

changing world to be "the same yesterday, and to-day, yea and for ever"? These are the questions which every theology must answer before it can justify its name, or warrant Christians in accepting it. Pour what new meanings you will, and must, into the disciple's profession, nothing can ever authorize any tampering with the profession itself: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

But a so-called "New Theology," which proposes the impossible alternative, Jesus or Christ? and calmly accepts the blasphemous postulate of the Saviour's sinfulness, is not Christian theology at all, and needs no other arguments to determine its prompt and indignant repudiation at the hands of Christian men: "We have not so learned Christ."



The Holy Communion as a Sacrifice.

BY THE REV. ARTHUR J. TAIT, M.A.

A.

IT is no unwillingness to acknowledge indebtedness for the work as a whole which prompts the writer to criticize Mr. Darwell Stone's exposition of New Testament teaching in his "History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist,"¹ nor is it failure to appreciate the hopes with which that book has been sent forth on its mission; but it is because "the better understanding of the great doctrine," and the promotion of "the cause of peace," require candid statements of points on which men differ.

The method often adopted in an inquiry into the doctrine of the Holy Communion as found in the New Testament is, to start with, an examination of the words of institution and of St. Paul's teaching in the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

¹ "A History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist." By Darwell Stone, M.A. London: Longmans, Green and Co. 2 vols. 30s. net.

There is, however, a better way. "No prophecy of Scripture is of private ['special,' R.V., margin—*i.e.*, 'its own'; Greek, *ιδίας ἐπιλίσεως*. Cf. John v. 18, viii. 44] interpretation":¹ no one passage may be interpreted independently of the whole. And in any question of doctrinal importance it is well to recollect the general bearing of Scripture on the subject before building a fabric of doctrine upon one or more isolated passages. Indeed, the only true approach to the interpretation of a particular passage of Scripture is through such recollection.

Mr. Stone reminds us of this principle of interpretation when he says that "in approaching the starting-point [*i.e.*, the institution of the Sacrament by our Lord] there are three preliminary considerations to be borne in mind."²

The third of these considerations is "the place which the administrations filled in the earliest Christian life, as shown in the New Testament records," and it is in connection with this statement and its illustration that I first find myself in serious disagreement with the writer. For what we want to know is not merely the place which the "administration" filled in the earliest Christian life, but also what place the whole conception of the Holy Communion occupied in Apostolic teaching. It is not enough to discover the place of the administration in the habitual round of Christian life, as indicated in the direct references to be found in Acts and 1 Corinthians; we must also discover what the general conception of the Holy Communion was, and what place it filled in Apostolic teaching. All Churchmen are agreed as to the importance of regular and frequent administration of the Lord's Supper: it is in our conceptions of its function and significance that we differ.

It might be argued that in respect of the doctrine of the Holy Communion this method is impossible, on account of the scantiness of the dogmatic teaching on the subject.

To that argument I would advance two answers:

1. It is a law of life that a man reveals, at least incidentally,

¹ 2 Pet. i. 20.

² P. 2.

the proportions of his mind. I cannot imagine the priest of a parish, where the sacrificial aspect of the Holy Communion is taught and emphasized, writing to the communicants of the congregation about the cultivation of their spiritual life without mentioning the Holy Communion. The phenomena of life forbid me to think of such a priest writing to his people such a general letter of instruction and exhortation, containing reference to faith, prayer, the need of a knowledge of God's Word, alms-giving, etc., and saying nothing about attending the sacrifice or receiving the Holy Communion.

But the Apostles were men, and what is natural for us was natural for them. It matters not that they did not set themselves to write dogmatically about the Lord's Supper, for if "the sacrificial aspect of Christian life has its centre in it,"¹ or if "the Holy Communion is the centre of the earthly life and worship of Christians,"² the teaching must have come out, at least incidentally, when the Apostles were writing about the spiritual life. If the Lord's Supper was for them *the* Christian sacrifice, holding a similar position and performing a similar function in the Christian Church to that of the Levitical sacrifice amongst the Israelites, they must have revealed that belief when treating of Christian life and worship.

