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KNOTS UNTIED.

BEING

PLAIN STATEMENTS

ON DISPUTED POINTS IN RELIGION,
FROM THE
STANDPOINT OF AN EVANGELICAL CHURCHMAN.

BY THE LATE BISHOP

JOHN CHARLES RYLE, D.D.

Author of "Expository Thoughts on the Gospels," etc.,

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CHAS. J. THYNNE,
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THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a point in the Christian religion which requires very careful handling. I approach it with reverence, fear, and trembling. I cannot forget that I tread on very delicate ground. There is much connected with the subject which is alike painful, humbling, and difficult.

It is *painful* to think that an ordinance appointed by Christ for our benefit should have been defiled by the din and smoke of theological controversy. It is undeniable that no ordinance has called forth so much passion and strife, and has become such a bone of contention among polemical divines. Such is the corruption of fallen man that the thing which was "ordained for our peace" has become "an occasion of falling."

It is *humbling* to remember that men of opposite opinions have written folios about the Lord's Supper without producing the slightest effect on the minds of their adversaries. Cart-loads of books about it have been published during the last three centuries, and poured into the open gulf between the disputants in vain. Like the "Slough of Despond" in *Pilgrim's Progress*, it is a yawning gulf still. I ask no stronger proof that the fall of Adam has affected the understanding as well as the will of man, than the present divided state of Christendom about the Lord's Supper.

It is *difficult* to know how to handle such a subject without exhausting the patience of readers. It is difficult to know what to say, and what to leave unsaid. The field has been so thoroughly exhausted by the labours of many masters in Israel, that it is literally impossible to bring forward anything that is new. The utmost that I can hope to attain is the condensation of old arguments. If I can only bring together a few ancient things, and present them to my readers in a portable and compact form, I shall be content.

In the present paper I shall content myself with two points, and two only.

I. *I will show the original intention of the Lord's Supper.*

II. *I will show the position which the Lord's Supper was meant to occupy.*

One thing, at any rate, is very clear to my mind: it is impossible to overrate the importance of the subject. I own to a strong and growing conviction that error about the Lord's Supper is one of the commonest and most dangerous errors of the present day. I suspect we have little idea of the extent to which unsound views of this sacrament prevail, both among clergy and laity. They are the hidden root of nine-tenths of the extravagant Ritualism which, like a fog, is overspreading our Church. Here, if anywhere, all Christian ministers have need to be very jealous for the Lord God of hosts. Our witness must be clear, distinct, and unmistakable. Our trumpets must give no uncertain sound. The Philistines are upon us. The ark of God is in danger. If we love the truth as it is in Jesus, if we love the Church of England, we must contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints in the matter of the Lord's Supper.

I. in the first place, *what was the original intention of the Lord's Supper?*

This question can never receive a better general answer than that of our well-known Church Catechism. Wanting in simplicity, as that famous formulary certainly is, and sadly too full of hard words and scholastic metaphysical terms, it is worthy of all honour for its statements about the sacraments. Our Sunday-school teachers may fail to understand the Catechism, and complain justly that it needs another Catechism to explain it. But, after all, there is a logical preciseness and theological accuracy about its definitions, which every well-read divine must acknowledge and appreciate. Rightly used, I hold the Church Catechism to be a most powerful weapon against semi-Romanism. Fairly interpreted, it is utterly subversive of the "Ritualistic" system.

The very first question of the Catechism about the Lord's Supper is as follows: "Why was the sacrament of the Lord's 'Supper ordained? "The answer supplied is this: "For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby." This is sound speech that cannot be condemned. Founded on plain language of Holy Scripture, it contains the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. (Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 24.)

The Lord Jesus Christ intended the Lord's Supper to be a continual *remembrance*¹ to the Church of His atoning death on the Cross. The bread, broken, given, and eaten, was intended to remind Christians of His body given for our sins. The wine, poured out and drunk, was intended to remind Christians of His blood shed for our sins.

The Lord Jesus knew what was in man. He knew full well the darkness, slowness, coldness, hardness, stupidity, pride, self-conceit, self-righteousness, slothfulness, of human nature in spiritual things. Therefore He took care that His death for sinners should not merely be written in the Bible,—for then it might have been locked up in libraries;—or left to the ministry to proclaim in the pulpit,—for then it might soon have been kept back by false teachers;—but that it should be exhibited in visible signs and emblems, even in bread and wine at a special ordinance. The Lord's Supper was a standing provision against man's forgetfulness. So long as the world stands in its present order, the thing which is done at the Lord's Table shows forth the Lord's death till He comes. (1 Cor. xi. 26.)

The Lord Jesus Christ knew full well the unspeakable importance of His own death for sin as the great corner-stone of Scriptural religion. He knew that His own satisfaction for sin as our Substitute,—His suffering for sin, the Just for the unjust,—His payment of our mighty debt in His own Person,—His complete redemption of us by His blood,—He knew that this was the very root of soul-saving and soul-satisfying Christianity. Without this He knew His incarnation, miracles, teaching, example, and ascension could do no good to man; without this He knew there could be no justification, no reconciliation, no hope, no peace between God and man. Knowing all this, He took care that *His death*, at any rate, should never be forgotten. He carefully appointed an ordinance, in which, by lively figures, His sacrifice on the Cross should be kept in perpetual remembrance.

The Lord Jesus Christ well knew the weakness and infirmity even of the holiest believers. He knew the absolute necessity of keeping them in intimate communion with His own vicarious sacrifice, as the Fountain of their inward and spiritual

life. Therefore, He did not merely leave them promises on which their memories might feed, and words which they might call to mind, He mercifully provided an ordinance in which true faith might be quickened by seeing lively emblems of His body and blood, and in the use of which believers might be strengthened and refreshed. The strengthening of the faith of God's elect in Christ's atonement was one great purpose of the Lord's Supper.

I turn from the positive to the negative side of the subject with real pain and reluctance. But it is plain duty to do so. Ministers, like physicians, must study disease as well as health, and exhibit error as well as truth. Let me then try to show what are not the intentions of the Lord's Supper.

(1) It was never meant to be regarded as *a sacrifice*. We were not intended to believe that there is any change in the elements of bread and wine, or any corporal presence of Christ in the sacrament. These things can never be honestly and fairly got out of Scripture. Let the three accounts of the institution, in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and the one given by St. Paul to the Corinthians, be weighed and examined impartially, and I have no doubt as to the result. They teach that there is no sacrifice, no altar, no change in the substance of the elements: that the bread after consecration is still literally and truly bread,—and the wine after consecration is literally and truly wine. In no part of the New Testament do we find the Christian minister called a priest; and in no part do we find any mention of a sacrifice, except that of prayer, and praise, and good works. The last literal sacrifice, we are repeatedly told in the Epistle to the Hebrews, is the once for all finished sacrifice of Christ on the Cross.

