all his people through the Holy Spirit and by faith which unites us to the Saviour; and this reservoir is itself constantly replenished from the everlasting spring-head.

Now, then, Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper simply is, that it holds forth and seals to us this most blessed truth. Does the reader see any heresy here? Does he see any absurdity? Does he see anything he cannot or ought not to accept? Our Reformed fathers in France, in Holland, in Scotland, in Switzerland, in Germany, accepted it. They were not tinctured in the slightest degree with the Rationalism of this age, and they accepted it as they perceived it in the word. The whole Reformation, excepting only the Lutherans (and not excepting all of them either, for Melancthon believed with Calvin), the whole Reformation, excepting Luther and his especial followers, accepted the same doctrine with Calvin, and we may safely do the same.

JNO. B. ADGER.