

Rome is not a party;” and after having had that important lesson brought home to us so lately with all the force of demonstration, we cannot give much confidence to the limitations which private individuals attempt to fix upon the papal power without the pope’s knowledge and consent. The time for imposing such restraints on absolute power is, we fear, gone by. The balloon, broken loose from its fastenings, rises high in air, and scorns any longer to be tied to earth. Pius IX is not now to be repressed. His voice goes to the world’s end. Speeches and bulls follow each other in thick profusion. The echo of one allocution has scarcely died away in the distance, till the air is disturbed by the approach of another. He is now an old man—the oldest pope who ever sat in the Roman chair—but he may live to fix upon half-a-dozen other new doctrines the stamp of St. Peter, and may add them to the Catholic creed before the curtain drops.



ARTICLE VI.

CALVIN DEFENDED AGAINST DRS. CUNNINGHAM
AND HODGE.

Fifteen years ago Principal Cunningham wrote: “But though there is no great difference of opinion among the Reformed Churches and among Protestant divines concerning the general doctrines of the sacraments, there seems to have sprung up in modern times a great deal of ignorance and confusion in men’s conceptions upon this subject. . . . The general doctrine . . . has been very much overlooked. . . . The disregard of this topic has tended to produce a great deal of confusion and error.

We are in the habit of seeing baptism and the Lord’s Supper administered in the Church, and are thus led insensibly and without much consideration to form certain notions in regard to them without investigating carefully their leading principles and grounds. . . . We believe there is scarcely any subject set

forth in the Confessions of the Reformed Churches that is less attended to and less understood than this of the sacraments; and that many, even of those who have subscribed these Confessions, rest satisfied with some defective and confused notions on the subject of baptism and the Lord's Supper, while they have scarcely even a fragment of an idea of a sacramental principle or of any general doctrine or theory on the subject of the sacraments." (*Cunningham's Works*, Vol. I., pp. 237-9.)

Some three or four years before Principal Cunningham thus expressed himself, Dr. Thornwell had said to a colleague about to take the chair of Ecclesiastical History and Polity in the Seminary at Columbia, "I hope you will make the Fourth Book of Calvin's Institutes your text-book in church government, for I, in my department, carry our students through the first three books so that they learn Calvin's theology, and it would be well for them to go with you over the Fourth Book that they may get his views of church government;—*besides* (he added) *I do believe in Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper.*"

Now what was Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper?

If we put this question to Principal Cunningham, his answer will be as follows: "Zwingle's views were a reaction against those which generally prevailed in the Church of Rome; but the extent to which he went rather reacted upon the other Reformers and made them again approximate somewhat in phraseology to the Romish position. This appears more or less even in Calvin, though, in his case, there was an additional perverting element—the desire to keep on friendly terms with Luther and his followers, and with that view to approximate as far as he could to their notions of the corporal presence of Christ in the Eucharist. We have no fault to find with the substance of Calvin's statements in regard to the sacraments in general, or with regard to baptism; but we cannot deny that he made an effort to bring out something like a real influence exerted by Christ's human nature upon the souls of believers in connection with the dispensation of the Lord's Supper—an effort which, of course, was altogether unsuccessful, and resulted only in what was about as unintelligible as Luther's consubstantiation. This is perhaps the greatest blot on

the history of Calvin's labors as a public instructor; and it is a curious circumstance that the influence which seems to have been chiefly efficacious in leading him astray in the matter was a quality for which he usually gets no credit, viz., an earnest desire to preserve unity and harmony among the different sections of the Christian Church." (*Ibidem*, p. 240.)