No doubt it may satisfy such controversialists as the late Cardinal Wiseman to adduce such texts as "This is My body," and "This is My blood," as proofs that the Lord's Supper is a sacrifice. But a man must be easily satisfied if such texts content him. The quotation of a single isolated phrase is a mode of arguing that would establish Arianism or Socinianism. The context of these famous expressions shows clearly that those who heard the words used, understood them to mean, "This *represents* My body," and "This *represents* My blood." The analogy of other places proves that "is" and "are" frequently mean "represent" in Scripture. St. Paul, in writing on the sacrament, expressly calls the consecrated bread, "bread," and not the body of Christ, no less than three times. (1 Cor. xi. 26, 27, 28.) Above all, there remains the unanswerable argument, that if our Lord was actually holding His own body in His hands, when He said of the bread, "This is My body," His body must have been a different body to that of ordinary men. Of course if His body was not a body like ours, His real and proper humanity is at an end. At this rate the blessed and comfortable doctrine of Christ's entire sympathy with His people, as very man, would be completely overthrown, and fall to the ground.²

Again, it may please some to regard the sixth chapter of St. John, where our Lord speaks of "eating His flesh and drinking His blood," as a proof that there is a literal bodily presence of Christ in the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper. But there is an utter absence of conclusive proof that this chapter refers to the Lord's Supper at all. The man who maintains that it does refer to the Lord's Supper, will find himself involved in very awkward consequences. He sentences to everlasting

ing death all who do not receive the Lord's Supper. He raises to everlasting life all who do receive it. Enough to say that the great majority of Protestant commentators altogether deny that the chapter refers to the Lord's Supper, and that even some Romish commentators on this point agree with them.³

(2) I pass on to another negative view of the subject. The Lord's Supper was never meant to confer benefit on communicants *ex opere operato*, or by virtue of a mere formal reception of the ordinance.⁴ We were not intended to believe that it does good to any but those who receive it with faith and knowledge. It is not a medicine or a charm which works mechanically, irrespectively of the state of mind in which it is received. It cannot of itself confer grace, where grace does not already exist. It does not convert, justify, or convey blessings to the heart of an unbeliever. It is an ordinance not for the dead but for the living,—not for the faithless but for the believing,—not for the unconverted but the converted,—not for the impenitent sinner but for the saint. I am almost ashamed to take up time with such trite and well-known statements as these. The Word of God testifies distinctly that a man may go to the Lord's Table, and "eat and drink unworthily,"—may "eat and drink damnation to himself." (1 Cor xi. 27, 29.) To such testimony I shall not add a word.

(2) I will only mention one more point on the negative side of the subject. The Lord's Supper was *not meant to be a mere social feast*, indicating the love that should exist among believers. We were never intended to regard it in this cold and tame light. The notion of the author of *Ecce Homo*, that "the Christian communion is a club dinner," is not only a degrading one, but one that cannot be reconciled with the language of its Founder at the time of institution. "Feeding on the character of Christ "(I quote this notorious book) is an idea which may satisfy a Socinian, or any one who rejects the doctrine of the atonement. But the true Christian who feeds especially on the vicarious death of Christ, and not His character, will see that death prominently exhibited in the Lord's Supper, and find his faith in that death quickened by the use of it. It was meant to carry his mind back to the sacrifice once made on Calvary, and not merely to the incarnation; and no lower view will ever satisfy a true Christian's heart.

I have now stated the ground that I believe we are meant to take up about the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Negatively, it was not intended to be a mere social meeting,—nor yet a sacrifice,—nor yet an ordinance conferring grace *ex opere operate*. Positively, it was intended to be a "continual remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ's death," and a strengthener and refresher of true believers. This ground may seem to some very simple, so simple that it is below the truth. Be it so: I am not ashamed of it. Whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear, I am convinced that this is the only view that is in harmony with Scripture and the formularies of the Church of England.

I grant most freely that a large and increasing school within our own Church entirely disagree with the view I have given of the Lord's Supper. Hundreds of clergy, both in high places and low, consider that there is not only a real presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, which I hold as strongly as they do, but that there is also a real presence of Christ in the elements of bread and wine after consecration,⁵ which I entirely deny.

Let us hear how Archdeacon Denison, no mean authority, states this view. He says, "Christ's body and blood are really present in the holy Eucharist, under the form of bread and wine, i.e. present things,—though they be present after a manner ineffable, incomprehensible by man, and not cognizable by the senses. The real presence of Christ in the Eucharist is therefore not, as I believe it is very generally supposed to be, the presence of an influence emanating from a thing absent, but the invisible and supernatural presence of a thing present; of His body and His blood present under the forms of bread and wine."⁶ (Sermon ii., p. 80.) Let us hear him again. "Worship is due to the real, though invisible and supernatural, presence of the body and blood of Christ in the holy Eucharist, under the forms of bread and wine." (Sermon II., p. 81.) Let us hear him again. "The act of consecration makes the real presence. Oh, priests of the Church of God! to us it is given to be the channels and agents, whereby the Holy Ghost doth there make the body and blood of Christ to be really, though invisibly and supernaturally, present, under the form of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper; to us it is given to give His body and His blood unto His people. Oh, priests and people of the Church of God! to us it is given to take and eat, under the form of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, the body and blood of Christ." (Sermon II., p. 107.)

Now I shall not multiply quotations of this kind. It would be easy to show you that the doctrine laid down by Archdeacon Denison is the doctrine of a large and growing section of the Church of England.⁷ It would be no less easy to show that the doctrine is substantially one and the same with that of the Romish Church, and that for refusing this very doctrine our martyred Reformers laid down their lives. But time would not allow me to do this. I shall content myself with trying to show that the doctrine of Archdeacon Denison and his school cannot be reconciled with the authorized formularies of the Church of England, and that the simpler and, as some falsely call it, lower view of the intention of the Lord's Supper, is in entire harmony with those formularies.

Let me turn first to the Thirty-nine Articles. We have no right to appeal to any formulary before this. The Church's Confession of faith is the Church's first standard of doctrine. The Twenty-eighth Article says as follows:

"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 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.

"Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of bread and wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by holy Writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

"The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith.

"The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance received, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped."

I shall make no remark on these words. I only ask plain Churchmen to put

them side by side with High Church statements about the Lord's Supper, and to observe the utter contrariety that exists between them. I appeal to the common sense of all impartial and unprejudiced Englishmen. Let them be the judges. If one view is right, the other is wrong. If the language of the Twenty-eighth Article can be reconciled with the doctrine of Archdeacon Denison and his school, I can only say that words have no meaning at all. I shall content myself with quoting the comment of Bishop Beveridge on this Twenty-eighth Article, and pass on.

He says,—“If the bread be not really changed into the body of Christ, then the body of Christ is not really there present; and if it be not really there present, it is impossible that it should be really taken and received into our bodies, as bread is.”

Again, he says,—“I cannot see how it can possibly be denied, that Christ ate of the bread whereof He said, ‘This is My body;’ and if He ate it, and ate it corporally (that is, ate His body as we eat bread), then He ate Himself, and made one body two, and then crowded them into one again, putting His body into His body, even His whole body into part of His body, His stomach. And so He must be thought not only to have two bodies, but two bodies one within another; yea, so as to be one devoured by another: the absurdity of which, and of like assertions, he that hath but half an eye may easily discover. So that it must needs be granted to be in a *spiritual* manner that the Sacrament was instituted, and by consequence that it is in a *spiritual* manner the sacrament must be received.”—*Beveridge on the Articles*. Ed. Oxford, 1846. Pp. 482-486.

The Liturgy of the Church of England on this subject is entirely in accordance with the Articles. The word “altar” is not to be found once in our Prayer-book. The idea of a “sacrifice” is most carefully excluded from our Communion Office. However much men may twist and distort the words of the Baptismal Service, they cannot make anything out of the Communion Service, to prove Romish views. Even the famous Non juror, Dr. Brett, was obliged to confess that he “knew not how to reconcile the Consecration Prayer in the present established Liturgy with the real presence; “for,” says he, “it makes a plain distinction betwixt the bread and wine and our Saviour's body and blood, when it says,—‘Grant that we receiving these Thy creatures of bread and wine, may be partakers of Christ's body and blood.’ Which manifestly implies the bread and wine to be distinct and different things from the *body* and *blood*.”—*Brett's Discourse on discerning the Lord's Body in the Communion*. London, 1720. Pref., pp. 19-21.

But the rubric at the end of the Communion Service makes it mere waste of time to say anything more on the subject of the Prayer-book's view of the Lord's Supper. That rubric says,—“Whereas it is ordained in this Office for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, that the communicants should receive the same kneeling (which order is well meant, for a signification of our humble and grateful acknowledgment of the benefits of Christ therein given to all worthy receivers; and for the avoiding of such profanation and disorder in the Holy Communion, as might otherwise ensue; yet, lest the same kneeling should by any persons, either out of ignorance and infirmity, or out of malice and obsti-

nacy, he misconstrued and depraved,—It is thereby declared, That thereby no adoration is intended, or ought to be done, either unto the sacramental bread or wine there bodily received, or unto any Corporal Presence of Christ’s natural flesh and blood. For the sacramental bread and wine remain still in their very natural substances, and therefore may not be adored (for that were idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful Christians); and the natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven, and not here; it being against the truth of Christ’s natural body to be at one time in more places than one.” If that rubric does not flatly condemn the teaching of Archdeacon Denison and his school, about the presence of Christ in the sacrament, under the forms of bread and wine, I am very certain that words have no meaning at all.⁸

The Catechism of the Church of England is in direct accordance with the Articles and Liturgy. Though it states distinctly that “Christ’s body and blood are verily and indeed taken and received by the *faithful* in the Lord’s Supper,” it carefully avoids saying one word to sanction the idea that the body and blood are locally present in the consecrated elements of bread and wine. In fact, a spiritual presence of Christ in the Lord’s Supper to every faithful communicant, but no local corporal presence in the bread and wine to any communicant, is evidently the uniform doctrine of the Church of England.

But I will not pass on without quoting Waterland’s interpretation of the doctrine of the Catechism. He says,— “The words *verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful*, are rightly interpreted of a real participation of the benefits purchased by Christ’s death. The body and blood of Christ are taken and received by the faithful, not corporally, not internally, but verily and indeed, that is *effectually*. The sacred symbols are no bare signs, no untrue figures of a thing absent; but the force, the grace, the virtue, and benefit of Christ’s body broken and blood shed, that is of His passion, are really and effectually present with all them that receive worthily. This is *all the real presence* that our Church *teaches*.”—*Waterland’s Works*. Oxford, 1843. Vol. vi, p. 42.

Once more I say that if Waterland’s view of the Catechism can be reconciled with that of Archdeacon Denison and his school, words have no meaning at all.

The Homily of the Church of England about the sacrament is in complete harmony with the Articles, Liturgy, and Catechism. It says, “Before all things this we must be sure of especially, that this Supper be in such wise done and ministered as our Lord and Saviour did, and commanded to be done; as His holy Apostles used it; and the good Fathers in the Church frequented it. For, as that worthy man St. Ambrose saith, he is unworthy of the Lord that doth celebrate this mystery otherwise than it was delivered by Him. Neither can he be devout that doth presume otherwise than it was given by the Author. We must then take heed, *lest of the memory it be made a sacrifice*, lest of a communion it be made a private eating; lest of two parts we have but one; lest, applying it for the dead, we lose the fruit that be alive.”—Again, it says, after pressing the necessity of knowledge and faith in communicants: “This is to stick fast to Christ’s promise made in His institution: to make Christ thine own, and to apply His merits unto thyself. Herein thou needest no other man’s help, no other sacrifice or oblation, no sacrificing priest, no mass, no means established by man’s invention.”—Again, it says: “It is well

known that the meat we seek for in this Supper is spiritual food, the nourishment of our soul, a heavenly refectation and not earthly, an invisible meat and not bodily, a ghostly substance and not carnal. So that to think that without faith we really enjoy the eating and drinking thereof, or that that is the fruition of it, is but to dream a gross carnal feeling, basely objecting and binding ourselves to the elements and creatures. Whereas by the order of the Council of Nicene, we ought to lift up our minds by faith, and leaving these inferior and earthly things, there seek it where the Sun of Righteousness ever shineth. Take then this lesson, O thou that art desirous of this table, of Emissenus, a godly Father,—that when thou goest up to the reverend communion to be satisfied with spiritual meat, thou look up with faith upon the holy body and blood of thy God, thou marvel with reverence, thou touch it with thy mind, thou receive it with the hand of thy heart, and thou take it fully with thy inward man.”

