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I.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THAT the Lord's Supper is the perpetual memorial of the bitter yet victorious passion of the Son of God, once done that it might be thought of forever ; * that it is one of the ordinances which God has committed to His visible Church for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life to the end of the world ; that the words of the institution contain, together with the precept authorizing the use thereof, a promise of benefit to worthy receivers ; that it is an effectual means of salvation ; † that its observance is the Ark of the Church's testimony ; the inner Sanctuary, the Holy of Holies of all Christian worship, the foretaste on earth of the marriage supper of the Lamb in Heaven ; that it " has ever lain in the golden morning light far out even in the Church's darkest night, not only the seal of Christ's presence and its pledge, but also the promise of the bright day of His coming" ‡—these are statements which so fully harmonize the teaching of all Christian creeds that any formal defence of them may seem to be superfluous. But the undisputed acceptance of a doctrine appears sometimes to make its impression less vivid. If theological controversy, like war with carnal weapons, has its lamentable evils, peace also has its insidious dangers. Not the least of these is the overshadowing of truth by extreme views begotten in times of strife. Men lean backward in order to strike hard at heresy, and when the contest is over they do not always regain their upright position.

* Bishop Hall.

† Westminster Confession, ch. 25.

‡ Edersheim's *Life and Times of Jesus*, vol. 2, p. 502.

In the Presbyterian Church of our day there is a widespread defection from the doctrine of our standards in regard to the Lord's Supper;* and this defection is largely due to the emphasis which is laid upon their controversial and negative statements to the neglect of their more positive teaching. This is the subject in which our candidates for the ministry are most frequently deficient. They are better prepared to tell what the Lord's Supper is not than to define what it is. The instruction our people receive consists too largely in warnings against expecting too much from the sacraments.† The human soul cannot live on negations. Faith may be defended, but cannot be nourished by protesting against the belief of others. The picket-fence may keep out wild beasts, but cannot make the garden grow. The purpose of this essay is not to revive old controversies, but to state clearly the doctrine of our standards and of the Scriptures in regard to the Design, the Necessity, and the Administration of the Lord's Supper.

We must encounter at the outset the prejudices of those who are averse from all discussion of the subject, insisting that we ought to celebrate the sacrament just as Christ has instituted it, and not to make what was designed to be a bond of union and an expression of love among His followers, an occasion for strife and division. This is plausible but shallow, and, on the part of many, more specious than honest. The peace for which they plead is conditioned either upon an utter indifference to the true meaning of the sacrament, or else upon the assumption that, for the sake of the harmony we all long for, all other Christians are bound to adopt their views. In the height of the sacramental controversy among the English Reformers, Queen Elizabeth, who was theoretically a Lutheran, wrote the famous lines which are graven on a stone in the church at Walton-on-Thames :

“ Christ was the Word and spake it ;
He took the bread and brake it ;
And what His word doth make it,
That I believe and take it.”

* “ We believe there is scarcely any subject set forth in the confessions of the Reformed Churches that is less attended to and less understood than this of the sacraments ; and that many even of those who have subscribed these confessions rest satisfied with some confused notions on baptism and the Lord's Supper, while they have scarcely even a fragment of an idea of a sacramental principle or of any general doctrine or theory on the subject.” Cunningham's *Reformers and Theology of the Reformation*, p. 239.

† The reason why believers receive so little by their attendance on this ordinance is that they expect so little. “ They expect to have their affections somewhat stirred and their faith somewhat strengthened ; but they, perhaps, rarely expect to receive Christ and to be filled with all the fulness of God. Yet Christ in offering Himself to us in this ordinance offers us all of God we are capable of receiving. For we are complete—*i.e.*, filled with God, in Him (Col. ii. 10).” Hodge's *Theology*, vol. 3, p. 624.

Calvin had said the same thing in simpler and sweeter prose ;* but both Elizabeth and Calvin had in mind a distinct apprehension of " what His word doth make it." And so has every communicant who does not esteem ignorance the mother of devotion, and think God's blessing is secured by the blind observance of outward forms. The indispensable qualification for a profitable use of the Lord's Supper is faith, not only in Christ, but faith in the sacrament as His ordinance, and in the promise of special blessings contained in the very words of its institution. Such faith necessarily involves an intelligent answer to the questions, What is the Lord's Supper, what is its design, and how does it accomplish the end for which it was instituted ?

All Christian teaching as to the design of the Lord's Supper and its corresponding efficacy may be classified under four theories—the *Roman Catholic*, the *Lutheran*, the *Zwinglian*, and the *Calvinistic*. These titles are not sharply definitive. The four theories have points of contact where they shade into each other. They have a common centre in Christ. They all agree that the sacrament is His appointment ; that its design is expressed in His own words of institution ; that its subject is Christ and His atoning sacrifice ; that its continued observance is obligatory upon all Christians ; that He is present whenever it is rightfully celebrated. And, with the exception perhaps of the Zwinglian, they all agree that the Lord's Supper is an effectual means of grace and salvation. But they differ very widely as to the interpretation of Christ's words of institution, the mode of His presence in the sacrament, the ground of its obligation or necessity, and the process and extent of its efficacy. The terms *Zwinglian* and *Calvinistic* are specially indefinite as descriptive of the theories to which they are applied.† In regard to the Lord's Supper, as well as other subjects, many things bear the venerable names of

* " I embrace without controversy the truth of God in which I may safely acquiesce. He promises His flesh for the food of my soul, His blood for the drink. I offer my soul to be fed with such aliments. In His sacred feast He bids me, under the symbols of bread and wine, to take His body and blood, to eat and to drink. I doubt not that He really offers, and that I receive. If any one ask me concerning the mode, I am not ashamed to confess the mystery to be more sublime than my intellect can grasp or than words can tell." Calvin's Institutes, B. 4, ch. 17, sec. 32.

† Dr. Charles Hodge holds that " there were three distinct types of doctrine among the Reformed—the Zwinglian, the Calvinistic, and an *intermediate form*, which ultimately became symbolical, being adopted in the authoritative standards of the church." Theology, 3. 626. In this we venture to observe that Dr. Hodge differs from most orthodox writers upon the subject. But the question is one of classification and of names, and of no vital importance. We prefer to adhere to the common nomenclature. The doctrine of the Reformed confessions is, as most authorities agree, substantially that of Calvin, and not a compromise between his views and those of Zwingle.

Zwingle and Calvin which they never taught. Still, they stood as the representatives of two sacramental theories which differ from each other quite as much as they both differ from the teaching of Luther and from the Romish doctrine.

The controversy on this whole subject did not begin with the Reformation.* The Romish doctrine, which was first authoritatively formulated by the Council of Trent in 1551, cannot be defended upon the ground of Catholicity. Even before the Reformation it was never accepted *semper, ubique, ab omnibus*. It is not taught in any of the ancient creeds. It was not affirmed by any Ecumenical Council for fifteen centuries after the birth of Christ. The decrees of the Council of Trent are the ripe fruit of heresy and apostasy from the ancient Catholic faith. Into the question as to how far the Romish doctrine is sustained by the teaching of the Fathers of the first four or five centuries we need not enter at length. It is not easy to form a concensus of the Fathers upon this or any other subject. They contradict each other in the interpretation of Scripture quite as much as modern commentators and theologians; and if their rhetorical language is to be taken literally, they constantly contradict themselves in regard to the Lord's Supper. And yet there are points of agreement, both negative and positive, in their testimony, which are fatal to the modern claims of the Church of Rome as to the catholicity of her doctrine. Dr. Schaff affirms † that there is no trace in all the ancient liturgies of the adoration of the consecrated elements, which follows transubstantiation as a logical necessity, and that in the whole patristic literature there are only four passages from which this doctrine can be inferred.