And consequently an important line of preliminary investigation is the examination of Apostolic teaching on the subject of the spiritual life.

2. There are other ways, in addition to that of direct reference, in which the Apostolic conception of the Lord's Supper has found expression.

For if the Lord's Supper is a propitiatory ordinance, then the minister is a propitiatory priest. What, then, is the general teaching of the New Testament on the subject of the Christian ministry?

Again, if the Lord's Supper is a propitiatory ordinance, it can only be because in it the Church on earth unites herself through the action of the priest with the work of Christ in the

¹ P. 21.

² P. 16.

heavenly sanctuary. What, then, is the teaching of the New Testament about the heavenly ministry of Christ ?

I may note in passing that Mr. Stone simply passes over these two fundamental points of inquiry. His examination of the teaching of the New Testament takes no account of the teaching on the Christian ministry, and assumes, without discussion, a particular view of the heavenly ministry of Christ as "an abiding heavenly sacrifice."¹

To sum up this introductory point, I accept Mr. Stone's position that the right approach to the study of the words of institution is the general examination of New Testament teaching, but I refuse to limit that examination to an inquiry as to the place which the *administration* occupied in the primitive worship. I claim that the general conception of the ordinance must be ascertained from the Apostolic writings. For the more vital the function which the Lord's Supper is regarded as fulfilling in the life and worship of Christians, the more certain is it, according to the laws which govern us, that its importance will be revealed, at least incidentally, in any instruction given about spiritual life; and also, seeing that the doctrine of the Holy Communion is bound up with the doctrine of the Christian ministry and of the mediatorial work of Christ, the examination of Apostolic teaching on these cognate subjects forms a natural part of the preliminary investigation.

B.

Turning, then, to an examination of the general bearing of New Testament teaching upon the subject of the Lord's Supper, we note the following points :

1. There is only one out of all the Epistles which contains any explicit reference to the sacred ordinance. The allusions in 1 Corinthians are sufficient in themselves to show that it was "an ordinary and recognized part of Christian life," "an habitual element in the worship of the Corinthians." And when to these we add the references in Acts, we have "suffi-

¹ Pp. 16, 21.

cient indication of its place in the habitual round of Christian life." But how are we to explain the general silence of the Epistles? How came it that St. Paul could write three Epistles, whose central thought was the life in Christ, and never mention the Lord's Supper? and three Epistles on the subject of Church life in general, and the qualifications and duties of Christian ministers in particular, without so much as a reference to the Lord's Supper? And how are we to explain the omission of reference in the writings of St. Peter, St. John, St. James, St. Jude, and the author of Hebrews?

This silence, moreover, becomes the more remarkable when it is contrasted with the mentions which are made of such subjects as faith, prayer, and the necessity of growing in spiritual knowledge.

That the Apostles assumed that discipleship of Christ necessarily involved a faithful use of the ordinance may, in the light of Acts and 1 Corinthians, be regarded as indisputable; and this would explain the omission of any exhortation to use the ordinance. The idea which seems to prevail amongst some people in our own day that the use of the Lord's Supper is for the inner circle, and not for the ordinary churchgoer, was non-existent in the Apostles' days. Absence from the Lord's Table was caused by the exercise of Church discipline, and was not a normal feature of life. There was, therefore, no reason at that time for such exhortation as is often found to be necessary in the present day. But this does not sufficiently explain the silence to which we have referred. If the Lord's Supper was the central thing in Christian life, affording the opportunity for the highest act of worship, securing for the worshippers a special and peculiar presence of the Lord, providing the one opportunity of offering this sacrifice in behalf of living and of dead, would the fact that its necessity was recognized by all have kept the Apostolic writers from making any mention of it? To put the question in another way, Do the clergy who accept this estimate of its importance and significance forbear to mention it at meetings of their com-

municants, because there is no need to exhort them to make a faithful use of the ordinance? Such an idea involves a denial of the phenomena of life. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. The greater the importance which men attach to a subject, the more certain it is that they will utilize suitable opportunities for expressing their thoughts about it. What, then, are we to say about Apostolic descriptions of the nature of the Christian's conflict, and the ways and means of waging it successfully, which omit all reference to the Lord's Supper?¹ and about similar omissions in instructions on the corporate life of the Church, and on the relation of the new dispensation to the old,² and on the attitude of the living towards the blessed dead?

