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THE RECOVERY OF A LOST SACRAMENT AND THE LOSS OF A GREAT OPPORTUNITY.

BY THE RT. REV. E. A. KNOX, D.D.

THOUGH Rome taught the doctrine of Seven Sacraments, she had, at the time of the Reformation, practically only six, so far as the laity were concerned. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper had been transformed into the Sacrifice of the Mass. Masses were said daily, but only once in the year, as a general rule, did the layman receive the Holy Communion, and then only in one kind. That which he received was not a Sacrament, if by a Sacrament we understand an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. He was taught that he received not the sign, but the thing signified. It might appear to be bread, but it was not bread. His eyes, touch, and taste were all deceived by appearances. The true nature of that which he received was the body and blood of Christ, the very same body that was sacrificed upon the Cross, and the effect of receiving it was the strengthening of spiritual life by union with Christ. On the other hand, unworthy reception was full of spiritual danger, and even worthy communicants received in it forgiveness of only venial sins. The whole matter of pardon of sin really lay outside the receiving of the Sacrament, and belonged to the realm of Confession, Absolution, Penance, Purgatory and Indulgence. Only in a very modified sense could the Communicant believe that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was communion with Christ for the pardon of sin.

THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

Divergence of the Reformers' Attacks.

It was to be expected that an attack upon the central act of the worship of the Church, and upon the outstanding element in the power of her priesthood, should be approached from more than one point of view, and should not be confined always within the same limits. The Reformers were not, at all events at first, a school of doctrinaires working out an abstract theological system. While three great personalities, those of Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin, occupy the foreground, each of them begins his anti-Roman controversy from a different point of view, is interested in the development of that view to its legitimate consequences, is misunderstood by his opponents, and often by his own followers. Differences of view arise, some of which prove to be irreconcilable. As contrasted with the rigid and inflexible definitions of the Council of Trent, the "variations" of Protestant doctrine have an air of weakness. They are repellent to the mind, if it can be called a mind, which demands: "Tell me exactly what I am to believe, and tell it me

with absolute assurance." To those, however who are content to accept the responsibility laid upon the Church of Christ of seeking ever for fuller knowledge of Him Who is the Truth, the doubts, difficulties, and questionings of the Reformed Churches will not argue any failure of the Divine Promise, but will be accepted as part of our probation, as part of the demand for faith, the faith which believes though it cannot see, and is content to wait for absolute certainty, until we see Him Who is invisible, and know even as we are known.

LUTHERAN ATTACK.

So far as the Sacrifice of the Mass is concerned, there is absolute unanimity of opposition to it in the three great schools of the Reformation. Such difference as there is appears not in any indulgence towards it, but in the grounds of repudiation. Luther regards it as the most "iniquitous" of all the three forms of the "Babylonish captivity," as being the performance of a supposedly meritorious work, which demands the attention and favour of God, and procures that favour in virtue of the valid ordination and the right intention of the Priest who offers it. It is thus contrary to the whole purpose of Christ, Who intended by the Lord's Supper not a sacrifice but a Testament and bequest of that which His Sacrifice of Himself effected: "Behold, condemned sinner, out of pure grace, I promise thee, before thou hast merited anything, the forgiveness of all thy sins and eternal life. In order that thou mayest be sure of this, I will surrender My body and My blood, by which means, I will, by death, confirm My promises. I will leave behind Me both My body and My blood as a sign and memorial to thee of this My promise. As oft as ye do this, remember Me, extol My love." Luther points out that even Christ at the Institution of the Lord's Supper did not offer Himself as a Sacrifice to God, but sitting at the Table, He announced to His disciples the Testament, and offered to them the sign. The more closely our celebrations conform to the original Institution, the more Christian they are. The root objection, however, from Luther's point of view to the Sacrifice of the Mass is that it promises Justification by works, and those the works not of the penitent but of the Priest.

