

unpleased when she sees one school of hostile criticism arrayed against another.

He who, biased at the outset in favour of the assault, reads only on the side of negation, is asked to weigh the wise King's words: "He that pleadeth his cause *first*, seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him out." For we fear they are not few who let judgment go by default, while refusing to afford a hearing to the other party in the suit.



The Holy Communion.

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"THE Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather it is a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's Death, insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the Bread which we break is a partaking of the Body of Christ; and likewise the Cup of Blessing is a partaking of the Blood of Christ. . . . The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith," etc.

So speaks our Church in her Article. The Sacrament is to be received "rightly" (*rite*)—that is, with due regard to all the essentials of administration; "worthily" (*digne*)—that is, in such mode and spirit as Scripture demands; and "with faith" (*cum fide*), as the paramount condition of such right reception.

It is to be noted, moreover, that the Sacrament is a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves. The Article goes on to speak of its further and more distinctive work, but this, its primary aspect, is one never to be forgotten. If ever there was a time when this warning was necessary it is surely now, when the Church seems likely to be rent in twain

by the differences of its members as to the very meaning and purpose of the Sacrament. The battle of the Reformation in the sixteenth century was fought upon many issues in Europe—political, social, as well as religious—but here in England the conflict centred upon the same question that agitates the Church to-day: Is the service of the Holy Communion a Mass, or is it a Sacrament? In other words, is it a sacrifice to God which in some sense procures His favour and grace towards sinful men, not merely in life, but after death—a propitiatory act capable of being performed by a priest (*sacerdos*) alone, a real and continued offering before God of the Victim of Calvary? Or is it, on the other hand, a Christian Passover—something not given by us to God, but by God to us—a feast upon a once-offered Sacrifice, not on an altar, but at a table, the seal and pledge of all the fruits of the Atonement?

These are weighty distinctions. They cannot be ignored. It is not the validity of an Article that is at issue, but the truth of the New Testament. It is impossible for Evangelical Churchmen to give way here; they hold, and rightly hold, that they are trustees of a sacred deposit of Divine revelation, and their appeal is to Scripture. Were the question of vestments, now being considered by the Convocations, merely sumptuary, they would yield at once; but behind it lies doctrine of crucial importance on which turns the whole question of whether our Church is Scriptural in her view of the Sacrament as set forth in her Prayer Book and Articles, or whether she is in a condition of practical schism in her separation from Rome. It is said that a new rubric as to vestments could not alter her fundamental position; it might not alter it, but it is possible it would contradict it; and it is the bounden duty of Evangelical Churchmen, while they accept such alterations as may tend to the greater elasticity of our services, to resist to the uttermost of their power any alteration that would bring the Church's use into conflict with the Church's doctrine. May the Spirit of Truth give us grace to remember in the days that are coming—days of stress and storm—that the central point of contention,

the Holy Communion, is still, and always, "a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another."

The aim of this paper is to set forth in positive terms some of the fundamental aspects of the Sacrament which ought steadily to be kept in view. Eschewing as far as possible words and formulas that have become mere battle-cries, we will use others sufficiently accurate for our purpose, around which we may group the main doctrinal positions for which we contend. Let the first of these be *imputation*. The reason of our selection of this word will be presently apparent, but for the moment let us ask what it means. The word is a Bible word, and in its use has to do with sin and righteousness. Thus we read: "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." To impute sin is not to make anyone subjectively sinful, but to charge to one the guilt of any sin as a ground of punishment. It is to lay sin to another's charge punitatively, to hold one guilty who is innocent. The act is essentially forensic—a legal act.