It is hard to believe that such phenomena are compatible with views of the Lord's Supper, which regard it as the central thing in Christian life and worship, and assign to it a place and function which correspond to that of the Levitical sacrifices under the old dispensation.

Experience proves that it is quite possible to regard the sacred ordinance as an habitual element in worship, and to assign to it a place in the habitual round of Christian life, without exalting it to a position which throws into the shade all other means of worship and grace, and brings it into the foreground of instruction and preaching. And this seems to be the only possible explanation of the silence of the Epistles. But it is extremely doubtful whether the emphasis required by the sacrificial view of the Lord's Supper is compatible with such an explanation.

2. Nowhere in the New Testament is the Christian minister distinctively called a priest (*ιερεὺς*). It is difficult enough to explain the omission in the enumeration of the different kinds of ministry given in 1 Cor. xii. 28 and Eph. iv. 11, considering the fact that, according to the sacerdotal view of the ministry, the sacrificial aspect is vital to the conception; but it is to me

¹ See, e.g., Eph. vi. 10-18.

² See, e.g., Col. iii. 16 *et seq.*; Heb. viii.-x.; 1 Thess. iv. 13 *et seq.*

quite inconceivable that St. Paul should have written three Epistles expressly on the subject of Church life, including directions as to the qualifications and duties of the minister, and should not have even indicated that this most essential aspect of the ministry was included in his conception.

Equally inconceivable is the silence of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

“The writer of the Epistle speaks of Christian sacrifices and of a Christian altar, but the sacrifices are praise and thanksgiving and well-doing, the altar is apparently the Cross of Christ.¹ If the Christian ministry were a sacerdotal office, if the Holy Eucharist were a sacerdotal act in the same sense in which the Jewish priesthood and the Jewish sacrifice were sacerdotal, then his argument is faulty and his language misleading. Though dwelling at great length on the Christian counterparts to the Jewish priests, the Jewish altar, the Jewish sacrifice, he omits to mention the one office, the one place, the one act, which on this showing would be their truest and liveliest counterparts in the everyday worship of the Church of Christ.”²

3. The New Testament teaching about the heavenly ministry of our Lord repudiates the idea of the continuance both of His sacrifice and of the offering of it.

Abiding efficacy, eternal validity, of the one sacrifice once offered there assuredly is; but this must be carefully distinguished from abiding sacrifice, continual offering. The dogmatic language of the New Testament invariably uses the metaphor of sitting in describing the ministerial posture of our Lord in heaven, and this metaphor has the definite significance of completed offering. One decisive passage will be sufficient to illustrate the point:

“Every priest, indeed, *standeth* day by day ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifice, the which can never take away sins; but He, when He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, *sat down* on the right hand of God. . . . For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.³ . . . Now, where remission of these (*i.e.*, sins and iniquities) is, there is no more offering for sin.”

It would be impossible to find language which could more decisively assert the fact that both the sacrifice and the offering

¹ Both Westcott and Lightfoot repudiate the idea of reference here to the Lord's table.

² Lightfoot, “Essays on the Christian Ministry: Epistle to the Philippians,” p. 265.

³ Heb. x. 11-18.

of it are in themselves things of the past. The pleading of the merits of the completed offering, the using of the virtue of the accomplished work, these are continuous; and "the propitiation itself is something eternally valid";¹ but the idea of a continual offering, a continual representation of the offering, a continual propitiation, is ruled out.

The perpetual intercession of Christ is not that of the Aaronic priesthood. He is a priest after the order of Melchizedek, and that is the order of the King-Priest; it is a royal priesthood. It is as King that Christ is also Priest; it is as seated on the throne that He also intercedes.