Now it would be easy to multiply quotations in support of the view of the Lord’s Supper which I advocate, from leading divines of the Church of England. But I forbear. Time is precious in these latter days of hurry, bustle, and excitement. Quotations are wearisome, and too often are not read. Those who wish to follow up the subject should study Dean Goode’s unanswerable, but much neglected, book on the Eucharist.

Two quotations only I will give, from two men of no mean authority, though differing widely on some points.

The first is the well-known Jeremy Taylor. In his book on *The Real Presence* (Edit. 1654, pp. 13–15) he says: “We say that Christ’s body is in the sacrament really, but spiritually. The Roman Catholics say that it is there really, but spiritually. For so Bellarmine is bold to say that the word may be allowed in this question. Where now is the difference? Here by *spiritually*, they mean spiritual after the manner of a spirit. We by *spiritually*, mean present to our spirit only. They say that Christ’s body is truly present there as it was upon the Cross, but not after the manner of all or anybody, but after that manner of being as an angel is in a place. That’s their *spiritually*.—But we by the real spiritual presence of Christ do understand Christ to be present, as the Spirit of God is present, in the hearts of the faithful by blessing and grace; and this is all which we mean beside the tropeal and figurative presence.”

The other divine whom I will quote is one who was a very giant in theology, and as remarkable for his soundness in the faith as for his prodigious learning. I mean Archbishop Usher. In his sermon before the House of Commons, he says: “In the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, the bread and wine are not changed in substance from being the same with that which is served at ordinary tables; but in respect of the sacred use whereunto they are consecrated, such a change is made that now they differ as much from common bread and wine as heaven from earth. Neither are they to be accounted barely significative, but truly exhibitivive also of those heavenly things whereunto they have relation; as being appointed by God to be a means of conveying the same to us, and putting us in actual possession thereof. So that in the use of this holy ordinance, as verily as a man with his bodily hand and mouth receiveth the earthly creatures of bread and wine, so verily with his spiritual hand and mouth, *if he have any*, doth he receive the body and

blood of Christ. And this is that real and substantial presence which we affirm to be in the inward part of this sacred action.”

I cannot leave this part of the subject without entering my indignant protest against the often-repeated sneer that learning, reasoning, and research are not to be found among the supporters of Evangelical Religion in the Church of England! The work of Dean Goode, on the nature of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist, containing 986 pages of masterly argument in defence of sound Protestant views of the Lord’s Supper, has now been for many years before the public. It stands to this day unanswered hitherto and unanswerable. Where is the honesty, where the fairness, of neglecting to refute that book if it can be refuted, and yet clinging obstinately to views which it triumphantly subverts?—I unhesitatingly commend that book to the patient and diligent study of all my younger brethren in the ministry, if they want their minds established and confirmed about the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. Let them read it carefully, and I think they will find it impossible to arrive at any but one conclusion. That conclusion is, that the Church of England holds that there is no sacrifice in the Lord’s Supper, no oblation, no altar, no corporal presence of Christ in the bread and wine; and that the true intention of the Lord’s Supper is just what the Catechism states, and neither less nor more:—“It was ordained for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits that we receive thereby.”

II. The second point which I propose to handle in this paper is so completely bound up with the first, that I shall not dwell upon it at length. He that can answer the question—“What is the true intention of the Lord’s Supper?”—will find no difficulty in discerning “*what is its rightful position in the Church of Christ.*”

Like the ark of God in the Old Testament, this blessed sacrament has a proper position and rank among Christian ordinances, and, like the ark of God, it may easily be put in the wrong one. The history of that ark will readily recur to our minds. Put in the place of God, and treated like an idol, it did the Israelites no good at all. In the days of Eli, it could not save them out of the hand of the Philistine. Their armies were defeated, and the ark itself was taken.—Defiled and dishonoured by being placed in an idol’s temple, it was the cause of God’s wrath falling on a whole nation, till the Philistines said with one voice, “Send it away.”—Treated with carelessness and levity, it brought down God’s judgment on the men of Bethshemesh, and on Uzza.—Treated with reverence and respect, it brought a blessing on Obed-edom and all his house.—It is even so with the Lord’s Supper.—Placed in its right position, it is an ordinance full of blessing. The great question to be settled is,—What is that position?

(1) The Lord’s Supper is not in its right place, *when it is made the first, foremost, principal, and most important thing in Christian worship.* That it is so in many quarters, we all must know. The well-known “masses” of the Romish Church, the increasing importance attached to “Holy Communion,” as it is called, by many in our own Church, are plain evidence of what I mean. The sermon, the mode of conducting prayer, the reading of “holy Scripture,” in many churches are made second to this one thing,—the administration of the Lord’s Supper.—We may well ask, “What warrant of Scripture is there for this extravagant hon-

our?" but we shall get no answer. There are at most but five books in the whole canon of the New Testament in which the Lord's Supper is even mentioned. About grace, faith, and redemption; about the work of Christ, the work of the Spirit, and the love of the Father; about man's ruin, weakness, and spiritual poverty; about justification, sanctification, and holy living;—about all these mighty subjects we find the inspired writers giving us line upon line, and precept upon precept. About the Lord's Supper, on the contrary, we may observe in the great bulk of the New Testament a speaking silence. Even the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, containing much instruction about a minister's duties, do not contain a word about it. This fact alone surely speaks volumes! To thrust the Lord's Supper forward, till it towers over and overrides everything else in religion, is giving it a position for which there is no authority in God's Word.⁹

(2) Again, the Lord's Supper is not in its right place, *when it is administered with an extravagant degree of outward ceremony and veneration*. In saying this I should be sorry to be misunderstood. God forbid that I should countenance anything like carelessness or irreverence in the use of any ordinance of Christ. By all means let us give honour where honour is due. But I ask all who read this paper, whether there is not something painfully suspicious about the enormous amount of pomp and bodily reverence with which the Lord's Supper is now administered in many of our churches? The ostentatious treatment of the Communion table as an altar,—the lights, ornaments, flowers, millinery, gestures, postures, bowings, crossings, incensing, processions, which are connected with the so-called altar,—the mysterious and obsequious veneration with which the bread and wine are consecrated, given, taken, and received,—what does it all mean?¹⁰ Where is there in all this the simplicity of the first institution, as we find it recorded in the Bible? Where is the simplicity which our Protestant Reformers both preached and practised? Where is the simplicity which any plain reader of the English Prayer-book might justly expect? We may well ask, Where? The true Lord's Supper is no longer there. The whole thing savours of Romanism. A plain man can only see in it an attempt to introduce into our worship the doctrine of sacrifice, the "blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit" of the mass, the Popish real presence, and transubstantiation. It is impossible to avoid feeling that a deadly heresy underlies this pompous ceremonial, and that we have not to do merely with a childish love of show and form, but with a deep-laid design to bring back Popery into the Church of England, and to subvert the Gospel of Christ. One thing at any rate is very plain to my mind: the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, administered as it is now in many places, is not in its rightful position. It is so disguised, and painted, and daubed, and overlaid, and bloated, and swollen, and changed by this new treatment, that I can hardly see in it any Lord's Supper at all.