It is in this sense that the obedience and sufferings of Christ are the meritorious ground of the sinner's justification and regeneration. That is the teaching of the Apostles, notably of St. Paul, and it has been the faith of the historical Church from the beginning. In the sixteenth century this was the recovered truth with which our Reformers dared to brave the thunders of Rome; although it is but right to say that long before their time the better schoolmen, like Anselm and Aquinas, insisted on the distinction between satisfaction and merit, and we find Bernard using language on this question of the imputation of man's sin to man's Saviour which is distinctly Evangelical. But nothing shows more clearly and unmistakably how this profound truth of imputation has been lost by a large section of Churchmen than their doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The view that the High Church party maintain, and urge on every possible occasion, is summed up by another word altogether—*impartation*. It is taught that in every valid consecration there is such a con-substantiation of the elements that in, with, and under the veil

of the species of bread and wine there is now a real presence of the glorified Body of our Saviour Christ. The sacrifice is first solemnly offered before God, and then reverently received and eaten, with the result that the Incarnation is, so to speak, infused into the communicant—a new humanity is gradually built up in him by successive acts of communion in which he receives the glorified Body of Christ. Impartation is, in a word, the central thought of this doctrine of the Sacrament. Resting partly on the philosophical conception of the immanence of God in the material world, partly on the fallacy that a thing must be locally present in order to be received by us, a quasi-physical interpretation of the Eucharist has taken the place of the New Testament doctrine.

To compare the relative truth of these two views of the Sacrament, let us suppose that it had been our lot to stand by the Cross of Calvary at the very moment when the awful Sacrifice was consummated; let us suppose, further, that we had been there, not awestruck with the multitude nor overwhelmed with the disciples, but realizing its purpose, its eternal efficacy, its personal application; that we had been filled with adoring gratitude for that supreme act of self-sacrifice for us men and our salvation. Now, in this case there would have been beyond question a “real presence of the Body and Blood of Christ,” and we ask in what way our souls would have been benefited. Would it have been by some virtue, liberated by death, passing into us from His Sacred Body—in a word, by some mysterious impartation of Himself—or would it not rather have come through the clearness of faith’s vision as to the tremendous fact of Atonement, the imputation of our guilt upon the Lamb of God, and our own share in His Sacrifice? In the light of type, prophecy, and doctrine, we cannot for one moment doubt the answer. Just so far as we realized what was then and there sacrificially effected towards God on our behalf would our souls have been “strengthened by the Body and Blood of Christ.” The thought of *impartation* does not occur here; it is manifestly as foreign to the whole transaction of Calvary as that

of *imputation* is central to it. We are not here concerned to urge any particular theory of the Atonement; "imputation" is not a word of our making; it sums up sufficiently the central aspect of the Cross as set forth in words like these: "The Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all"; "He died the just for the unjust"; "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many"—*λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν*.

Now, the great purpose for which the Holy Communion was instituted was to bring the communicant back to the Cross. "Do this," He said, "in remembrance of Me"—not, be it observed, "in remembrance of Me as incarnate, nor yet as glorified, but as *crucified*." We come here to the root of the matter: in the Sacrament the believer's thoughts are directed not to the Lord's glorified Body (nor to His glorified Blood, a point conveniently slurred over), but to His Body and Blood as separated in death for his salvation. It is not too much to say that the mind is directed away from the Saviour's glorified condition, and is concentrated upon a certain condition—the death condition—in which His Body was once held. That death condition is a thing of the past, and faith recognizes it as a thing of the past, and therefore cannot recognize it as present. Not less on grounds of faith than on grounds of scholarship the believer repudiates the notion that "Do this" means "Sacrifice this." The Sacrifice is over; the offering is once made, and once for all accepted; the Atonement is eternally finished; but the Church, in obedience to that dying word of her Lord, constantly endeavours to renew in the hearts of her faithful children the original impression and teaching conveyed by the Lord's own solemn words and acts of institution. Nothing that He did are her ministers to leave undone: the thanksgiving, the breaking, the distributing, the partaking—all, in short, that we are bidden to *do* in remembrance of His atoning sacrifice. And in so *doing* we "show forth," not any present condition of His glorified Body, but "the Lord's *death till He come*" (1 Cor. xi. 26)—words written, as it might

seem, in anticipation of the so-called "development of Catholic doctrine." "The strength *imparted* flows from our recognition of that which has been *imputed*; and the degree of that strength will depend on the simplicity of our faith in recognizing not only the fact of the imputation, but also the preciousness of that sacrificial excellency which is imputed."¹