The faith for which it calls is not trust in the promises of God, but trust in the efficacy of a sacrifice offered by man. Luther does not question the power of God to unite the body and blood of The Crucified with the consecrated elements. In a modified form he accepts the miracle by which the body and blood of Christ are received by the bodily organs of the communicant: Only he insists that the Sacrament must be received, received in both kinds, received with faith in the promises of God. For it is this faith alone that justifies. "The Mass is a promise; and, as such, it applies to none but the believer, and to him alone by virtue of his Faith" (*De Captivitate Babylonica*). Although Luther allowed the elevation of the bread and wine, and even adoration, in his "Order of the Mass" after the Sermon, we read, "The Offertory is to be

disused"—meaning by Offertory the offering of the Host—"All that abomination to which all that has gone before in the Mass has had to give way—the Offertory as it is called. In the middle of which the words of life and salvation are placed like the ark of the Lord in a temple of idols, side by side with Dagon."

It has been necessary to present Luther's condemnation of the Sacrifice of the Mass at some length that readers may realize the difficulty which he found in coming even into Conference with the Zwinglians. The position which was held in his experience by Faith in the Word of God, made him shrink from any appearance of questioning the literal truth of the Words of Institution, or of suggesting that Christ offered to us in the Eucharist anything less than the Substance of His body and blood. Nor could he free himself from the material associations of that most unhappy word, Substance.

ZWINGLIAN ATTACK.

The main difference between Luther's and Zwingli's attack on the Mass is that while Luther's is anti-judaistic, Zwingli's is anti-pagan. Luther finds in it the doctrine of salvation by works. Zwingli, the friend, for a time, and follower of Erasmus, steeped in classical literature, applies to theology the classical principle of examining sources, and, finding no trace of such Sacrifice in the New Testament, condemns it as borrowed from Paganism. It is after a series of lectures on the Acts of the Apostles that his attack becomes most vigorous. The New Testament contains no hint that our Lord intended to establish a new sacrifice or order of sacrificing Priests. Still less does it suggest that He conferred on anyone the power of making God. What Zwingli finds there is the memorial of the absent Lord. But this memorial is also a Covenant. A fierce conflict with Anabaptist teachers whose teaching was severely individualistic, evokes from Zwingli a defence of the two Sacraments as bonds of union between the Church and her Lord, and between all the members of his body. These are the two outstanding features of Zwingli's teaching, and it would not be impossible to quote from his works sentences in support of the idea that in them was contained the whole of his belief, the teaching, in fact, which ordinarily passes by the name of Zwinglianism. Yet it would be more true to say of his doctrine as a whole that, in the popular sense, Zwingli was no Zwinglian.

ZWINGLI'S FIRST PERIOD.

To obtain a correct idea of his position as a whole we must discriminate between three periods in his life, the period of his conflict with Luther, and the periods which preceded and followed that conflict. In the first period attention must be paid to his conception of faith. With Zwingli faith was neither acceptance of doctrine as with the Romans, nor acceptance of pardon as with Luther, but it was the surrender of the entire self to God. Zwingli has not Luther's stages of (1) justification, (2) works, the fruit of

justification, (3) sanctification, (4) mystical union with Christ. His faith embraces all these elements. By faith the believer possesses God. In the Lord's Supper, according to Zwingli, the Atonement, once for all offered to God by Christ, is accepted by the believer, through the life of Christ which is in him by faith, and the soul is nourished and strengthened by the spiritual food of which it is there a partaker.

Perhaps the best evidence of Zwingli's teaching in this period is contained in a prayer in his Order of the Mass (1523) :

" Do Thou feed our hungering souls with heavenly food. Our souls are spiritual, made in Thine image ; therefore they can be refreshed with spiritual food. That food can be administered by Thy word alone. In vain would we eat the flesh of Thy Son, did we not firmly believe that Thy Son had atoned for our sins. Do Thou, therefore, if our faith falters, increase our faith. Grant that, as Thy Son restored to us Thy grace through the shame and bitterness of the Cross, we also, with Him as guide, may conquer the hardships and afflictions of the world, while we eat and drink His body and His blood. Grant that we may approach Thy Son's most Holy feast, of which He is the Host and also the Food. Grant, O most merciful Father, through Thy Son Jesus Christ, that we may express Him in our deeds, so that the image destroyed in Adam may be restored in His likeness."