(3) Again, the Lord's Supper is not in its right place, *when it is pressed on all worshippers indiscriminately*, as a means of grace which all, as a matter of course, ought to use. Once more I ask that no one will misunderstand me. I feel as strongly as any one, that to go to church as a worshipper, and yet not be a communicant, is to be a most inconsistent Christian, and that to be unfit for the Lord's Table is to be unfit to die. But it is one thing to teach this, and quite another to

urge all men to receive the sacrament as a matter of course, whether they are qualified to receive it or not.—I should be sorry to raise a false accusation. I do not for a moment suppose that any High Church clergyman recommends, in naked language, wicked people to come to the Lord's Supper that they may be made good. But I cannot forget that from many pulpits people are constantly taught that they are born again, and have grace, by virtue of their baptism; and that if they want to stir up the grace within them, and get more religion, they must use all means of grace, and specially the Lord's Supper! And I cannot help fearing that thousands in the present day are practically substituting attendance at the Lord's Supper for repentance, faith, and vital union with Christ, and flattering themselves that the more often they receive the Sacrament, the more they are justified, and the more fit they are to die. My own firm conviction is that the Lord's Supper should on no account be placed before Christ, and that men should always be taught to come to Christ by faith *before* they draw near to the Lord's Table. I believe that this order can never be inverted without bringing in gross superstition, and doing immense harm to men's souls. Those parts of Christendom where "the mass" is made everything, and the Word of God hardly ever preached, are precisely those parts where there is the most entire absence of vital Christianity. I wish I could say there was no fear of our coming to this state of things in our own land. But when we hear of hundreds crowding the Lord's Table on Sundays, and then plunging into every dissipation on week-days, there is grave reason for suspecting that the Lord's Supper is pressed on many congregations in a manner utterly unwarranted by Scripture.

Does any one ask now what is the rightful position of the Lord's Supper? I answer that question without any hesitation. I believe its rightful position, like that of holiness, is between grace and glory,—between justification and heaven,—between faith and paradise,—between conversion and the final rest,—between the wicket-gate and the celestial city. It is not Christ; it is not conversion; it is not a passport to heaven. It is for the strengthening and refreshing of those who have come to Christ already, who know something of conversion, who are already in the narrow way, and have fled from the city of destruction.

We cannot read hearts, I am well aware. We must not be too strict and exclusive in our terms of communion, and make those sad whom God has not made sad. But we must never shrink from telling the unconverted and the unbelieving that, in their present condition, they are not fit to come to the Lord's Table. A faithful clergyman, at any rate, need never be ashamed of taking up the ground marked out for him in the Church Catechism. The last question in that well-known formulary is as follows: "What is required of them that come to the Lord's Supper?" The answer to that question is weighty and full of meaning. Those who come to the Lord's Supper must "examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life,—have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, and a thankful remembrance of His death,—and are in charity with all men." Does any one feel these things in his own heart? Then we may boldly tell him that the Lord's Supper is placed before him by a merciful Saviour, to help him in running the race set before him.—Higher than this we must not place the ordinance. A communicant was not expected to be an angel,

but a sinner who feels his sins, and trusts in his Saviour.—Lower than this we have no right to place the ordinance. To encourage people to come up to the Table without knowledge, faith, repentance, or grace, is to do them positive harm, promote superstition, and displease the Master of the feast. He desires to see at His Table not dead guests, but living ones,—not the dead service of formal eating and drinking, but the spiritual sacrifice of feeling and loving hearts.

I pause here. I trust I have said enough to make clear the views I hold of the true intention and rightful position of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. If, in expounding these views, I have said anything that grates on the feelings of any reader, I can assure him that I am unfeignedly sorry. Nothing could be further from my desire than to hurt the feelings of a brother.

But it is my firm conviction that the state of the Church of England requires great plainness of speech and distinctness of statement about the sacraments. There is nothing, I am persuaded, which the times so imperatively demand of Evangelical Churchmen, as a bold, manly, and explicit assertion of the great principles held by our forefathers, and specially about baptism and the Lord's Supper. If we would "strengthen the things that remain which are ready to die," we must resolutely go back to the old paths, and maintain old truths in the old way. We must give up the vain idea that we can ever make the Cross of Christ acceptable by polishing, and varnishing, and painting, and gilding it, and sawing off its corners. We must cease to suppose that we can ever lure men into being Evangelical by a trimming, temporizing, half-and-half, milk-and-water mode of exhibiting the doctrines of the Gospel,—or by wearing borrowed plumes, and dabbling with High Churchism,—or by loudly proclaiming that we are not "party-men,"—or by laying aside plain Scriptural phrases, and praising up "earnestness,"—or by adroitly keeping back truths that are likely to give offence. The plan is an utter delusion. It wins no enemy: it disgusts many a true friend. It makes the worldly bystander sneer, and fills him with scorn. We may rest assured that the right line and the wisest course for the Evangelical body to pursue, is to adhere steadily to the old plan of maintaining the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as it is in Jesus, and specially the truth about the two sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Let us be courteous, amiable, charitable, affable, considerate for the feelings of others, by all means, but let no consideration make us keep back any part of God's truth.

Let me close this paper with a few practical suggestions. Assuming, for a moment, that we have made up our minds, what is the intention and rightful position of the Lord's Supper, let us just consider what the times demand at our hands.

(1) For one thing let us *cultivate a godly simplicity* in all our statements about the Lord's Supper, and a godly jealousy in all our practices about it.