Harold Browne, Bishop of Ely, in his admirable lectures on the Thirty-nine Articles, after showing conclusively that the whole Primitive Church believed in the *real* presence of Christ in the supper,

* Gieseler sums up the history of the mediæval controversy on this subject as follows: "The ecclesiastical mode of speaking, that bread and wine in the Lord's Supper became by consecration the body and blood of Christ, may have been frequently understood of a transformation of substance by the uneducated; but among the theologians of the West this misconception could not so readily find acceptance, in consequence of the clear explanations given by Augustin. When, therefore, Paschasius Radbert (in the beginning of the ninth century) expressly taught such a transformation, he met with considerable opposition. Still, the mystical and apparently pious doctrine, which was easier of apprehension and seemed to correspond better to the sacred words, obtained its advocates, too; and it was easy to see that it only needed times of darkness such as soon followed to become general." Gieseler's Ecclesiastical History, vol. 2, p. 79. See also Freeman's Principles of Divine Service, vol. 2, p. 6; Schaff's History of Christian Church, vol. 4, 460; Schaff's Creeds of Christendom, vol. 2, 130; Neander's Church History, vol. 4, 335.

† History of Christian Church, vol. 3, 501.

says, "If there were no alternative but that the fathers must have held either a *carnal* presence or none at all, then we must perforce believe that they were transubstantiationists." But he demonstrates another alternative which has been acknowledged as possible even by eminent Romanist divines. By a long *catena* of patristic authorities he proves that the Fathers held to the spiritual presence of Christ and to the spiritual feeding of the soul upon His body and blood, and that "their writings contain abundant evidence that the doctrine of transubstantiation had not risen in their day." He concludes his argument with the following passage from Bishop Gardiner in his controversy with Cranmer: "The Catholic teaching is that the manner of Christ's presence in the sacrament is spiritual and supernatural, not corporal nor carnal, not sensible nor perceptible, but only spiritual, the how and manner whereof God knoweth." *

We are thoroughly Protestant in our rejection of transubstantiation as defined by the Council of Trent, † whether that doctrine was held by the Fathers or not. At the same time, we are not in sympathy with some of the Protestant arguments against it. Nothing is gained by our appeal to the Word of God from human authority embodied in ecclesiastical decrees, if in the contest between rival interpretations of Scripture we invoke that same authority expressed by individuals or by the masses of mankind. If we must submit to either, we prefer an organized court to a town meeting, or to the opinion of any number of individuals. Our Confession of Faith ‡ says "the doctrine which maintains a change in the substance of the bread and wine into the substance of Christ's body and blood is repugnant not to Scripture alone, but *even to reason and common-sense.*" What is the force of *even* in this statement? Does it indicate an authority above that of Scripture? If so, the statement repudiates the fundamental principle of Protestantism. What do we mean by reason and common-sense? If we mean simply our own perceptions and the inferences we draw from them, the statement is only a roundabout declaration that we as individuals reject the doctrine in question. If we mean the reason and common-sense of mankind in general, the argument is manifestly based on false premises, in view of the fact that the majority of nominal Christians, including multitudes of the ablest and purest of mankind, sincerely

* Browne on the Thirty-nine Articles, p. 678-701.

† "By the consecration of the bread and wine a conversion is made of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into His blood, which conversion is by the Holy Catholic Church suitably and properly called transubstantiation." Council of Trent, Decrees, Session 13, ch. 4.

‡ Ch. 29. 6.

believe in transubstantiation. As to the vague proverb that a thing may be above reason and common-sense without being contrary to them, our opponents are as much entitled as we, under the storm and stress of the argument, to run into this refuge; for if a thing is above the apprehension of our senses and the grasp of our reason, how can we know whether it is contrary to them or not? It may, indeed, be assumed as a truism that the Word of God does not and cannot require us to believe anything which the constitution of our nature as God has given it to us forces us to reject as false or impossible. But the constitution of our nature is but another phrase for Reason and Common-Sense, and is equally indefinite. It may also be assumed that whatever God has revealed in His Word will be found ultimately to be in perfect harmony with all He has established in His works. But it does not follow from this that our present apprehensions, whether of sense or of reason, are the true measure of that final agreement. It is of the very essence of faith in the supernatural to admit that there are "more things in heaven and in earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy." The facts discoverable by our senses and the laws which are the generalized and scientific statement of these facts must be regarded as supreme in their own sphere; but when, in the attempt to apply natural law to the spiritual world or to the explanation of revealed mysteries, we go a step beyond the Word of God, we get beyond our depth, and are surrounded with the fogs of "philosophy and vain deceit." What do we know about substance in its last analysis? * Admitting that there are only two substances in the universe, matter and mind, and that these two are essentially and forever distinct, what do we know about the relations they may sustain to each other in a sphere beyond our observation, and how far in these unknown relations they may be assimilated to each other? What do we know about the capabilities of a celestial and spiritual body? The phrase is self-contradictory and repugnant to reason and common-sense. Yet "there is a natural body and there is a *spiritual* body" (1 Cor. xv. 44). What do we know about the capabilities of a body begotten by the Holy Ghost and filled with all the fulness of God? Even before He rose from the dead and was glorified, the body of Christ was exempted from the ordinary restrictions of flesh and blood. When, after His resurrection, He stood suddenly in the midst of the disciples, "the doors being shut" (John xxi. 26), and permitted Thomas to touch the wounds in His hands and side, could they or

* "Substance is nothing but the supposed but unknown support of those qualities which we find existing, which we imagine cannot subsist without something to support them." Locke, quoted in Worcester's Dictionary.

can we tell how He came in? To insist, with some commentators, that the doors must have opened of themselves, or that a keeper was appointed to open them to friends, is a presumptuous addition to the record, which explains away its chief point. The closed door is the definite and emphasized condition under which Christ came into the upper chamber.* It was this that terrified the disciples, just as they had been alarmed before when they saw Him walking on the waters. Understanding no better than we do how a human body could pass through a closed door, they hastily concluded that He was only a spirit; but Christ, knowing their thoughts, showed them His hands and His feet. We believe this story because "it is written." And for the same reason, if the Scriptures declared that the bread and wine of the communion are changed into the flesh and blood of Christ, we would believe that also, however repugnant it might be to reason and common-sense. We, therefore, greatly prefer the statement of the Thirty-nine Articles on this subject to that of our Confession. "Transubstantiation cannot be proved by holy writ, but is repugnant to the plain meaning of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions." † These four arguments are comprehensive and conclusive. Transubstantiation cannot be proved from holy writ, because the one passage adduced to support it admits of an easier interpretation, which brings this one passage into harmony with the admitted interpretation of many similar texts; ‡ it is repugnant to the plain meaning of Scripture, because an inspired apostle, when repeating the words of the institution as he received them from the Lord, expressly declares that the sacred emblems, after consecration and at the very time when they are eaten and drunk by the communicant, are still bread and wine; § it overthrows the nature of a

* "των θυρων κεικλεισμενων, points to a miraculous appearance which did not require open doors, which took place while they were closed, how, it does not and cannot appear. In any case, however, the αφαντος εγενετο in Luke xxiv. 31 is the correlative of this immediate appearance in the closed place; and the constitution of His body, changed, brought nearer to the glorified state, although not immaterial, is the condition for such a liberation of the Risen One from the limitations of space which apply to ordinary corporeity." Meyer on John xxi. 26.