In the words of Bishop Westcott:

"The modern conception of Christ, pleading in heaven His Passion, 'offering His blood' on behalf of men, has no foundation in this epistle.² His glorified humanity is the eternal pledge of the absolute efficacy of His accomplished work. He pleads, as older writers truly expressed the thought, by His Presence on the Father's throne. Meanwhile, men on earth in union with Him enjoy continually through His Blood what was before the privilege of one man on one day in the year."³

It is because of the vital necessity of distinguishing between the continuance of the offering and its eternal validity that the ambiguous phrase, "the abiding heavenly sacrifice," is open to objection.

There is no inherent reason why the continuous pleading of the merits of the one offering should not be done on earth by means of symbol, and the question as to whether the Holy Communion provides the occasion of such *symbolic* pleading depends entirely upon what we are told in Scripture about its nature and purpose.

C.

We pass on now to consider the passages in the New Testament which refer directly to the Lord's Supper.

(a) "This is My body." Mr. Stone argues that the words signify an identity of the bread and the body of Christ, which

¹ Cf. Westcott, quoted by Stone, p. 17.

² *I.e.*, Hebrews.

³ Westcott, "Hebrews," p. 230.

involved the presence of the glorified Christ in the elements on the night of the institution.¹

In support of the latter part of the proposition, Mr. Stone refers us to the Transfiguration, when the Lord, "in the days of His humiliation in the course of His ministry, possessed by anticipation in His human nature the glory of His ascended life." The alleged analogy requires some further explanation. Are we to believe that Jesus was not in His natural state on the night of the institution, but was transfigured once again before the eyes of the Apostles? No indications can be found of such a transformation in the records of the institution. And, if it did take place, how could the Gospel narratives which give an account of the institution have failed to relate such a startling experience?

Or are we to suppose that Jesus remained in His natural state before the eyes of the Apostles, but in some unexplained way was also in His spiritual state in the elements? If so, the analogy falls to the ground; for at the Transfiguration Jesus was not present in both the natural and the spiritual states at the same time.

While discussing this question of identity, we may notice that in his explanation of the words, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood," Mr. Stone is content to speak about what "the phrase *implies*"²—viz., not identity of the cup and the covenant, but of the contents of the cup and the blood. What, then, we may ask, becomes of the argument that the words, "This is My body," *assert* an identity of the bread and the body? And, further, can we believe that the words, "This cup is the new covenant," would ever have been substituted for the words, "This is My blood," if this conception of identity had been in St. Paul's mind? Bishop Westcott wrote:

"ταῦτο ἐστὶ must be taken in the same sense in 'This is My body' and in 'This cup is the new covenant.' It cannot be used of material identity."³

¹ See pp. 7, 20.

² P. 7.

³ Westcott's "Life and Letters," ii. 354.

There is one other point in Mr. Stone's treatment of these words which calls for notice. He criticizes the "explanation that bread and wine are means, and only means, by which the faithful communicants may spiritually receive Christ,"¹ on the ground that "the alternatives are only two—'This is in fact My body,' or 'This represents My body'; not three—'This is in fact My body,' 'This represents My body,' 'This is a means by the reception of which My body may be spiritually received.'"

But does anyone interpret the words, "This is My body," in the third sense? The third interpretation is not an explanation of the words "This is My body," but of the whole institution. The bread represents the body, and the bread has to be taken and eaten. The bread is therefore, according to this view, a means (and only a means) by which the faithful communicant receives the body spiritually. But the words "This is My body" in themselves signify nothing more than "This represents My body."

In addition to these detailed criticisms, the position adopted by Mr. Stone in interpreting these words is open to the serious objection that whereas it is made to rest on their alleged obvious meaning, the fact remains that the more literally the words are taken, the more impossible it is to regard them as signifying identity. According to the literal and obvious meaning, the bread is not Christ, nor the blood of Christ, but the "body which is given," as distinguished from the blood, and that alone; and the wine is not Christ, nor the body of Christ, but the "blood which is shed," as distinguished from the body, and that alone. And inasmuch as the "body which is given" and the "blood which is shed" no longer exist either separately or in combination, it follows that the conception of identity is ruled out.