This is a statement not of but *about* Calvin's doctrine. And the reader will notice that it is not a little disparaging to the great Genevese. There are not less than five charges here made against Calvin, and these by one of his staunchest disciples and warmest admirers: (1.) The Reformer's views were not strictly his own—the product of his own calm and unbiassed investigation and reflection, but were reached under the control of a reactionary influence from Zwingle's genius, or at least from Zwingle's extravagance. (2.) Calvin, under this influence, went astray and approximated Rome. (3.) Acting along with Zwingle's reactionary influence over this feeble and impassible mind, there was another perverting element—a rather weak desire to keep on friendly terms with Luther. (4.) All this gave rise to a dishonest effort on Calvin's part to bring out of Scripture what was not in Scripture. (5.) The result was, of course, a *failure*, as Calvin, if he had really had good sense, ought to have anticipated;—it was the miserable invention of a theory as unintelligible as Luther's consubstantiation, which constitutes the greatest blot on Calvin's character as a public instructor! Some of these charges it is one object of this paper to examine, and thus we redeem the pledge given in concluding our former article.

We propose now to submit to our readers, not any statements of our own about the doctrine of Calvin, but the thing itself as he sets it forth, and every one can then judge for himself whether Principal Cunningham has correctly represented the great Reformer. We shall endeavor to reduce the full exposition of it by its author to the shortest compass consistent with clearness.

1. In the fourteenth chapter of the Fourth Book of his Institutes, Calvin discusses the sacrament in general, defining it to be "an external sign by which the Lord seals on our consciences his promises of good-will towards us, in order to sustain the weak-

ness of our faith; and we, in our turn, testify our piety towards him, both before himself and before angels, as well as before men.” Thus there never is a sacrament without an antecedent promise to which the sacrament is a kind of appendix for confirming and sealing it. Sacraments, therefore, are exercises which confirm our faith in the word of God; and because we are carnal they are exhibited under carnal objects, that thus they may train us in accommodation to our sluggish capacity, just as nurses lead children by the hand. Here is seen the condescension of our merciful Lord, who because from our animal nature we are always creeping on the ground and cleaving to the flesh, having no thought of what is spiritual, and not even forming an idea of it, yet declines not to lead us to himself by means of these earthly elements, and even to exhibit in flesh itself a mirror of spiritual blessings. Hence Augustine calls the sacrament a *visible word*, because it represents the promises of God as in a picture. (Chap. XIV., §§1–6.)

Now in assigning this office to the sacraments, it must not be understood that there is any kind of secret efficacy inherent in them by which they can of themselves promote or strengthen faith, but they perform this office because our Lord has instituted them for it, and they perform it only when accompanied by the Spirit, the internal Master. If he is wanting, the sacraments can avail us no more than the sun shining on the eye-balls of the blind. Wherefore we ascribe the whole energy to the Spirit, and to the sacrament only ministry, which without the Spirit is empty and frivolous, but when he acts within is full of power. (*Ibid.*, §9.)

It is therefore a fixed point, that the office of the sacraments differs not from that of the word of God, which is to hold forth and offer Christ to us. They confer nothing and avail nothing, if not received in faith. We must beware of being led into error by the terms somewhat too extravagant which ancient Christian writers have employed in extolling the dignity of the sacraments. (*Ibid.*, §17.)

After saying these things, Calvin proceeds to set forth that the term *sacrament*, in the view he has taken of it, includes generally all time signs which God ever commanded men to use, that he

might make them sure and confident of the truth of his promises. These were sometimes placed in natural objects, and sometimes were exhibited in miracles. Of the former class, was the tree of life to Adam and Eve—it was an earnest of their immortality, that they might feel confident of the promise as often as they ate the fruit. And so when the Lord withdrew from our first parents the promise of life, he withdrew also the sacrament which assured them of that promise. Another example of the same class was the bow given to Noah and his posterity. Of the second class, one example was the light showed to Abraham in the smoking furnace; another, the wet and dry fleece to Gideon: and a third, the going back of the shadow on the dial to Hezekiah. Still more eminent examples of sacraments, were those *pactions* (to use the term of Chrysostom) by which God entered into covenant with his people for their training in faith and that they might testify his truth to men, such as circumcision, and all the purifications, sacrifices, and other rites of the Mosaic law, and more recently Baptism and the Lord's Supper. For the ancient sacraments had the same end in view as our own, viz., to direct and almost by the hand lead us to Christ; or rather, they were all like images to represent him and hold him forth to our knowledge. For sacraments are seals of the promises of God; and as no divine promise has ever been offered to man except in Christ, whensoever they remind us of any divine promise they must of necessity exhibit Christ. There is only this difference, that while the former shadowed forth a promised Christ while he was still expected, the latter bear testimony to him as already come and manifested. (*Ibid.*, §§18-26.)