† Art. 28.

‡ Circumcision is the Lord's covenant, the Lamb is the Lord's passover, the ark of the covenant is the face of God, that rock was Christ, I am the true vine, I am the door of the sheep. All Christians understand these statements as figurative. Roman Catholics are obliged to give a figurative meaning to the words "this cup is the New Testament in my blood." There is no reason in the grammatical structure nor in the circumstances under which it was uttered to compel us to understand the words "this is my body" in its most literal sense.

§ Cardinal Wiseman, in his fifth Lecture on the Eucharist, contends that if our Lord had meant to teach that the bread represents His body He would have said, "This bread is

sacrament, even according to the Romish definition, by identifying the sign with the thing signified, thus destroying the sacramental relation between them ; * it is the occasion of many superstitions, because it leads by logical necessity to the worship of the consecrated elements † and to the pretended repetition of Christ's offering ‡ of Himself on the cross, and is, therefore, " most abominably injurious " to the one everlasting sacrifice for sins by which He has forever perfected them that are sanctified (Heb. x. 12-14).

We fully agree with Calvin that the doctrine of transubstantiation and the logical inferences from it which are embodied in the Romish Mass *profane* the sacrament. But we cannot accept the more sweeping declaration that the Lord's Supper is thereby *annihilated*,

my body ;" but He intentionally avoided calling it bread, and simply said *this*, because when He spake what He held in His hand was not bread, but His own body. The cardinal does not explain how, according to his views, the bread was transubstantiated *before* the words of consecration were fully uttered, neither does he account for the fact that Paul, when he is delivering what he had received of the Lord, expressly calls the elements *after* they are consecrated, and at the *very time* when they are received by the communicant, " this bread," and " this cup." " As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup," etc.; " whoso eateth this bread and drinketh this cup," etc. (1 Cor. xi. 26, 27).

* " The most holy Eucharist hath this, in common with the rest of the sacraments, that it is the *symbol* of a sacred thing, a visible form of an invisible grace." Decrees of Council of Trent, Session 13, ch. 3.

† " Wherefore there is no room left for doubt that all the faithful in Christ may, according to the custom ever received in the Catholic Church, render in veneration the worship in *latría*, which is due to the true God, to this most holy sacrament." Decrees of Council of Trent, Session 13, ch. 5.

‡ " In the divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass the same Christ is contained and immolated, in an unbloody manner, who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross. For the victim is one and the same, the same now offering by the ministry of priests who then offered Himself on the cross, the manner of offering alone being different. ' If any one saith that the sacrifice of the Mass is only a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, but not a propitiatory sacrifice, and that it ought not to be offered for the living and for the dead, for sins, pains, satisfactions, and other necessities, *let him be accursed.*' " Ibid., Session 22, 2, 3. There is no valid objection to calling the Lord's Supper the " Eucharistic Sacrifice"—*i.e.*, the sacrifice of thanksgiving. Whether in its literal or its historic sense, the phrase does not signify a repetition, but only " the commemoration of Christ's one offering up of Himself upon the cross once for all and a spiritual oblation of all possible praise unto God for the same." Westminster Confession, xxxix. 2. Very different, however, is the teaching of some of the Anglican High Churchmen. Take the latest exposition of their views: " The holy Eucharist is a *perpetuation* of our Lord's *passion*. . . . The holy words of our Lord (in the institution of the Supper) then *had begun* that work which was to be accomplished by the unholy hands of others. It was commenced in the upper chamber, but consummated on the cross. And that which our Lord began to do by His own words when He was upon the earth He *still continues to do* through the ministry of His servants now that He has ascended into heaven." Wilberforce's *Doctrines of the Holy Eucharist*, p. 44. We can see no difference between this and the Decree of the Council of Trent, except that it is more vaguely and feebly expressed.

because we do not dare to affirm that devout believers, of whom there are multitudes in the Romish Church, do not show forth Christ's death, and receive what He has promised to those who keep His ordinance. If we admit the validity of Romish baptism, as all the Reformers, including Calvin, did, we can see no reason why on the same grounds we should not admit the validity of the Lord's Supper, even under the corrupt and mutilated form in which it is administered by a Romish priest.

There was a remarkable agreement among all the Reformers as to the doctrines of grace. The theology of Melanchthon and of Calvin, of Knox and of Cranmer, was substantially the same. It was thoroughly Augustinian and Pauline. How unutterable is the pity that this harmony in fundamentals could not have embraced all questions of church government and worship. The bitter strife in regard to the sacraments, of which Luther and Zwingli were the recognized leaders, did more than all other causes to prevent the complete triumph of the Reformation. It is not for us to say which of them was most self-willed, or whether either is to be blamed for the evil results of the controversy. While neither can be properly called a theologian, they were both Christian heroes, having the courage of their convictions. But there is a real and profound difference in the views they adopted. For this reason all attempts to compromise their doctrines failed. The Reformed theologians labored hard to formulate a statement which both parties could adopt without a sacrifice of conscience. Calvin and Melanchthon exerted their utmost strength as peacemakers. Calvin especially, in his earnest desire to conciliate, went to the utmost verge of concession; so that while he is the most consistent of all the Reformed theologians, it is easy to quote fragments from his writings which make him appear at one time like a Lutheran, and at another like a Zwinglian. The Helvetic Confessions, the Formula of Concord, and the Consensus Tigurinus are among the fruits of this effort to compromise. But they were simply flags of truce, not standards of permanent peace. They are not to be compared in the explicitness of their teaching nor in their living authority with such symbols as the first Scotch Confession, the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and the Westminster Confession and Catechism, whose formative purpose was the positive statement of Scripture truth rather than the reconciliation of conflicting doctrines. Having failed in the attempt to compromise on the subject of the sacraments, the Lutherans and the Reformed separated permanently on this issue into two hostile camps; each retaining, however, in its own bosom some of the elements which it formally repudiated. In Germany the

outward agreement was effected on political grounds by the pressure of the civil government, rather than by ecclesiastical authority and the force of reasoning. The Reformed churches embraced and absorbed, but did not subdue, the Zwinglian element; and though there can be no question that the doctrine of the sacraments, taught in all the Reformed Confessions, whose influence has survived, is distinctively Augustinian and Calvinistic, the churches which adopt these Confessions have never been free from the prevalence of Zwinglian views. The Low and Broad Church parties in the Church of England are deeply imbued with them, and they have many advocates in the Presbyterian Church of Great Britain and America.

However the connection may be accounted for, it is a remarkable fact that the repudiation of the Reformed or Calvinistic doctrine of the sacraments is generally associated with a repudiation or a loose tenure of the doctrines of grace. The Remonstrants of Holland adopted Zwinglian views as by a theological instinct; and from the days of Laud to the present time the Anglican churchmen who have leaned backward toward Rome on the subject of the sacraments have been more bitter than Arminius himself in denouncing the Calvinism of the Thirty-nine Articles.