The whole genus of views (of which Transubstantiation is only one species) which seek to identify in any sense the elements with Christ depend upon the theory of concomitance

¹ P. 19.

in order to make them even possible, and involve the abandonment of the plain meaning of the Lord's words. As Bishop Westcott wrote :¹

“ One grave point I am utterly unable to understand—how ‘ the body broken ’ and ‘ the blood shed ’ can be identified with the Person of the Lord. I find no warrant in our Prayer-Book or ancient authorities for such an identification.”

And again :

“ The circumstances of the institution are, we may say, spiritually reproduced. The Lord Himself offers His body given and His blood shed. But these gifts are not either separately (as the Council of Trent), or in combination, Himself. It seems to me vital to guard against the thought of the Presence of the Lord in or under the form of bread and wine. From this the greatest practical errors follow. The elements represent the human nature as He lived and died for us under the conditions of earthly life.”

(*b*) “ Do this.” Mr. Stone admits that the writers of the early Church and the compilers of the Liturgies understood the words to mean, “ Perform this action.”² But whereas he devotes only four lines to the statement of this important evidence, he devotes no less than nineteen lines to an argument that the word “ do ” might mean “ offer ” if the context were sacrificial. No one will care to dispute this, for not only is it self-evident, but also the actual use of the word *ποιεῖν* in the New Testament reveals it to be a colourless word, deriving its significance in all cases from its context, and never giving a significance to its context. Thus, it may mean “ to keep,” if the context relates to a feast (Matt. xxvi. 18); “ to spend,” if it relates to time (Acts xx. 3); “ to bring forth,” if it relates to fruit-bearing (Matt. xiii. 33); etc.

Hence the important matter is not whether *ποιεῖν* may mean “ to offer,” but whether this particular context is sacrificial. And Mr. Stone's reference to this point cannot be regarded as satisfactory. He seems to regard this context as sacrificial because “ in its origin the Passover was a sacrifice in which deliverance was accomplished by means of blood, the symbol

¹ Westcott's “ Life and Letters,” ii. 351.

² P. 9.

of life.”¹ If this argument is sound, it might involve us in the assertion that because in its origin the Passover was followed by the Exodus, therefore every subsequent celebration of the Passover must have been accompanied by a similar experience. We can pass by the question as to whether the Passover was even in its origin a sacrificial ordinance; for the Holy Communion is related, not to the original celebration, but only to the annual commemoration of it.

To quote Bishop Westcott again :

“ In the context in which the words occur I have not the least doubt that *τοῦτο ποιᾶτε* can only mean ‘ Do this act ’ (including the whole action of hands and lips), and not ‘ Sacrifice this. ’ ”²

(c) “ For My remembrance.” It is true that the word *ἀνάμνησις* in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament is used for that which brings to remembrance a memorial both before God and before man. But of the five occasions on which it is used, only one³ is connected with the propitiatory offerings, and even there it is probably the trumpets rather than the sacrifices which are spoken of as the means of the memorial. In the other passages the word is used of the memorial before God made by means of the shewbread, of the memorial, or bringing to remembrance, made by means of Psalms, and for the bringing of God's laws to man's remembrance through trouble.⁴

Mr. Stone has, therefore, not underestimated the evidence of the Septuagint when he says: “ While it suggests, it does not necessitate the sense of a sacrificial memorial before God.” The alleged suggestion, however, seems to be silenced by the usage of the New Testament. For, on the one hand, the only other context in which the word occurs in the New Testament requires the sense of remembrance by man;⁵ and, on the other hand, the word used for memorial, both in the Gospels and Acts, is not *ἀνάμνησις*, but *μνημόσυνον*.⁶ The most natural

¹ P. 9. ² Westcott's “ Life and Letters,” ii. 353. ³ Num. x. 10.

⁴ See titles of Ps. xxxviii., lxx.; Wisd. xvi. 6.

⁵ Heb. x. 3. ⁶ Matt. xxvi. 13; Mark xiv. 9; Acts x. 4.

meaning of the phrase, therefore, seems to be "for My remembrance"—*i.e.*, "to keep Me in remembrance."