If we are ministers, let us often remind our people that there is no sacrifice in the Lord's Supper,—no real presence of Christ's body and blood in the bread and wine,—no change of the elements,—no grace conferred *ex opere operato*,—no altar at the east end of our churches,—no sacrificing priest-hood in the Church of England. Let us tell them these things again, and again, and again, till our congregations have them ingrained into their very minds and memories and souls, and let

us charge them, as they love life, not to forget them.

Whether we are clergymen or laymen, let us beware of countenancing or tolerating any practices in connection with the Lord's Supper which either exceed or contradict the rubrics of our Prayer-book, and imply any belief in a Romish view of this sacrament. Let us protest in every possible way against any extravagant veneration of the Communion Table and the bread and wine, as if Christ's body and blood were in these elements, or on the Table; and let us never forget what the Prayer-book says about "idolatry to be abhorred of all faithful Christians."

We cannot be too particular on these points. The times are changed. Things that we might have borne with in past years as matters of indifference, and comparative trifles in ceremonial, ought not to be borne with any longer. A few years ago I would have turned to the east in repeating the Creed in any parish church, rather than offend a neighbour's feelings. I can do so no longer, for I see great principles at stake. Let our protest on all these matters be firm, unflinching, and universal all over the country, and we may do much good.

(2) For another thing, *let us not be shaken or troubled by the common charge that we are not Churchmen*, because we do not agree with many of our brethren on the subject of the sacraments. Such charges are easily made, but not so easily established. I trust my younger brethren especially will treat them with perfect indifference and unconcern. I know not which to admire most, the impudence or the ignorance of those who make them.

Do those who coolly say that Evangelical Churchmen are not true Churchmen, suppose that we cannot read? Do they fancy we cannot understand the meaning of plain English? Do they think to persuade us that our doctrinal views are not to be found in the Articles, the Liturgy, and the Homilies, and in the writings of all the leading divines of our Church, up to the days of Charles the First?— Do they fancy, for example, that we do not know that the Communion Table was seldom to be found at the east end of the Church, till the time of Laud, but generally stood in the chancel, like a table, and that Ridley specially called it "the Lord's Board"?¹¹ Alas, I fear they presume on the non-reading propensities of the day. They know too well that the reading of many Evangelical people is seldom carried beyond newspapers and magazines.

I am bold to say that in the matter of true, honest, conscientious membership of the Church of England, the Evangelical body need fear no comparison with any other section within the Church's pale. We may safely challenge any amount of fair investigation and inquiry. Have others signed the Thirty-nine Articles "*ex animo et bona fide*"? so have we. Have others declared their full assent to the Liturgy? so have we. Do others use the Liturgy, adding nothing and omitting nothing, reverently, solemnly, and audibly? so do we. Are others obedient to Bishops? so are we. Do others labour for the prosperity of the Church of England? so do we. Do others value the privileges of the Church of England, and deprecate needless separation? so do we. Do others honour the Lord's Supper, and press it on the attention of all believing hearers? so do we. But we will not concede that a man must follow Archbishop Laud, and be half a Romanist, in order to be a Churchman. We are true High Churchmen and not Romish High Churchmen. And the best proof of our Churchmanship is the fact that for every

one of *our body* who has left the Church of England and gone over to Dissent, we can point to ten *High Churchmen* who have left the Church of England and gone over to Rome.

No! Evangelical Churchmen never need be moved by the charge that they are not true Churchmen. Ignorant and impudent men may make such charges, but none except shallow and ill-read men will ever believe them. When those who make them have answered Dean Goode's work on the Eucharist, as well as his other works on Baptism and the Rule of Faith, it will be time for us to pay attention to what they say. But till then we may safely act on the advice given to the Jews by Hezekiah about Rabshakeh's railing accusations,—“Answer them not.”

(3) In the last place, let me express an *earnest hope that no one who reads this paper will ever let himself be driven out of the Church of England* by the rise of the present tide of extreme Ritualism, and the seeming decay of the Evangelical body. I lament that there should be a need for uttering this warning, but I am sure there is a cause.

I can well understand the feelings which actuate many in this day. They live perhaps in a parish where the Gospel is never preached at all, where Romish doctrines and practices about the Lord's Supper carry all before them,—where, in fact, they stand alone. Week after week, and month after month, and year after year, they hear nothing but the same dreary round of phrases about “holy Church, holy baptism, holy communion, holy priests, holy altars, holy sacrifice,” until they are almost sick of the word “holy,” and Sunday becomes a positive weariness to their souls. And then comes up the thought, “Why not leave the Church of England altogether? What good can there be in such a Church as this? Why not become a Dissenter or a Plymouth Brother?”

Now I desire to offer an affectionate warning to all who are in this frame of mind. I ask them to consider well what they do, and to take the advice of the town-clerk of Ephesus,—“To do nothing rashly.” I entreat them to call faith and patience into exercise, and at any rate to wait long before they secede, to pray much, to read their Bibles much, and to be vary sure that they have done everything that can be done to amend what is wrong.

It is a cheap and easy remedy to secede from a Church when we see evils round us, but it is not always the wisest one. To pull down a house because the chimney smokes, to chop off a hand because we have cut our finger, to forsake a ship because she has sprung a leak and makes a little water,—all this we know is childish impatience. But is it a wise man's act to forsake a Church because things in our own parish, and under our own minister in that Church, are wrong? I answer decidedly and unhesitatingly, No!

It is not so sure as it seems that we mend matters by leaving the Church of England. Every man knows the faults of his own house, but he never knows the faults of another till he moves into it, and then perhaps he finds he is worse off than he was before his move. There are often smoky chimneys, and bad drains, and draughts, and doors that will not shut, and windows that will not open, in No. 2 as well as in No. 1. All is not perfect among Dissenters and Plymouth Brethren. We may find to our cost, if we join them in disgust with the Church of England, that we have only changed one sort of evil for another, and that the chimney smokes in

chapel as well as in church.

It is very certain that a sensible and well-instructed layman can do an immense deal of good to the Church of England,—can check much evil and promote Christ's truth,—if he will only hold his ground and use all lawful means. Public opinion is very powerful. Exposure of extreme malpractice has a great effect. Bishops cannot altogether ignore appeals from the laity. By much importunity even the most cautious occupants of the Episcopal bench may be roused to action. The press is open to every man. In short, there is much to be done, though, like anything else that is good, it may give much trouble. And as for a man's own soul, he must be in a strange position if he cannot hear the Gospel in some Church near him. At the worst he has the Bible, the throne of grace, and the Lord Jesus Christ always near him at his own home.