There is a popular impression that the Lutheran differs but little from the Romish doctrine of the sacraments. This impression is due either to ignorance or to prejudice. The Lutheran doctrine is essentially and explicitly protestant in its rejection of transubstantiation and the errors which logically flow from it. It repudiates and condemns the worship of the consecrated elements, and the idea of the repetition in any sense of Christ's one everlasting sacrifice for sin. The term *Consubstantiation*, commonly applied to it, is a nickname, which is not found in any of the Lutheran symbols, and the ideas it conveys to ordinary readers are repudiated by Lutherans as strenuously as by ourselves. No intelligent Lutheran believes that the body and blood of Christ are literally *mixed up*, as Hooker says, with the bread and wine, or that they are locally confined to the elements in the sacrament, or that they are received and consumed with the mouth in the same way with the bread and wine. The Formula of Concord and many eminent Lutheran divines indignantly reject the notion of a physical eating with the teeth of Christ's body as "a malignant and blasphemous slander of the sacramentarians." *

The Lutheran doctrine not only repudiates transubstantiation, the worship of the consecrated elements, the repetition of Christ's sacrifice, and the carnal eating of His body and blood by the mouth of

* Schaff's Creeds, vol. 1, 317.

the communicant—all of which gross conceptions are essential to the Romish doctrine—but it rejects also the Romish notion that the sacrament of itself *contains* the grace which it signifies, and that its saving effects are independent of the faith of the recipient. At this point the Lutheran doctrine is a strong protest against the errors of the Church of Rome. How could it be otherwise, since it is Luther's doctrine? The saving efficacy and the absolute necessity of a personal faith in Christ was with him the very centre and stronghold of Christianity. In the beginning of his conflict with Rome, he declared "whatever be the case with the sacrament, faith must maintain its rights and honors." From this point he never swerved. "Non sacramentum sed fides Sacramenti justificat," was one of his axioms. He also insisted that faith may receive apart from the sacrament the same thing as in the sacrament. "He never doubted, indeed, that the sacrament conveys a blessing, but he stands upon this, that the Almighty God Himself can work nothing good in a man unless he believes."* Here, then, in its application to the vital question of a sinner's justification before God, Lutheranism is forever divorced from Romanism. This alone is a sufficient answer to the flippant assertion that consubstantiation is the same thing as transubstantiation under another name.

The statements of the Augsburg Confession, † both as to the sacraments in general and the Lord's Supper in particular, are capable of an interpretation entirely consistent with the teaching of the Reformed Confessions. ‡

It is in the explanations of the Augsburg Confession, in subsequent and apologetic symbols, especially in the Formula of Concord and the Saxon Visitation Articles, that the differences between the Lutheran and Reformed doctrine distinctly appear. These differences all centre in the question, What do *unbelievers* receive in the Lord's Supper? The Lutheran doctrine maintains that they receive *the same thing* with believers, though it produces opposite effects in the two cases: to the one it is an effectual means of salvation, while to the other it is only a means of condemnation and spiritual death. According to the Reformed doctrine, unbelievers receive nothing but the outward and visible elements, while believers by faith receive

* Dorner's Hist. of Protestant Theology, vol. 1, 150.

† "Of the Lord's Supper they teach that the true body and blood of Christ are truly present under the form of bread and wine, and are communicated to those that eat in the Lord's Supper and received by them; and they disapprove those that teach otherwise. Wherefore also the opposite doctrine is rejected." Schaff's Creeds, vol. 3, 13.

‡ "The Lutheran definition of the sacraments agrees in all essential points with that of the Reformed churches." Hodge, Theology, vol. 3, 488.

and feed upon the body and blood of Christ. The Lutheran doctrine is stated with admirable clearness in the passage quoted below.*

While we greatly admire the breadth of his views and the catholicity of his spirit, we cannot agree with Dr. Candlish in passing over the difference between the Lutheran and Reformed doctrine so lightly. The doctrine that unbelievers receive the same thing with believers in the Lord's Supper cannot stand alone. It rests upon the assumption that the outward elements are so connected with the body and blood of Christ which they represent, that the reception of the one necessarily involves the reception of the other, whether the recipient have faith or not. When the Lutheran comes to explain the mode of this connection, it is not easy to understand him. When the Formula of Concord declares that the real presence of Christ's body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine is not an impanation or local inclusion, not a mixture of the two substances, nor a permanent conjunction between them, but only a sacramental union which is confined to the celebration of the Supper, we can see no difference between these statements and the Reformed doctrine of Christ's real presence. But the Lutheran symbols and theologians go further than this, and teach : (1) The local and material ubiquity of Christ's body, involving the communication of His divine attributes to His human nature ; and (2) the efficacy of the sacraments aside from the work of the Holy Spirit and the exercise of faith by the communicant. On this point the Lutheran is careful to avoid the Romish doctrine that a divine efficacy is imparted to the elements in the Supper by *priestly consecration*, and that the consecrated elements produce the *same effect* in all who oppose no obstacle to their divine virtue. According to his view, there is the same divine power imparted by God directly to all the means of grace, to the Word as well as to the sacraments. The efficacy of the sacrament is due to this inherent virtue, independent both of the influences of the Holy Spirit and the faith of the communicant. Faith,

* "The Lutherans hold all that Calvin does, and something more ; but that concerns almost entirely what unbelievers receive in the sacrament. In order to avoid the danger that seemed to them to lie in Zwingle's view, of making the blessing of the sacraments depend on our changing moods, they thought it necessary to maintain that the blessing was there, whether men believed it or not, and is *really given even to unbelievers*. Hence, since they have no faith, the consequence followed that Christ and His benefits must be given or received in or with the outward elements ; and thus the Lutheran doctrine in appearance approximates to the Roman Catholic one, though it is really very different in nature and spirit, and much more truly akin to that of Calvin. Lutherans agree with Calvinists as to what *believers* receive in and through the sacraments ; their chief if not only difference is as to what *unbelievers* receive in them, and that surely cannot be an essential part of the Christian doctrine on the subject." Dr. Candlish on the Sacraments, p. 40.

indeed, is the necessary condition for the *improvement* and *beneficial effect* of what is received ; but it has nothing to do with the reception of all that is signified by the sacrament. Because it rests upon and involves these two dogmas, the ubiquity of Christ's body and the inherent efficacy of the sacrament, the Reformed Confessions and theologians unanimously reject the doctrine that unbelievers receive the same thing as believers in the Lord's Supper.

It is not easy to ascertain what were Zwingli's views and to determine precisely what doctrine of the Lord's Supper may fairly bear his name. He was a popular leader, not a profound theologian. He contributed very little to formulate the theology of the Reformation. His fame rests largely on his personal heroism and the tragic interest which gathers about his death in battle. His peculiar views of the Lord's Supper were not embodied in any of the Reformed Confessions,* and are not recognized to-day in the standards of any Christian denomination known as evangelical, with the exception of the Reformed Episcopal Church.† How far his earlier teaching about the sacraments was simply the recoil and protest of his ardent mind against the errors of Romanism, and therefore not intended to be a full exposition of doctrine on the subject ; and how far his earlier teaching was modified by the influence of the other Reformers or by his own more mature reflections, we cannot undertake to determine. The learned witnesses on these points contradict each other, and are not always consistent with themselves. Bishop Browne affirms that Zwingli was not satisfied to reject a material presence of Christ in the supper, but he denied a presence of any sort. With him the bread and wine were empty signs. Feeding on Christ was a figure for believing on Him. The communion was but a ceremony to remind us of Him.

"He probably may have modified these statements afterward, but they thoroughly belonged to his system." ‡ Dr. Bannerman says: "There is good reason to doubt whether Zwingli ever meant to deny that the Lord's Supper is a seal as well as a sign of spiritual grace." § Dr. Cunningham defends the Reformer against "the misstatements

* The doctrine that the Lord's Supper is a sign or symbol, and nothing more, became the characteristic system of the Socinian party." Bannerman's *Church of Christ*, vol. 2, 137.