Nothing more needs to be added from Calvin's general doctrine of the sacraments in this fourteenth chapter, except that he deals in it with two classes of opponents of the truth: those who undervalued the power of the sacraments, as the Anabaptists, and those who exaggerated their power, as Rome. Under the latter head, (though Principal Cunningham charges that Calvin, in his doctrine of the Sacraments, goes astray and approximates the Romish position,) we find the Reformer, all unconscious of this error and this approach, denouncing as "fatal and pestilent-

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tial this sentiment—that the sacraments have a kind of secret virtue.” In fact he says, in his own forcible way, that “it is plainly of the devil.” (*Ibid.*, §14.)

2. The seventeenth chapter, which treats especially of the Supper, consists of two principal parts. In the first eleven sections Calvin delivers his doctrine of the Supper, and in the remaining sections refutes the errors which superstition has introduced.

He begins with a reference to John vi. 51, and calls the Supper a spiritual feast, at which Christ testifies that he himself is living bread on which our souls feed. We get invisible food from the body and blood of Christ, and the signs which represent this are bread and wine. The mystery of the secret union of Christ with believers is incomprehensible by nature, and it is therefore exhibited to our dull minds in visible, familiar signs, showing that souls are fed by Christ just as the corporeal life is sustained by bread and wine. The end then of this sacrament is to assure us, that the body of Christ was once sacrificed for us, so that we may now eat it and eating feel within ourselves the efficacy of that one sacrifice, and that his blood was once shed for us so as to be our perpetual drink. Pious souls have great delight in this sacrament as a testimony that they form one body with Christ, so that every thing which is his they may call their own. For these are words which can never lie nor deceive: “Take, eat my body broken for you; drink my blood shed for you.” In bidding us *take*, he intimates that it is ours; in bidding us *eat*, he intimates that it becomes one substance with us; in affirming that his body was broken and his blood shed *for us*, he shows that both were not so much his as ours, because he took and laid down both not for his own advantage but for our salvation. So the chief and almost the whole energy of the sacrament consists in these words, “It is broken for you, it is shed for you,” because it would not be of much importance that the body and blood of the Lord are now distributed, had they not once been set forth for our redemption and salvation. (Chapter XVII, §§1–3.)

The principal object of the sacrament, then, is not simply by signs to set forth the body of Christ, but rather to seal and con-

firm the promise that his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, nourishing us unto life eternal, and that he is the Bread of Life, of which whosoever eats shall live forever;—and to seal and confirm that promise it sends us to the cross of Christ, where that promise was performed and fulfilled in all its parts. For we do not eat Christ duly and savingly unless as crucified, whilst we perceive the efficacy of his death in lively apprehension. Because he did not take the appellation, Bread of Life, from the Sacrament, as some perversely understand, but such was he given to us by the Father, and such he exhibited himself, when, partaking of our mortality, he makes us to share in his divine immortality; when, offering himself a sacrifice, he bore in himself our curse that he might cover us over with his blessing; when, in his dying, he devoured and swallowed up death; when, in his resurrection, this our corruptible flesh, which he had put on, he raised to glory and incorruption. (*Ibid.*, §4.)

3. Thus far Calvin has been declaring what it is which God exhibits in the Holy Supper. But now he proceeds to set forth by what means and to what extent that which is there exhibited by God, becomes ours. This discussion occupies sections 5–11, and it is here we shall discover all that distinguishes his doctrine of this sacrament.