I say these things as one who is called a Low Churchman, and as one who feels a righteous indignation at the Romanizing proceedings of many clergymen in our own day. I mourn over the danger done to the Church of England by the Ritualism of this day. I mourn over the many driven in disgust out of the pale of our Zion. But Low Churchman as I am called, I am a Churchman, and I am anxious that no one should be goaded into doing rash and hasty things by the proceedings to which I have alluded. So long as we have truth, liberty, and an unaltered Confession of faith in the Church of England, so long I am convinced that the way of patience is much better than the way of secession.

When the Thirty-nine Articles are altered,—when the Prayer-book is revised on Romish principles and filled with Popery,—when the Bible is withdrawn from the reading desk,—when the pulpit is shut against the Gospel,—when the mass is formally restored in every parish church by Act of Parliament,—when, in fact, our present order of things in the Church of England is altered by statute, and Queen, Lords, and Commons command that our parish churches shall be given over to processions, incense, crosses, images, banners, flowers, gorgeous vestments, idolatrous veneration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, mumbled prayers, gabbled-over apocryphal lessons, short, dry, sapless sermons, histrionic gestures and postures, bowings, crossings, and the like,—when these things come to pass by law and rule, then it will be time for us all to leave the Church of England. Then we may arise and say with one voice, "Let us depart, for God is not here."

But till that time,—and God forbid it should ever come: till that time,—and when it does come, there will be a good many seceders: till that time let us stand fast, and fight for the truth. Let us not desert our post to save trouble, and move out to please our adversaries, and spike our guns to avoid a battle. No! in the name of God, let us fight on, even if we are like the 300 at Thermopylae,—few with us, many against us, and traitors on every side. Let us fight on, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

The good ship of the Church of England may have some rotten planks about her. The crew may, many of them, be useless and mutinous, and not trustworthy. But there are still some faithful ones among them. There is still hope for the good old craft. The Great Pilot has not yet left her. Let us therefore stick by the ship.

The following quotations may be interesting to some readers.

(1) Archbishop Cranmer, in the Preface to his *Answer to Gardiner*, says:—

“They (the Romanists) say that Christ is corporally under or in the form of bread and wine; we say that Christ is not there, neither corporally nor spiritually. But in them that worthily eat and drink the bread and wine He is spiritually, and corporally He is in heaven.—I mean not that Christ is spiritually, either in the table, or in the bread and wine that be set on the table, but I mean that He is present in the ministrations and receiving of that Holy Supper, according to His own institution and ordinance.”—See *Goode on the Eucharist*, vol. ii., p. 772.

(2) Bishop Ridley, in his *Disputation at Oxford*, says:—

“The circumstances of the Scripture, the analogy and proportion of the sacraments, and the testimony of the faithful Fathers, ought to rule us in taking the meaning of the Holy Scripture touching the sacraments.

“But the words of the Lord’s Supper, the circumstances of the Scripture, the analogy of the sacraments, and the sayings of the Fathers, do most effectually and plainly prove a figurative speech in the words of the Lord’s Supper.

“Therefore a figurative sense and meaning is specially to be received in these words, ‘This is My body.’”—See *Goode on the Eucharist*, vol. ii., p. 766.

(3) Bishop Hooper, in his *Brief and Clear Confession of the Christian Faith*, says:

“I believe that all this sacrament consisteth in the use thereof; so that without the right use the bread and wine in nothing differ from other common bread and wine that is commonly used: and, therefore, I do not believe that the body of Christ can be contained, hid, or inclosed in the bread, under the bread, or with the bread,—neither the blood in the wine, under the wine, or with the wine. But I believe and confess the only body of Christ to be in heaven, on the right hand of the Father; and that always, and as often as we use this bread and wine according to this ordinance and institution of Christ, we do verily and indeed receive His body and blood.”—Hooper’s Works. Parker Society’s Edition, vol. ii., p. 48.

(4) Bishop Jewel says:—

Let us examine what difference there is between the body of Christ and the sacrament of His body.

“The difference is this: a sacrament is a figure or token; the body of Christ is figured or tokened. The sacramental bread is bread, it is not the body of Christ; the body of Christ is flesh, it is not bread. The bread is beneath; the body is above. The bread is on the table; the body is in heaven. The bread is in the mouth; the body is in the heart. The bread feedeth the body; the body feedeth the soul. The bread shall come to nothing; the body is immortal, and shall not perish. The bread is vile; the body of Christ is glorious. Such a difference is there between the bread which is a sacrament of the body, and the body of Christ itself. The sacrament is eaten as well of the wicked as of the faithful. The body is only eaten of the faithful. The sacrament may be eaten unto judgment; the body cannot be eaten but unto salvation. Without the sacrament we may be saved; but without the body of Christ we have no salvation: we cannot be saved. “—*Jewel on the Sacrament*. Parker Society’s Edition, vol. iv., p. 1121.

(5) Richard Hooker, in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, says:—

“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.

“And with this the very order of our Saviour’s words agreeth. First, ‘take and eat;’ then, ‘this is My body which is broken for you.’ First, ‘drink ye all of this;’ then followeth, ‘this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.’ I see not which way it should be gathered by the words of Christ,—when and where the bread is His body, or the wine His blood, but only in the very heart and soul of him which receiveth them. As for the sacraments, they really exhibit, but for aught we can gather out of that which is written of them, they *are* not really nor do really *contain* in themselves that grace which with them or by them it pleaseth God to bestow.”—Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.*, book v., p. 67.

(6) Waterland says:—

“The Fathers well understood that to make Christ’s natural body the real sacrifice of the Eucha-

rist, would not only be absurd in reason but highly presumptuous and profane: and that to make the outward symbols a proper sacrifice, a material sacrifice, would be entirely contrary to Gospel principles, degrading the Christian sacrifice into a Jewish one, yea, and making it much lower and meaner than the Jewish one, both in value and dignity. The right way, therefore, was to make the sacrifice spiritual, and it could be no other upon Gospel principles.”—Works, vol. iv., p. 762.

“No one has any authority or right to offer Christ as a sacrifice, whether really or symbolically, but Christ Himself; such a sacrifice is His sacrifice, not ours,—offered for us, not by us, to God the Father.”—Works, vol. iv., p.753.

FOOTNOTES

1 The doctrine of the Communion Service, let me remind the reader, is in precise harmony with that of our Catechism. Let us mark the following expressions:

“To the end that we should always *remember the* exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by His blood-shedding He hath obtained to us: He hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries as pledges of His love, and for a continual *remembrance* of His death, to our great and endless comfort.”—“He did institute, and in His holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual *memory* of that His precious death until His coming again.”—“Take and eat this in *remembrance* that Christ died for thee.”—“Drink this in *remembrance* that Christ’s blood was shed for thee.”