† "We feed on Christ only through His word, and only by faith and prayer ; and we feed on Him whether at our private devotions, or in our meditations, or on any occasion of public worship, or in the *memorial symbolism* of the Supper." Ref. Epis. Articles of Religion, Schaff's *Creeds*, vol. 3, 823. "By the word sacrament this church is to be understood as meaning *only a symbol or sign* divinely appointed." *Ibid.*

‡ Browne on the Thirty-nine Articles, p. 701.

§ *Church of Christ*, vol. 2, 136.

of Mosheim and Milner," which he condemns as "second-hand opinions" and "remarkable specimens of the *humanum est errare.*" And yet when he comes to give positive testimony in Zwingle's favor, he seems virtually to admit what Mosheim and Milner had affirmed; for the most he can say is that, "in his last work, *Expositio Fidei*, Zwingle gave some indications, though perhaps not very explicit, of regarding the sacraments as not only signs but also seals; as signifying and confirming something then done by God through the Spirit, as well as something done by the believer through faith." * Dr. Hodge says: "According to the doctrine of Zwingle, afterward adopted by the Remonstrants, the sacraments are not properly means of grace. . . . They were not ordained to signify, seal, and apply to believers the benefits of Christ's redemption. . . . They were to Him no more means of grace than the rainbow or the heap of stones on the banks of the Jordan. By their significancy and by their association they might suggest truth and awaken feeling, but they were not channels of divine communication." † And yet Dr. Hodge afterward says: "It should be remembered that Calvin avowed his agreement with Zwingle and Œcolampadius on *all questions relating to the sacraments.*" ‡

Of course these two statements can be reconciled only on the supposition that Zwingle before his death abandoned his earlier opinions, against which Calvin so earnestly contended; for no one can think that Calvin modified in any important particular the views so grandly set forth in his Institutes.

We need not undertake to define Zwingle's doctrine or to harmonize the testimony of the learned in regard to it. Admitting all that has been said in explanation and defence of his teaching, and recognizing much that claims his authority as exaggerated and unfair inferences from his views, it is still evident that his doctrine fell below the standard of the Reformed Confessions, and that there is historic justice in applying his name to such inadequate descriptions of the Lord's Supper as the following:

(1) That the bread and the wine of the holy communion are nothing but naked and bare signs, and that the ordinance itself is simply a commemoration of Christ's death, a badge of our Christian profession, and a pledge of mutual love among believers;

(2) That the Lord's Supper is only a sign and seal of pre-existing grace in the communicant, and not a means or instrument by which more grace is bestowed upon those who worthily partake of it;

* Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation, p. 228.

† Theology, vol. 3, 498.

‡ Ibid. p. 647.

(3) That Christ is present and operative for our salvation in the sacrament only in His divine nature and in the *apprehension* of the believing communicant ;

(4) That the benefits received by the believer at the Lord's table are nothing more than the sacrificial virtue of the Saviour's death on the cross ;

(5) That the sacramental feeding of the believing soul on Christ, the eating of His flesh and the drinking of His blood in the holy Supper, is identical with any and every exercise of faith in Him, and therefore can be done as well elsewhere as at the Lord's table.

(6) That the believing participant in this sacrament of the New Testament receives nothing more than what the believer under the Old Testament received in the Passover, and nothing more than what he may ordinarily receive without the use of the sacrament ; and therefore the necessity for the observance of the Lord's Supper is simply a necessity of precept, and not a necessity of means. In other words, that we are obliged to keep the feast of the holy communion only because Christ has commanded it, and not because we are to expect any *special* benefit from its observance.

Each of these statements will be fully discussed as we proceed. Meantime we cannot forbear to observe that we reject them not only because of their inconsistency with our doctrinal standards and with the teaching of Scripture, but because of the spirit which pervades them and the underlying assumptions on which they are based. Zwinglianism is essentially *rationalistic* in the evil sense of the word. Its chief effort is to explain away or reduce to a minimum the mystery of the Lord's Supper. It assumes that the theory which is most level to our comprehension, which brings the holy Supper nearest to a common meal, where Christians have sweet fellowship together, and makes it agree most with ordinary human experience, is for that reason nearest to the truth. We have heard Presbyterian ministers, in administering it, eulogizing the absolute simplicity not only of its symbols, but of its whole design and efficacy, comparing it to the monument which recalls the memory of some great man, as though that explained its whole meaning and effect ; and dwelling with minute particularity upon Christ's physical sufferings, as though our highest purpose in keeping the feast was to look on a pathetic picture and be moved by it. We grow weary in our reading on the subject of the reiterated assertion that this or that view is incomprehensible, unreasonable, or contrary to common-sense ; and the more so, because the same writers who use such arguments in regard to the Lord's Supper repudiate and denounce them when they are urged by others against the doctrine of

the Trinity, the sovereignty of God, the incarnation, the atonement, the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, the vital union of believers with His glorified person, and the wonder-working power of His Holy Spirit ; all of which revealed mysteries pervade and are embodied in the transcendent mystery of the Holy Communion.

Perhaps the ripest and the bitterest fruit of this rationalizing about the Lord's Supper may be found in Dean Stanley's "Christian Institutions." Adopting the idea of Renan, he makes the "Last Supper a continuation of those earlier feasts in which Christ had blessed and broken the bread and distributed the fishes on the hills of Galilee." * He can see no higher character in the communion of the first and second centuries than in the festive dinner of "a Greek club, where each brought, as to a common meal, his own contribution in a basket, and each helped himself from a common table." † He identifies the Lord's Supper with the Love Feasts of the Early Church. He admits, indeed, that it was intended by its founder to be "a glorification of the power of memory;" but in his account of what is thus to be remembered, he is careful to avoid any reference to Christ's death as the sacrifice for sin, and insists only upon His example and teaching as inculcating human charity. In proportion as the observance of this ordinance enables us "to move in unison" with the parables of the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, and the Good Shepherd; with the Beatitudes on the Galilean mountains, the resignation in Gethsemane, and the courage on Calvary, he affirms that "it is a true partaking of what the gospels intended by the body of Christ." ‡ He denies that the Lord's Supper is necessary for these ends, and insists that all who move in unison with these moral precepts and examples, "whether they be Christian in name or not, whether they have or have not partaken of the sacrament, have thus received Christ, because they have received that which was the essence of Christ, His spirit of mercy and toleration." §

There is nothing new in these sentiments. They are Socinianism in full bloom. But the strange thing is that a clergyman of high position in the Church of England, one accustomed to the public use of her solemn Liturgies, should advocate such opinions; that he should claim for them the authority of "the clear-headed and intrepid Zwingle," ¶ and attempt to reconcile them with the Articles and Formularies of the Episcopal Church, by the vague assertion that "since the days of Elizabeth a strong Zwinglian atmosphere has per-

* Christian Institutions, p. 41.

§ Ibid., p. 42.

† Ibid., p. 46.

¶ Ibid., p. 106.