In the same Canon of the Mass, the form of administration is specially noteworthy. It is often said that in our own service the first half of the words of administration is Lutheran, and the second Zwinglian. But when we turn to Zwingli's own service we find that the words of administration are : " The body (the blood) of our Lord Jesus Christ avail thee for eternal life." Though Zwingli taught that the Mass is a commemoration of a Sacrifice, he also taught that it was a participation of the body and blood of Christ.

ZWINGLI'S SECOND PERIOD.

Conflict with Luther.

The controversy between Luther and Zwingli during the years 1525 to 1529 was between two personalities of unequal stature. Although Luther betrayed discourtesy, petulance, and obstinacy, he remained the giant personality through whom a great Reformation was wrought—a work to which Zwingli was unequal. The details of the controversy need not be set forth here. To most of our readers they would probably be uninteresting and unedifying. It was found that while the dispute seemed to start from the meaning of the word " is " (" This *is* My body "), whether " is " means " is one with," or means " signifies," and while both sides professed to argue entirely from the Scriptural record, they were soon involved in mysterious speculations as to the Person of our Blessed Lord, His Divinity and Humanity, and His Session at the Right Hand of God. Metaphysical subtleties, on which Scripture is silent, came into the foreground, and especially the profound mystery of the nature of the Body of the Glorified Christ. He is at the Right Hand of the Father—but God is not in one place but everywhere. Does it then follow that the Body of Christ is everywhere ? If that

is so, can a body that is everywhere be a true human body? and can that body be orally received and consumed? and if so, can it be thus consumed by unbelievers? From inquiries like these the devout, but non-theological layman turns aside, not without some sense of pain. He prefers to say with Richard Hooker: "Why should any cogitation possess the mind of a faithful communicant but this, 'O my God, Thou art true; O my soul, thou art happy.'"

After painful controversy in writing, Luther and Zwingli were brought face to face at Marburg in 1529 by their respective patrons, the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse. All the world is familiar with the figure of Luther sitting stubbornly in front of the words, "Hoc est Corpus Meum," which he had chalked on the table before him. He looked on Zwingli as a heretic and fanatic to whom he would make no concession. "This is My body," urged Luther. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life," replied Zwingli's friend Œcolumpadius. "Your text forbids gross, oral manducation, not sublime and spiritual manducation, though it be with the mouth," answered Luther. "Where does Scripture distinguish between different kinds of manducation?" was Œcolumpadius's rejoinder. So the debate went on. We must hasten to the result. Agreement and difference were summed up as follows:

Agreement: (1) Communion must be in both kinds. (2) The Mass is not a means whereby one obtains pardon for another. (3) The Sacrament is the Sacrament of the very body and blood of Christ. (4) Spiritual manducation is required of every true Christian. (5) The Sacrament is ordained of God that weak consciences may be stirred to faith and charity.

Difference: Whether the real body and blood of Christ are corporeally present in the bread and wine.

Both parties were to cherish Christian charity to each other so far as the conscience of each permits, and to suspend controversy.

The result of the Conference was decidedly satisfactory on the surface. For the point of difference was simply as to the mode of Christ's presence, and it would not appear difficult to go one step farther and to agree that Christ was *really* present. A presence may be real which is not corporeal. Luther wrote to his wife: "We agreed on almost all points but that our opponents stand for bread only in the Lord's Supper, while admitting a spiritual Presence therein."

But the real difference lay far deeper down than that—deeper than the opponents, in their effort to reach agreement, were aware. Luther answered the question, "What is it that wins salvation for man?" by saying, "Not works but faith"; Zwingli and Calvin more emphatically after him, replied, "It is the fore-ordaining and determining will of God."

The Eucharistic controversy was, in fact, really superficial. Behind it lay the problem of the soul's union with God.

ZWINGLI'S THIRD PERIOD.

After the Marburg Conference Zwingli fell increasingly under the influence of Bucer, and returned to his original teaching, of which the last exemplar was his letter to Francis I in 1531, which Zwingli wrote shortly before his death on the field of Kapel. In that letter he says :

" We believe that Christ is truly present in the Lord's Supper ; yea, we believe that there is no communion without such Presence. . . . But that His body is literally eaten is far from truth : because He Himself says, ' I am no more in the world,' and, ' The flesh profiteth nothing.' It is contrary to faith (I mean the holy and true faith), because faith embraces love, fear of God and reverence, which abhor such gross and carnal eating. . . . We believe that the true body of Christ is eaten in the Communion, not in a gross and carnal manner, but in a sacramental and spiritual manner by the religious, believing, and pious heart."