(*d*) 1 Cor. x. 16-21. In his explanation of this passage, Mr. Stone says: "St. Paul here treats the Eucharist as having in the Christian religion a position in some respects parallel to the sacrifices to demons in the heathen rites,"¹ but he makes no mention of the change of terms introduced by the Apostle.

Bishop Lightfoot's comment on the passage is as follows:

"Some interpreters, from a comparison of 1 Cor. ix. 13 with x. 18, have inferred that St. Paul recognizes the designation of the Lord's table as an altar. On the contrary, it is a speaking fact that in both passages he avoids using this term of the Lord's table, though the language of the context might readily have suggested it to him, if he had considered it appropriate. Nor does the argument in either case require or encourage such a reference. In 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14, the Apostle writes, 'Know ye not that they which wait at the altar are partakers of the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.' The point of resemblance in the two cases is the holding a sacred office; but the ministering at the altar is predicated only of the former. So also in 1 Cor. x. 18 the *altar* is named as common to Jews and heathens, but the *table* only as common to Christians and heathens—*i.e.*, the holy Eucharist is a banquet, but it is not a sacrifice (in the Jewish or heathen sense of sacrifice)."²

(*e*) 1 Cor. xi. 26-30. Mr. Stone allows that the primary meaning of the words "ye do proclaim" appears to be "that the memorial instituted in the Eucharist is a memento set up in the Church as a reminder to Christians";³ but in view of what he has said about other passages, he finds it difficult to exclude the further idea of a sacrificial memorial and presentation before God.

Apart from the question as to whether the other passages admit of the sacrificial interpretation, inclusion of the further idea would be more conceivable if the order could be inverted. If the primary meaning were the making memorial before God, it might be possible to conceive of the making memorial before man as a secondary idea. But it is exceedingly difficult to entertain the idea that the Apostle had the two aspects of the

¹ Lightfoot, "Essays on the Christian Ministry: Epistle to the Philippians," p. 265.

² P. 13.

³ P. 14.

memorial in his mind, and made his language refer primarily to the memorial before man.

Moreover, he uses a term which is regularly employed for making an announcement to man. The word *καταγγέλλεω* is of frequent occurrence, and always has that association.

The view which this paper is intended to represent of the teaching of the New Testament on the question as to whether the Holy Communion is a sacrifice may be summarized as follows :

(1) Negatively : (a) There is no indication that the Holy Communion is an ordinance which corresponds to the Jewish sacrifices.

(b) There is nothing in the language of the New Testament which suggests that the Holy Communion was intended to be regarded as a sacrifice.

(2) Positively : (a) The Holy Communion takes the place of the Passover celebration (which was not sacrificial) as a memorial of the completed offering which procured our redemption.

(b) The analogy of the Passover and the language of the New Testament require the conception that the memorial is before man.

(c) The word *ἀνάμνησις* permits (but its use in the New Testament does not favour) the idea that the memorial is also before God, but there is no suggestion that such memorial is in itself sacrificial.

D.

Reference must be made in closing to the use of sacrificial language found in subsequent Christian writings.

The Fathers employed sacrificial terms in speaking of the Eucharist, but the use of such terms must be judged in the light of their general teaching.

St. Augustine's definition of a sacrifice is "every act which is performed in order that we may cleave unto God in Holy

Communion, such act being referred to Him as our Sovereign Good, by which alone we can enjoy true felicity.”¹

Accepting that definition of sacrifice, we should feel no difficulty in using sacrificial language of the Holy Communion; but it illustrates the necessity, before we claim the Fathers as sanctioning such language, of understanding in what sense they use it.