‡ Ibid., p. 121.

vaded the original theology of the Church of England, and been its prevailing hue." *

The Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper is called *Calvinistic*, not because Calvin invented it, but because at the time of the Reformation he was its ablest and most influential expounder. He appealed from the teaching of Rome on the one hand, and from the doctrine of Zwingle on the other, not only to the Scriptures, but to the commentaries of the Fathers. In the chapter of the Institutes which treats of the Communion—one of the noblest pieces of writing in the records of the Reformation—he proves by quotations, especially from Augustine, that the Reformed doctrine is catholic and apostolic. He stands for the historic faith of the Church against both the inventions of Rome and the vagaries of those who broke away to an opposite extreme. There is no ground for doubting that the views he defended passed substantially into all the authoritative Confessions of the Reformation, and must be regarded as the orthodox doctrine of the Reformed.† That it is the doctrine of the Thirty-nine Articles and of the Westminster Confession, and that the standards of the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches are in perfect accord upon the whole subject of the sacraments, no candid student will deny.‡ If there is any difference, it is in the fact the latter teaches what are called "sacramentarian" § views rather more explicitly and in stronger terms than the former.

The Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper as taught in the Thirty-nine Articles and in the Westminster Confession is intimately connected with the two great mysteries of the incarnation and the personal union of believers with Christ. The holy communion has

* Christian Institutions, p. 109.

† Schaff's Creeds of Christendom, I. 376.

‡ "The teaching of the Confession on the Lord's Supper is that of Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, Hooker, Usher, and many others. . . . This teaching is as far removed from the bare remembrance theory, attributed to the early Swiss Reformers, as from the consubstantiation of Luther and the local or supra-local presence contended for by the Roman Catholics and Anglo-Catholics." Mitchell's Lectures on Westminster Assembly.

"The doctrine of the real spiritual presence is the doctrine of the English Church, and was the doctrine of Calvin and of many foreign Reformers." Browne on Thirty-nine Articles, p. 678.

"The peculiar views of Luther on the real presence and the ubiquity of Christ's body found no congenial soil in England. Cranmer abandoned them, and adopted, together with Ridley, the Calvinistic doctrine of a virtual presence and communication of Christ's body." Schaff's Creeds, I. 601.

§ "The name *Sacramentarian* was applied by Luther to Zwingle and his followers, to convey the idea that they explained away and reduced to nothing the value of the sacraments; while Zwingle, throwing back the nickname, protested that it might be applied with more propriety to those who made great mysteries of the sacraments." Cunningham's Reformers and Theology of the Reformation, p. 236.

its profound roots in the one mystery and its precious fruits in the other. Christ did not say, "This do in remembrance of *My death*." To make it simply a memorial of His sufferings on the cross is to belittle the ordinance and presumptuously to restrict the meaning of the words of institution. He said, "Do this in remembrance of *Me*." Christ Himself, and not any one part of His person or of His history, is the subject and the substance of the sacrament. His death as the sacrificial victim for sin, though it is the central point, is but a small part of the history of His relation to His redeemed people, and derives its importance and its efficacy from what precedes and follows it. The cross of Jesus would be nothing to us, if He were not the incarnate Son and Word of God, and if that cross were not inseparably connected with His resurrection and exaltation to Glory. The sacrament is founded upon and leads to His one indivisible person, which is the reservoir and the channel of all divine fulness for our salvation. He is not and cannot be divided. His human nature never had and never can have any existence separate from His Deity. His human soul and body were separated for three days when the one descended to Hades and the other lay in the tomb; but neither was parted for a moment from His divine nature. Moreover, since the incarnation Christ's divine nature does not exert any saving power or bestow any gracious gift upon men, except in and through His human nature. The efficacious manifestation of the Godhead in and through the humanity of Christ is as permanent as the incarnation. The Son of God was from the beginning the living Word of the Father, the fountain and origin of life; and now since the Word became flesh, it is the Son of Man who has power on earth to forgive sins, and is exalted a prince and Saviour to give repentance and remission. By its union with His divine nature the humanity of Christ is infinitely exalted. It was so even on earth. The touch of His finger was life-giving—there was virtue in the hem of His garment. The light of God which transfigured Him on the mount came from within. It follows from this that wherever Christ is, He is there in His human as well as in His divine nature. Not only in heaven, but in the midst of two or three met together in His name, He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, because He was tempted in all points as we are. We cannot bring our minds to deny all distinctive meaning to the promises of His personal presence, by making them synonymous with the promised presence of the Holy Spirit. When He says, "*I will come to you*," "*I am with you always*," "*there am I in the midst of them*," He certainly does not mean the same thing as when He says, "*I will send the Comforter*;" and wherever He is, there is His theanthropic person. His

human nature is virtually omnipresent, because it is forever united to the divine.

The incarnation of the Son of God accomplishes its chief purpose in the personal union of the believer with Him. This union is a great mystery (Eph. vi. 32). But its mystery is no hindrance to our faith in the reality nor to our experimental knowledge of its blessedness. The Scriptures in which it is asserted are numerous, varied, and explicit. The sixth chapter of John, the farewell address of Christ, and the intercessory prayer are full of it. We are one with Him, even as He is one with the Father, as the branch is one with the vine, as the husband is one with the wife, as the members are one with the body. The union is not only legal, but vital. He dwells in us, and we in Him, and "when He who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory." It is trifling to set aside these Scripture statements as mere figures of speech. The figures fall short of the profound reality which they illustrate. It is no less trifling to resolve the mystery of this personal union with Christ into the indwelling of His spirit in the souls of believers. It is accomplished *by* the indwelling of the spirit, and therefore *additional* to it and not identical with it. Our bodies as well as our souls are united to Christ—our whole nature to His one person. His saving work for us and in us will reach its consummation in the "redemption of our body." * When the Christian dies he "sleeps in Jesus." "The souls of believers at death, being made perfect in holiness, pass immediately into glory, and their bodies, *being still united to Christ*, do rest in the grave till the resurrection." †

Now, both the everlasting unity of Christ's person and our personal union with Him are signified, exhibited, and brought home to our experience in the Lord's Supper. This is the chief end for which it was instituted. "It was designed to signify and effect our communion with Christ in His person, in His offices, and in their precious fruits." ‡

It is only by being made partakers of Christ Himself that we can partake of His benefits; and therefore the *res sacramenti*, the thing signified, sealed, and applied in the Holy Supper, is not merely the sacrificial virtue of His death nor the benefits He procures for us by His sacrifice and intercession, but the personal Christ, once crucified, now risen and glorified forever. He plainly asserts the necessity of this personal union with Himself in words § which, if they are not intended to describe the Lord's Supper, are certainly

* Rom. viii. 23.

† A. A. Hodge's Commentary on the Confession, p. 484.

§ John vi. 53-57.

‡ Shorter Catechism.

applicable to it ; for Paul makes the application (in 1 Cor. x. 16) when he declares that the bread we break and the cup of blessing we bless is the communion (the *κοινωνία*, the actual 'participation') of the body and blood of Christ—*i.e.*, of His divine yet human person. " This I say, then, that in the mystery of the supper, by the symbols of bread and wine, Christ, His body and blood, are truly exhibited to us ; *first*, that we might become one body with Him, and, *secondly*, that, being made partakers of His substance, we might feel the results of this fact in the participation of all His blessings." * In his commentary on the eleventh chapter of First Corinthians, Calvin asserts the same great truth still more strongly. †

In the light of the incarnation and the personal union of believers with Christ we may undertake to answer certain questions which go to the root of the whole doctrine as to the design and efficacy of the Lord's Supper.