CALVIN ON THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Luther and Zwingli both taught, so to speak, under the shadow of the Mass. The Mass, as a name of the Sacrament, virtually disappears from the writings of Calvin, except when he is criticizing the Roman Catholic Mass. Again, both Luther and Zwingli are feeling their way gradually out of the old doctrine. There are degrees and stages in their emancipation, and limits to it. But the central teaching of Calvin appears in the first edition of his Institutes (A.D. 1536), and in spite of some development, it remains perfectly consistent through the whole of his career. He proves to be a mediator—not by skill in devising ambiguous formulæ, but by his grasp, his profound grasp, of the reality which lies at the heart of the great mystery, the mystical union between Christ and His people, the reality, that is, as well as the spirituality of that union. His words deserve the most careful consideration :

" The other Sacrament of the Christian Church is the bread sanctified in Christ's body, and the wine sanctified in His blood." (Note how carefully its exact form is given to the word " Sacrament.") " We call it either the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist (note, no longer the Mass), because in it we are fed spiritually by the kindness of God, and we, on our part, give thanks for His goodness. . . . As we see the bread given to us as a sign of Christ's body, we must endeavour to understand the following comparison. I mean as that the bread nourishes the life of the body, upholds and supports it, so the body of Christ is the food and support of our spiritual life. Since the wine is the symbol of the blood, so do we believe that Christ acts spiritually on the soul, as wine acts on the body. . . . But let us believe that the Sacrament is spiritual—a something whereby God will feed our soul, not our stomach. Let us seek Christ, not as He is seen and apprehended by the bodily senses, but as He is recognized by His Presence in our soul. . . . Christ having ascended with His own proper body into Heaven, there sits at the right hand of the Father, that is, He rules in the might, power and glory of the Father. . . . This Kingdom is bounded by no limits of space and is circumscribed by no dimensions. He exercises His dominion in Heaven and on earth. By this He shows His presence in power and virtue. He is ever with His People. He lives in them. He upholds, strengthens, and defends them, and this no less manifestly than if He were present in the body." (The attentive reader will notice how the difficulties presented by

material or semi-material conceptions of the body of Christ are overcome. For Calvin the spiritual is the real.)

The triumph of Calvin's interpretation is that he has reconciled a true belief in the risen, glorified body of Christ with the conception of a mystical union that is not corporeal or material. In another passage the nature of this union is more fully developed :

"The Holy Spirit alone does not enter into us, while Christ remains outside us. Nor does Christ enter into us without the agency of the Holy Spirit. The union with Christ is a real union. He communicates His whole being to us with all its spiritual and psychical power, and penetrates with His sanctifying influence our whole being, body, soul, and spirit. But it is an inner union. The body of Christ as physical substance is not bound with the substance of our body, in this communicating of Christ's spiritual and psychical powers to us. But the Holy Spirit, Who has made Christ to be born in us, perfects continually the further appropriation of Christ, that is, He brings, not indirectly through the illumination of our thoughts, but directly through His Divine Power, Christ really into us. The act of union is not an act of local descent, but an Almighty act, which is outside all categories of space, and can only be comprehended under the category of eternity. It is not a question of mechanical commingling, but of organic birth and power. The Divine-human power of Christ enters into the centre of our spiritual and psychical life (not into our thoughts, still less into our bodies)."

Luther died in 1546, and was succeeded by Melancthon, whom the Conference of Marburg had deeply impressed. His was now the greatest mind on the Lutheran side, but he could not be described as the Lutheran leader. Bullinger, highly esteemed afterward by the English Reformers, was, with Bucer, the acknowledged leader of the Zwinglians. Calvin, as soon as he was firmly established at Geneva, opened up negotiations with Bullinger, with a view to reaching some agreement on the question of the Eucharist, and that agreement took shape eventually in the

CONSENSUS TIGURINUS.