And this brings us to another word—*appropriation*—which, like the last, has not been soiled by controversy. The Eucharist is more than an occasion of thankful remembrance, though it is that always and that *first*; it is, as the name "Supper of the Lord" suggests, an occasion for spiritual eating and drinking. Like Baptism, this Sacrament is social in character; "the Lord's Table," to use St. Paul's phrase, was not instituted in the Temple, but in a house; it is the table of the family gathered together: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion [joint partaking] of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ, seeing that we who are many are one bread, one body, for we all partake of the one bread?"²

But, passing by this social aspect, we now dwell upon the simple blessed fact that the bread and wine of the Eucharist are to be received and eaten with personal appropriation of that which they signify. In themselves they are but as the wick of a candle to the light thereof—in the very act of using they perish and pass from the mind—but in their right use they serve the high purpose for which they were given. "For although," says Jewel in his "Apology," "we do not touch the Body of Christ with teeth or mouth, yet we hold Him fast, and eat Him by faith, with understanding and by the Spirit." The food of the believer's soul in the Holy Communion is Christ crucified—not Christ living, but Christ slain. All that speaks of the Cross is food to the Christian heart. The elements are not something to be offered, they are to be taken and eaten.

¹ B. W. Newton, "Thoughts on Scriptural Subjects," *passim*.

² We must beware of interpreting this word "communion" as if it meant, or could mean, *communication*.

They are not something given to God, they are God's gift to us. In a word, they are a Sacrament, not a Sacrifice. But then, *sursum corda*; and the heart of the well-taught communicant lifts itself unto the Lord, and, resting on the one Sacrifice once offered, claims in humble worship all the fruits of that Sacrifice, and enjoys all that is his in Christ—the high priesthood, the intercession, the mediation, the promises of the new covenant, the return in glory. Well did the framers of our Liturgy speak of the Sacraments as *efficacia signa*—seals, that is, that do seal-work effectually, strengthening and confirming in their proper use our faith and love, so that “we, receiving these, God's creatures of bread and wine, according to our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of His Death and Passion, become partakers of His most blessed Body and Blood.” If imputation is a key-word for the right explanation of the purpose of the Sacrament, appropriation is as certainly the clue to its blessings.

Let the last of these words be *manifestation*. The great end of the ordinance is the sanctification of the disciple. We feed on Christ that we may manifest Christ. We are constantly reminded that He gave Himself for us, that we may give ourselves to Him. There is a suggestive difference between the attitude of believing men at the Passover feast and at Holy Communion. In Egypt, at the original institution, Israel stood; they ate in haste; the time was short; they went forth as pilgrims. In Palestine, at the time of the institution of the Lord's Supper, the Passover feast was eaten, as we all remember, in a recumbent position; men lay on couches as if to signify thereby the ease and comfort of Canaan when pilgrimage was done. To-day, at the Lord's Table, we Churchmen kneel “for a signification,” says the rubric, “of our humble and grateful acknowledgment of the benefits of Christ therein given to all worthy receivers.” We have seen what Israel, save in shadow, never saw—“Christ, our Passover, sacrificed for us”; we have learned that in Him “God was reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them”; we are conscious

that the Sacrifice of His death can only be answered by the sacrifice of our lives, and so, kneeling in humble worship, we say: "And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee." Manifestation is the outcome of appropriation, the one test of its reality.

We would close this paper by an earnest appeal to our readers to be careful in this controversy to define their terms. Dr. Mozley warned us long ago in his "Lectures on the Baptismal Controversy" that our opponents are apt to use old and recognized terms in a new and modified sense, and that must be our excuse for using words here which have escaped such treatment in the prolonged discussion. The battle of the Reformation has to be fought and won once more, and ambiguity may hazard the whole issue at stake. There is no ambiguity in the following words by Dr. Ince, late Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford: "The truth is that the Declaration of the English Church Union [in 1900, upon the Holy Communion] is at variance with the doctrine maintained by the consensus of all the most eminent theologians of the Church of England since the Reformation, nor can it be reconciled with the natural interpretation of the English Liturgy or the 28th and 29th Articles. It is a deliberate attempt to undo the work of the Reformation, which delivered our Church and realm from the tyranny of the many accretions of false doctrine which the Church of Rome had imposed upon Christians as necessary articles of faith, but which the Church of England declared to be unsanctioned by Scripture or the teaching of the primitive ages of the Church."¹

¹ "The Doctrine of the Real Presence," p. 28.