The *first* question relates to the real presence of Christ in the sacrament. In common language the idea of *presence* is usually restricted to local nearness and to discernment by the bodily senses. Yet even in common language a much wider conception of its meaning is often indicated. We say of another that he is present with us when we know that he is sitting behind a screen at the farther end of the same room, or in another room of the same house. Two hearers are present in the same audience without recognizing each other. We speak of the presence of the sun when it shines on us. A blind man would use the same language. Presence, therefore, even in common language, does not depend upon local nearness nor upon sense perception. One person is present with another wherever he reveals himself and makes his influence felt by the other ; and even where such revelation is made and such influence exerted, though they are accepted and realized by some and not by others of the same company. On a bright day at a funeral the sun is as really present with the corpse as with the living mourners.

All Christians who believe in the Lord's Supper at all believe also that Christ is present in it. The whole contention is about the mode of that presence. Many who admit its reality virtually deny it in their attempts to explain it—those, for example, who make it a mere conception in the mind of believers. Our Confession and

* Calvin's Institutes, vol. 2, p. 564.

† " Christ is obtained not only when we believe that He was made an offering for us, but when He dwells in us, when He is one with us, when we are members of His flesh (Eph. vi. 30), when, in fine, we are *incorporated* with Him, so to speak, into one life and substance. For He does not simply present to us the *benefits* of His death and resurrection, but the very body in which He suffered and rose again." Calvin on 1 Cor. xi. 24-26.

Catechisms assert that "Christ's body and blood are present *to* the faith of the receiver no less truly than the elements themselves are *to* their outward senses." Their bodily senses do not produce but only perceive the presence of the elements. They are present to a blind man, though he does not see them. And so Faith perceives, but does not create nor secure, the presence of Christ's body and blood. It is as real to those who do not discern the Lord's body as to those who do.* While we fully agree, with Hooker, that they who hold that Christ body and blood are "externally seated in the very consecrated elements themselves" are driven either to incorporate Him with the sacramental elements or to transubstantiate their substance into His, we cannot accept the inference that "the real presence of Christ's most blessed body and blood is not to be sought for in the sacrament, but in the worthy receiver of the sacrament." † Surely there is a broad and tenable ground between seating Christ externally in the elements and confining Him to the thoughts and experiences of the communicants. The two extremes meet, and are equally objectionable in this point, that they limit and localize the Saviour's presence. ‡ No less objectionable is the theory which identifies Christ's presence in the sacrament with the omnipresence of the divine nature. This, like the preceding notion, belongs to Zwinglianism in its lowest form, and cannot be reconciled to the Scripture doctrine of the person of Christ. The Romish Church is consistent with Scripture and with the teaching of all the Reformed Confessions, when she insists that Christ's presence in the sacrament includes His human as well as His divine nature, His body and blood as well as His deity. But when she insists that this personal and real presence involves the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into His deity and humanity, we deny and protest against the assumption. We reject also the theory of a local presence in, with, or under the sacred symbols. § Presence, as applied in Scripture and in our theology to the theanthropic person of Christ, has nothing to do with locality or limitation of any kind. § It refers

* "It seems impossible, with any show of reason, to assert that the *discernment* spoken of in 1 Cor. xi. 27-29 is the mere power of interpreting the signs as representatives of Christ's death, or that the guilt incurred is nothing more than the danger of abusing certain outward symbols. These expressions evidently point to a spiritual and awful sin, not of misusing and profaning outward symbols, but of misusing and profaning *Christ actually present in them.*" Bannerman on the Church of Christ, vol. 2, 138.

† Ecc. Polity, vol. 2, 84.

‡ "The body of Christ in this holy sacrament is a thing external to ourselves and in nowise dependent upon our perception, knowledge, or belief." Scudamore's *Notitia Eucharistien*, p. 858.

§ "That participation in the body of Christ which I affirm does not require a local

only to influence and manifestation. His whole human nature, body and soul, being forever united to His divine nature, is virtually omnipresent—that is to say, its influence can be exerted and manifested anywhere according to His divine will. The ultimate source of such influence and manifestation, of course, is in His divine nature; but they are exerted and put forth in and through His human nature.

This use of the word presence is perfectly consistent, as already shown, with the popular use of language. It is consistent also with Christ's own promises—"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world. Where two or three are met in My name, there am I in the midst of them." To resolve such promises into the presence of the Holy Spirit is to belittle and utterly to confuse them. Christ does not make a difference in His promises without a corresponding difference in the things to which they refer. His promised presence, though invisible and intangible, and in that sense spiritual, is nevertheless personal, real, and objective—that is, outside and independent of our apprehensions of it. This spiritual but real presence of Christ is specially promised and covenanted to us in the Lord's Supper. The consecrated bread and wine are not merely the symbols of His body and blood, but the divine seals of the covenant whereby Christ and all His benefits are not only represented but applied to us; and therefore their use is the *κοινωνία*, the actual participation of Christ's body and blood by every believing communicant. "If they are 'seals' of the covenant they must, of course, as a legal form of investiture, actually convey the grace represented to those to whom it belongs; as a deed conveys an estate, or the key, handed over in the presence of witnesses, the possession of a house from the owner to the renter. Our confession is explicit and emphatic on this subject."* "It is the authoritative appointment of Christ that these signs, rightly used, shall truly represent and convey the grace they signify."† The grace signified is the fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in Christ (Col. ii. 9). His body and blood are specially mentioned and emphasized because it is through His humanity that the divine nature is brought into union with us and His divine power made efficacious for our salvation, and also because it is in regard to His coming in the flesh, His sacrificial

presence, nor the descent of Christ, nor infinite extension, nor anything of that nature. His communicating Himself to us is effected through the secret virtue of the Holy Spirit, which cannot merely bring together, but join in one things which are separated by distance of place. In short, that He may be present with us He does not change His place, but communicates to us from heaven the virtue of His flesh as though it were present." Calvin's Commentary on 1 Cor. xi. 24-26.

* Dr. A. A. Hodge, Commentary on Westminster Confession, p. 451.

† Ibid., p. 448.

death, and His glorification as our representative that our faith most needs to be confirmed.

This will be more apparent in our answer to the *second* question, What does the believer receive in the Lord's Supper? The unbeliever receives nothing but bread and wine. Here the Reformed doctrine differs radically from both the Romish and the Lutheran.* The unbelieving communicant is guilty of or concerning the body and blood of the Lord not because he eats and drinks them *without faith*, but because, having no true faith, he does *not* eat and drink them at all.† They are present and offered to him as truly as to the believer, but he neither discerns nor receives them. He is guilty not because he is personally unworthy, as all communicants are, but because he eats and drinks *unworthily*, in a way not suitable to the nature and design of the sacrament. The thing there signified Christ truly exhibits and offers to all who sit down at that spiritual feast.‡ But just as the rain falling on the hard rock runs away because it cannot penetrate, so the unbelieving repel the grace of God and prevent it from reaching them. "They bring death on themselves not by *receiving* Christ unworthily, but by *rejecting* Him." §

But the believing communicant receives and appropriates that which the unbeliever ignores and rejects. The bread and wine are called Christ's body and blood because our Lord, by holding forth these symbols, gives us at the same time that of which He has chosen them to be the signs and the seals; for Christ is not a deceiver, to mock us with empty representations. The reality is conjoined with the sign; or, in other words, we do not less truly become participants in Christ's body and blood in respect of their spiritual efficacy than we partake of the bread and wine.

It should be remembered, however, that the body and blood of Christ cannot be separated from Christ Himself, and that no saving benefit can be received from Him unless we are vitally united to His person. His body and blood represent His whole person and offices, His merits, the sacrificial virtue of His death, and all His benefits,

* "Although ignorant and wicked men receive the outward elements in this sacrament, yet they receive not the thing signified thereby." Conf. of Faith, 29. 7.