This Consensus was a body of Articles drawn up in 1549, by which the Churches of Geneva were brought into harmony with those of Zurich. It reconciled Zwinglians and Calvinists, and found favour with some of the Lutherans, notably with Melancthon. Bucer, who was in England, in close touch with the English Reformers, expressed his hearty approval of it. The agreement is too long even to admit of summary in this Article, but its value is expressed by a competent authority (Planck), who says :

"It had hitherto been a matter of doubt whether the Swiss, *i.e.* the Zwinglians and Calvinists, in partaking of the Sacrament recognized the actual Presence of the body of Christ. But every kind of suspicion on the subject was now removed. The Formulary sets forth the idea of a real Presence, and of an actual participation of the body of Christ in this Sacrament. But it explains at the same time the nature and manner of this Presence. According to Luther's doctrine, the body of Christ is miraculously present in the Sacrament, and brought into such union with the outward sign of bread and wine, that it is not only received at the same time with these, but *in* these and *under* these, so that it is therefore partaken of with the *mouth* by everyone who receives the sign, though he is an unbeliever. According to

Calvin's opinion, on the contrary, the body of Christ is not brought down into the Sacrament, but the soul of him who partakes thereof is raised by faith towards heaven, and is there brought into contact with the body of Christ, and thus made partaker of the divine life."

It should be added that the Articles affirm that: "Believers, before, and without, the use of the Sacrament, communicate with Christ, nor do the Sacraments confer grace." "But God does use them to seal the secret communion which we have with Him."

The agreement reached comes out more clearly still when considered in the light of the bitter opposition offered to it by the extreme Lutherans, headed by Westphal. From this controversy it is seen that Calvin was far, very far indeed, from regarding the Lord's Supper as superfluous, or without real spiritual efficacy.

In that controversy he made it plain that:

1. In the Lord's Supper there is a real objective communication of Christ.
2. The bread and wine are pledges of the certainty of communion.
3. That which is communicated is Christ Himself.
4. From the glorified body of Christ proceeds a real, living energy into the very centre of our being.
5. This communication is not locally but by an act of the Holy Ghost.
6. The objective communication is not by an act of faith, but by an act of Christ and of the Holy Ghost.
7. It takes place even if the communicant is godless.
8. Only those who are in a state of grace receive Christ.
9. The godly are advanced in faith by the communication of Christ to them in the Sacrament.

These conclusions should be carefully compared with our Catechism, and with the 28th Article of our Church. In the Catechism we are taught that the body and blood of Christ are "verily and indeed *taken* and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." Again in the 28th Article we read that: "The Body of Christ is *given, taken, and eaten*, in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith." It is sometimes argued that the words "given" and "taken" must imply association of the body and blood with the consecrated elements. But it is clear from the foregoing summary that the gift is the act of the Holy Ghost, and that the godless do not take it when offered to them, but *repe*l it by unbelief. This interpretation is confirmed by the apparently superfluous sentence: "The mean whereby the Body of Christ is taken and received is faith." Is not this mere surplusage? Is it not already stated in the foregoing words, "given, taken, and eaten only after a heavenly and spiritual manner"? Not at all. The "gift" is the act of the Holy Ghost. It is not dependent on faith. It is offered to the unbelieving after a heavenly and spiritual manner, and the whole transaction is after a heavenly and spiritual manner. It is no mechanical transaction effected by a mere delivery of consecrated bread and wine. Christ,

through the Holy Ghost, gives His body and blood. The faithful by faith take and receive the gift. The unbelieving refuse it.

This interpretation is confirmed by Dr. Ryder Smith in a discussion of Calvin's view, which he states as follows, not having the doctrine of our Church in mind at the time, but the position of Calvin as exponent of the doctrine of the Atonement.

"For Calvin, the body of Christ in that new order of existence to which it has been advanced by the Resurrection is no longer under law to Nature as before. It has become all Spirit and Life, having its place, indeed, in heaven, but in such a way as to be capable of reaching forth at once, over all outward limits, with its inmost substance and force to the souls of His people (and so to their bodies also) in every part of the world. To express all this he avoids carefully every word that might imply locality or matter, but he insists with all the more stress on all that is included in the conception of its invisible and dynamic nature."