2 That our Lord’s body was not a real body like our own, was the favourite doctrine of the ancient heretics called “Apollinarians,” in the early Church.

3 On this point I venture to refer my readers to my own *Expository Thoughts on St John’s Gospel*, where they will find a condensed summary of opinions, in my notes on the sixth chapter.

4 These three Latin words, be it remembered, mean simply, “out of,” or “by means of, the work done.”

5 It is extremely difficult to make some people see the immense importance of strict accuracy in stating terms, in this unhappy controversy about the Lord’s Supper. The point in dispute is not whether there is a “real presence” of Christ in the Lord’s Supper. This we all hold.—The point is not whether Christ’s presence is a spiritual presence. Even Harding, the well-known antagonist of Jewel, admits that Christ’s body is present, “not after a corporal, or carnal, or natural wise, but invisibly, unspeakably, miraculously, supernaturally, spiritually, divinely, and in a manner by Him known.”—*Harding’s Reply to Jewel*.—The true point is, whether Christ’s real body and blood are really present in the elements of bread and wine, as soon as they are consecrated in the Lord’s Supper, and independently of the faith of him who receives it. Romanists and semi-Romanists say that they are so present. We say that they are not.

6 The antagonism between these sentences of Archdeacon Denison and Bishop Ridley’s views of the same subject, is so singularly strong, that I ask the reader not to pass on without noticing it. Bishop Ridley, in his Disputation at Oxford, says of the Romish doctrine of the Real Presence: “It destroyeth and taketh away the Institution of the Lord’s Supper, which was commanded only to be used and continued until the Lord Himself should come. If, therefore, He be now really present in the body of His flesh, then must the Supper cease: for a remembrance is not of a thing present, but of a thing past and absent. And, as one of the Fathers saith,—‘A figure is vain where the thing figured is present.’”—See *Foxe’s Martyrs, in loco*.

7 “In a devotional work lately published by the Church Press Company, entitled “The Little Prayer-book, intended for Beginners in Devotion, revised and corrected by three Priests,” the following passages will be found: —“When you enter the church, before you go to your place, bow reverently to the holy altar, for it is the throne of Christ, and the most sacred part of the church.”—“Bow reverently to the altar, before you leave the altar.”—“At the words ‘this is My body, this is My blood,’ you must believe that the bread and wine become the real body and blood with the Soul and God-head of Jesus Christ. Bow down your heart and body in deepest adoration when the priest says those awful words, *and worship your Saviour*, there, verily, and indeed present on His altar.”

In a “Catechism on the Office of the Holy Communion, edited by a Committee of Clergymen,” will be found the following statement:—“The Holy Communion is a sacrifice, an offering made on an altar to God.”—“We offer bread and wine; these afterwards become the body and blood of Christ.”—“The Lord Jesus Christ Himself as our High Priest, and the Priests of His Church

whom He hath appointed here on earth, alone have power to offer this sacrifice.”—“The sacrifice is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and is presented as a sin-offering to obtain pardon for our offences.”—The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ are really and truly present on the altar under the forms of the bread and wine, and the priest offers the sacrifice to God the Father.”—“We should worship our Lord, present in His sacrament, as we should do if we could see Him bodily.”

8 The rubric at the end of the Communion of the Sick is another strong evidence of the views of those who drew up our Prayer-book in its present form. It says, “If a man by reason of extremity of sickness, or for want of warning in due time to the curate, or for lack of company to receive with him, or by any other just impediment, do not receive the sacrament of Christ’s body and blood, the curate shall instruct him, that if he do truly repent him of his sins, and steadfastly believe that Jesus Christ hath suffered death on the Cross for him, and shed His blood for his redemption, earnestly remembering the benefits he hath thereby, and giving him hearty thanks therefor, he *doth eat and drink the body and blood* of our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul’s health, although he do not receive the sacrament with his mouth.”

9 I take occasion to say that I view with strong dislike the modern practice of substituting the Lord’s Supper for a sermon at Episcopal and Archidiaconal visitations. No doubt it saves Bishops and Archdeacons much trouble. It delivers them from the invidious responsibility of selecting a preacher. But the thing has a very suspicious and unsatisfactory appearance. Preaching the Word, in my judgment, is a far more important ordinance than the Lord’s Supper. The subject is one about which Evangelical Churchmen would do well to awake and be on their guard. This studied attempt to thrust in the Lord’s Supper on all occasions has a most unfortunate tendency to make men remember the Popish mass.

10 It is truly lamentable to observe how many young men and women, of whom better things might have been expected, fall away into semi-Romanism in the present day, under the attraction of a highly ornamental and sensuous ceremonial. Flowers, crucifixes, processions, banners, incense, gorgeous-vestments, and the like, never fail to draw such young persons together, just as honey attracts flies. I will not insult the common sense of those who find these things attractive, by asking them whether they really believe they get any food from them for heart, and conscience, and soul. But I should like them to consider seriously what these things mean. Do they really know that the doctrines of the mass and transubstantiation are the root of the whole system? Are they prepared to swallow these awful heresies? I suspect many are playing with Ritualism without the least idea what it covers over. They see an attractive bait, but they do not see the hook.

11 It is a fact that the Communion Table in Gloucester Cathedral was first placed altar-wise against the east end of the chancel by Laud himself, when he was Dean of Gloucester, in the year 1616. It is also a fact that Bishop Miles Smith, then Bishop of Gloucester, was so pained and annoyed by this change, that he declared he would not enter the Cathedral again till the table was brought back to its former position. He kept his word, and never went within the walls of the Cathedral, till he was buried there in 1624.

Let us observe the language used by Bishop Ridley in his injunctions to the clergy of the See of London. Assigning reasons for the removal of altars and the substitution of tables, he says: “The use of an altar is to sacrifice upon; the use of a table is to serve men to eat upon. Now when we come to the Lord’s Board, what do we come for? To sacrifice Christ again, and to crucify Him again, or to feed upon Him that was once only crucified and offered up for us? If we come to feed upon him, spiritually to eat His body, and spiritually to drink His blood, which is the true use of the Lord’s Supper, then no man can deny that the form of a table is more meet than the form of an altar.”—See *Foxe’s Acts and Mon.* Vol. vi.. Seeley’s Edition, p. 6.