† "The wicked and such as be void of lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth (as Augustin saith) the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, yet in nowise are they partakers of Christ, but rather to their condemnation do eat and drink the *sign* or *sacrament* of so great a thing." Thirty-nine Articles, art. 29.

‡ Christ's body and blood be offered by God unto all, yet they are received by such only as have the hand of faith to lay hold on Christ; and these with the bread and wine spiritually receive Christ, with all His saving graces. The wicked receive only the outward elements." Usher's Body of Divinity, p. 399.

§ Calvin, Institutes, vol. 2, 590.

both of grace and of glory. This is evident from His own words in John vi. 51-57; and this mode of speaking is adopted especially with reference to the Lord's Supper, because we cannot be made partakers of His divine nature except in and through His humanity. "For the flesh of Christ is the conduit that conveys the graces of the Godhead and the graces of the Spirit of Christ into our souls, which otherwise than by His body we could not receive."* It is plainly the doctrine of our standards that the believing communicant receives not only the sacrificial virtue of Christ's death, but Christ Himself in all the fulness of His divine and human nature. "Sacraments are holy signs and seals to represent Christ *and* His benefits, and to confirm our interest in *Him*." † "Wherein Christ and the benefits of the New Covenant are represented sealed and applied to believers." ‡ In the Lord's Supper believers "are made partakers of His body and blood with all His benefits," § "feed upon His body and blood, and have their union and communion with Him confirmed," || "receive and apply unto themselves Christ crucified and all the benefits of His death." ¶ Our singing is often more orthodox than our preaching. Many a Zwinglian sacramental address has been contradicted if not corrected by such a hymn as this :

" Together with these symbols, Lord,
Thy *blessed self* impart ;
And let Thy *holy flesh and blood*
Feed the believing heart."

This leads us to a *third* question : as to the mode of feeding on Christ, eating His flesh and drinking His blood in the holy Supper. The great battle-ground of all sacramental discussions on this point is the discourse of Christ in the sixth chapter of John's Gospel. We cannot agree with those who deny all distinctive and transcendent meaning to that wonderful discourse, and make it only a highly figurative repetition of what Christ had already taught about the necessity of our believing in Him. The saying, "It is the spirit that quickeneth ; the flesh profiteth nothing : the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life,"** so often dogmatically quoted to sustain this view, seems to us to point in the opposite direction, and to indicate that the theme of the discourse is not so much faith in Christ, which He had frequently described in far simpler words, but that vital union with Himself and that personal participation through His flesh in His eternal life, of which faith is only the instrumental cause. This is a mystery unspeakably greater than our exercise of

* Isaac Ambrose's Looking to Jesus, p. 298. † Conf. 27. 1. ‡ Short. Cat., 92.
§ Short Cat., 96. || Larger Cat., 168. ¶ Larger Cat., 170. ** Verse 63.

faith. It is co ordinate with the incarnation itself. Whether the discourse refers directly and prophetically to the Lord's Supper or not, it certainly treats of the subject which is the inmost core of the holy sacrament—namely, the life which is hid with Christ in God and nourished by feeding on Christ, which He declares to be the same thing as eating His flesh and drinking His blood.*

How the soul feeds on Christ's body and blood is an open question among the Reformed. It is agreed on all sides that the eating or feeding is by faith; but whether faith and eating are the same thing is a disputed point. Do we feed on Christ, eat His flesh and drink His blood every time and wherever we believe on Him, or is this language applicable only to a *peculiar exercise of faith* in connection with the Lord's Supper? The Zurich and Helvetic Confessions maintain that "eating is believing, and believing is eating," † and that "this eating takes place as often and whenever a man believes in Christ." This is the Zwinglian doctrine. Calvin admits that "eating is *by* faith, and that no other eating can be imagined. But," he adds, "there is this difference between their mode of speaking and mine: according to them to eat is merely to believe, while I maintain that the flesh of Christ is eaten *by believing*, that eating is the *effect and fruit of faith*. This difference is little in words, but not in reality."

We fully agree with Calvin on this point. The distinction on which he insists is very important, as indicating a correct use of language. To say that because we eat *by* faith, therefore faith *is* eating, is about as logical as to maintain that whatever we do *by* our hand *is* our hand. Christ dwells in our hearts by faith; is this dwelling of Christ in us nothing more than our own faith? Doubtless faith itself is always and everywhere essentially the same. But it does many and various things. We have a catalogue of its heroes

* John vi. 33-51, 56. "The mystery of our union with Christ, which in this discourse is expressed in words, is precisely the same which Jesus desired to express by an act in the holy Supper." Godet on John vi. "It affords a key to interpret the sacramental phraseology applied to the supper." Bannerman on Church of Christ, 2, 139. "Jesus purposely framed His words so skilfully that they would apply in their strict literal sense to the enjoyment of Himself, and yet that afterward the same words should by consequence be appropriate to express the most august mystery of the holy Supper when that should be instituted." Bengel, Commentary on John vi.

"We are not at liberty to say that the discussion in John vi. was intended to be a commentary on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. But the ordinance, for all that is blessed and real in its observance, refers us to that sermon. The essential point in the sermon which we transfer to the Eucharist is that in it we are called in a true though spiritual sense to eat and drink the body and blood of the Son of God." Marshall Lang on the Last Supper of our Lord, p. 92.

† Institutes, 2. 563.

and a record of its achievements in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. Does every Christian, as often as he believes, do all that was achieved by these ancient worthies? But Calvin's distinction between faith and the results achieved by it is still more important in its special application to the Lord's Supper. The doctrine that "faith is eating and eating is faith" is the very essence of the Zwinglian theory. If "this eating takes place as often and whenever a man believes in Christ," then it follows necessarily that the Lord's Supper is simply a sign and remembrancer to assist our faith. A vine, or a door, or a flower of the field, when they remind us of the Saviour and quicken our faith in Him, are just as truly the communion of His body and blood as the bread we break and the cup of blessing we bless in the holy Supper. According to this theory logically carried out, we have not seven, but seventy times seven sacraments, and the Lord's Supper is no more sacred and has no more efficacy as a means of grace than a thousand natural objects around us. We shrink back from such conclusions, and therefore reject the premises on which they rest. We believe there is a peculiar exercise of faith, suitable to the occasion and to the special manifestations of Christ in the Holy Sacrament, by which the believing soul feeds on Him. The teaching of the Zurich and Helvetic Confessions on this subject is peculiar to themselves. It is not found in any other of the Reformed Confessions. The Westminster Standards give no sanction to it. The Earlier Scotch Confession and Catechism, which were superseded by those of the Westminster Assembly, are very explicit in repudiating the whole Zwinglian theory, including the point we are now considering. The views of the Westminster divines on all questions relating to the sacraments were thoroughly Calvinistic.

John Owen, the prince of all the Puritan theologians, strongly insists that both the manifestation of Christ and our participation of Him in the Lord's Supper "are expressed in such manner as to demonstrate them to be peculiar—such as are not to be obtained in any other way." "There is in it an eating and drinking of the body and blood of Christ, with a spiritual incorporation thence ensuing, which are peculiar to this ordinance. Herein is a *peculiar exercise of faith* and a peculiar participation of Christ." *

The necessity and obligation for observing the Lord's Supper, the mode of its administration, and the elements to be used in it, especially the question concerning communion wine, are reserved for discussion in a second article.

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* Owen's Works, vol. 8, 560.