In this careful insistence on combination of the actual and objective with the spiritual and real, we may find the true explanation of the "kneeling" in reception of Holy Communion. There is more in that Sacrament than our prayers, our thoughts, more even than our faith. There is the gift of Himself bestowed by our Blessed Lord through the Holy Ghost, and that gift deserves our reverence. But not to any Presence of Christ in the Bread and Wine do we kneel. We kneel because we are partakers in a heavenly and spiritual transaction, of which the reality is in a supramundane sphere.

To return, then, to the Consensus Tigurinus and its immediate effect on the history of our Church.

The effect of the Consensus Tigurinus on England is seen by contrasting the First Prayer Book of Edward VI (1549) with the Second (1552). The usual reason assigned for the difference between the two Books is the influence of foreigners. The First Book is said to represent the English, the Second the Continental Reformation. The truth is that in the earlier stages of the Reformation movement in England, Lutheran influences were dominant. The First Prayer Book was a Mass with a Communion attached—closely resembling Luther's. The Zwinglians had hitherto passed for heretics and fanatics. The Consensus Tigurinus held out a glorious prospect of a union of the Protestant or Lutheran Churches with the Reformed or Genevan. Cranmer and Ridley studied Ratramnus whose teaching had influenced Calvin. It was felt to be absurd, almost criminal, that England should not cast in her lot with so promising an opening for reconciliation: and still worse that she should support the die-hard Lutherans, who represented all the obstinacy of Luther without his spiritual power. The Second Prayer Book was no more the work of foreigners than the First, though it followed the lead of the great reconcilers of Protestant thought. The final triumph of the Second Prayer Book on the accession of Elizabeth must be attributed in no small measure to the cruelty of the Lutheran die-hards, who, in the depth of winter, drove the English refugees from Marian persecution away from Helsingfors, Hamburg, and other

Lutheran ports, on the ground that "they were martyrs of the devil." It was not likely that when those refugees returned this criminal offence would be overlooked. The extreme Lutherans—Protestants, as they were called—alienated the sympathies of England, and confirmed Calvin in the veneration of Englishmen for many years to follow.

DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES OF LUTHERAN REFUSAL.

But it was not only in England that the disastrous consequences of Lutheran obstinacy made themselves felt. Those consequences cannot be summed up in better words than those of Doumergue in his Calvin (Vol. VI, p. 576):

"Ecclesiastical history records few faults so saddening and so grievous as that of the post-Lutherans. The progress of Protestantism was arrested: the Counter Reformation was facilitated, and, humanly speaking, the lot of the modern world was changed. 'The further development of the German Reformation,' says Professor Stähelin, 'was checked at one blow.' The Reformation lost the chance of the Imperial Crown, when the pious Maximilian II, while fully admitting the great truths of that Reformation, could not overcome the disgust aroused by its divisions and strifes. And it was not only that progress was arrested. The great loss which the German Reformation underwent, its obliteration in the Austrian Provinces, and particularly in Bohemia, during the Thirty Years' War, arose entirely—humanly speaking—from the separation between the Lutherans and the Reformed, and their mutual hostilities. For the same reason, the Lutheran Church, weakened and divided, was obliged to have recourse to foreign help and to invite into the Empire Swedes and Frenchmen, and to put into their hands the negotiations for the Peace of Münster. Many Lutheran communities were utterly destroyed, country districts and towns were placed under the yoke of the Pope, and Alsace was lost. Such was the curse which Westphal and the zealots brought down on their country and their Church."

[Acknowledgment is due and is hereby made to A. Barclay's *Protestant Doctrine of the Lord's Supper*, a book which should be found in the library of every English Theological College.]

Foreshewings Of Christ is a series of "Old Testament Studies in the Preparation for the Advent" (S.P.C.K., 5s. net). These deal with the characters of some of the prominent personages in the Old Testament, including Balaam, Joshua, Jephthah's Daughter, Saul, Jeroboam the Son of Nebat, Elisha, Hosea, Josiah, Jeremiah and Job. The author's wide range of knowledge is brought to bear upon these representatives of the Revelation of the olden time, and he shows how our Lord summed up in Himself the great qualities of His Forerunners. It is an interesting and suggestive study, and helpful in many ways to an understanding of important aspects of Old Testament literature.