The Fathers, again, speak of Christ being daily offered on the altar. But such language was only used in a certain sense, which is made clear by other expressions in their writings—*e.g.*, St. Chrysostom, in his comments on Heb. x. 9, says: “We do not offer another sacrifice, as the high-priest did formerly, but always the same”; and then, in explanation, he adds, “or, rather, we make a commemoration of a sacrifice.”²

St. Augustine writes:

“Christians in the holy oblation and participation of the body and blood of Christ *celebrate a memory* of the same sacrifice which has been accomplished.”³

And again:

“Was not Christ offered once in Himself? And yet He is offered in the Sacrament at Easter and every day; nor does anyone say what is false when he affirms Him to be offered. For if Sacraments had not a resemblance to the things of which they are Sacraments, they would not be Sacraments at all. But from this resemblance they derive the names of the things themselves.”⁴

Mr. Stone⁵ points out that the use of a sacrificial phraseology by the early Fathers must be considered in the light of their interpretation of Mal. i. 11, “In every place incense is offered unto My name, and a pure offering,” which was generally regarded as “a prophecy of Christian worship, and in particular of the Eucharist.” There can be little doubt that the interpretation is a mistaken one, for the language is not that of prediction, but description, referring in all probability to the

¹ “De Civ. Dei,” x. 6.

² μᾶλλον δὲ ἀνάμνησιν ἐργαζόμεθα θυσίας.

³ “Peracti ejusdem sacrificii memoriam celebrant” (C. Faust., xx. 18).

⁴ Ep. ad Bonifac., xxiii.

⁵ P. 49.

worship in heathen countries of Jews of the dispersion, as being more acceptable to God than the unworthy worship of the more privileged priests of the temple. And even if it be regarded as prediction, the language in which it is expressed is obviously determined by the circumstances of the writer. A literal fulfilment is no more to be expected of those words of Malachi than of the prophecy of Zechariah—that on the bells of the horses there shall be written, “Holiness unto the Lord.”

The use which the early Fathers make of the passage suggests that their sacrificial phraseology is to be traced to their misunderstanding of its import; and then, having once been admitted, it was justified by later writers on the ground that similitude and representation permit the transmission of names. So Augustine in the passage quoted above, and the schoolmen Peter Lombard and Peter of Poitiers.

Peter Lombard writes :¹

“What is presented and consecrated by the priest is called a sacrifice and an oblation, because it is the memorial and representation of the real sacrifice.”

Similarly, Peter of Poitiers writes :²

“Christ is sacrificed in the Sacrament, and this sacrifice is called a sacrifice simply for the reason that it represents the real sacrifice which was once made with extended hands on the cross. As a picture represents that of which it is an image, and as an image is called by the name of the thing which it signifies, so this sacrifice is called by the name of the real sacrifice, which was once made.”

Experience, however, has proved that the use of such language was unwise. It led in time to the doctrine which the Roman Church now holds—that in the Mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead.

The reaction from medieval developments led to the elimination from our services, not merely of everything which suggested the offering of propitiatory sacrifice, but also of all reference to the making memorial before God of the one

¹ Quoted by Stone, i. 306.

² *Ibid.*, i. 307.

sacrifice once offered. And perhaps it was safer and better so, but it strikes the present writer as a loss; it would have been in keeping with very early Christian thought to have preserved the idea of such commemoration.

Mention has not been made of the Holy Communion as the occasion for offering the sacrifices of self, alms, and praise—though in all these subsidiary senses it has sacrificial associations—because the point of dispute is as to its relation to the offering of Christ. Scripture and the Fathers alike limit that relation to one of commemoration and representation.

The pioneers of theological expression used sacrificial language to signify that relationship, but its association with later developments of doctrine has robbed it of the innocent meaning which it once had, and therefore it seems undesirable in the present day to claim the same liberty of expression which the pioneers in theology exercised.



Home Reunion: A Wesleyan Outlook.

BY THE REV. DINSDALE T. YOUNG.

WITH a willing mind I add a few notes to the discussion of Home Reunion. Let me first of all say that I speak in no representative capacity. No one beyond myself is involved in the opinions I express. As an individual Wesleyan, and only as such, do I contribute to these pen-conversations.

Whilst this is emphatically so, I yet may claim that there is in Wesleyan Methodism a not inconsiderable body of opinion which coincides with my own. And, at the risk of egotism, I will add that I have peculiar opportunity of ascertaining the views of the rank and file of our Wesleyan ministry and laity, seeing that I have probably visited more of our churches than any living minister, and every week of my life I am going in and out among them.

Modern Wesleyanism is ecclesiastically composite. Divers