His first statement in section 5, is that the whole of what is exhibited in the Supper becomes ours by application, and then he proceeds to say that the means of the application are the Word, and still more clearly the Sacred Supper. Of course the agent is the Holy Spirit. We pause to suggest the inquiry, which at present we have not the opportunity to determine ourselves, whether it was not just here originated the use of the term “applied” as it is employed in the Shorter Catechism’s answer to the question, What is a sacrament? Principal Cunningham (see Works, Vol. I., p. 278,) finds some “difficulty” in this word, and calls it “a single, vague, and ambiguous expression.” His “difficulty” he states thus: “Do not these words [exhibiting and applying] convey the idea of conferring or bestowing what was not previously possessed? Do they not thus sanction the notion that Christ and his benefits are conveyed or bestowed, not pre-

viously to the lawful reception of the sacraments, but in and by the use of them?" What he is apprehensive may be wrongly inferred from the term, is, that the sacrament is to be used by others than believers, and he elaborately argues to prove that the Catechism is not to be so understood. But it appears to us that the answer of the Catechism itself sufficiently guards against such abuse by its own emphatic statement, that in the sacrament "by sensible signs Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed, and applied to believers." The term "*applied*" then appears to us a perfectly innocent, as it is a very transparently clear one. What is the sense of it as used by Calvin, who was perhaps its originator? Manifestly that the Supper, *like the word*, though (for certain reasons derived partly from our own weakness and carnality) *still more clearly than the word*, is for our assurance that the benefits of the new covenant are all ours, through Christ, by faith—in other terms, that these are both of them means of grace to us in the hands of the Spirit of all grace. He says that in the Supper, with special clearness, Christ offers himself to us with all his blessings, and we receive him in faith. Then he reiterates that the Supper does not make Christ become, for the first time, the Bread of Life, but recalls to our mind the fact that he was made that Bread and makes us feel the efficacy of it, by assuring us, first, that whatever Christ did or suffered was to give us life, and, secondly, that this vivification is eternal. For as Christ would not have been the Bread of Life to us if he had not been born, and died, and risen again, so he could not now be the Bread of Life to us if the efficacy of his birth, death, and resurrection, were not eternal. This is what Christ himself said: "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world"—intimating that his body would be as bread for the life of the soul, because delivered unto death for our salvation; and intimating, also, that he extends it to us for food when he makes us partakers of it by faith. So that he gave himself to be bread for us, when he was crucified for the redemption of the world; and daily he gives himself as bread, when he offers himself in the word to be partakers of by us, inasmuch as he was

crucified; when he seals that offer by the sacred mystery of the Supper; and when he accomplishes inwardly what externally he designates.

But now there are two extremes to be avoided: the one is to extenuate too much these *signs*, and so to dissever them from the mysteries to which they are in a certain manner affixed; the other is by extolling these signs immoderately to seem even to obscure the mysteries themselves.

And here Calvin pauses to consider whether, as is affirmed by some, the eating of the flesh and the drinking of the blood of Christ be nothing more than believing in Christ. And he says that it seems to him that something more express and more sublime is taught in that noble discourse of our Lord, [viz., John, 6th chapter,] where he recommends the eating of his flesh; viz., that it is with a real participation of his life we are vivified, which he designates by the terms *eating* and *drinking*, lest any one should suppose that the life we partake of from him may be obtained *by simple knowledge*. For as it is not the sight but the eating of bread which nourishes the body, so the soul must truly and thoroughly partake of Christ that it may grow in spiritual life by his energy. But we admit that this eating is nothing else than the eating of faith, and that no other eating can be imagined. This (says Calvin) is the difference between their mode of speaking and mine. According to them, to eat is merely to believe; but I maintain that the flesh of Christ is eaten by believing, because it is made ours by faith, and the eating of it is the fruit and effect of faith. Or, to be plainer, with them the eating is faith; with me it rather is a consequence of faith. The difference is little in words, but not in reality. The apostle teaches that Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, but who interprets that *dwelling* to be faith? Every one sees that that saying explains the admirable *effects of faith*, because it is by it that believers have Christ dwelling in them. In this way our Lord, by calling himself the Bread of Life, designed to teach us not only that our salvation is in the faith of his death and resurrection, but that it is accomplished by a real communication of himself to us, so that

his life passes into us and becomes ours, not otherwise than as bread taken for food administers vigor to the body. (*Ibid.*, §5.)

4. Having thus disposed of the question, *by what means* that which is exhibited in the Supper becomes ours, the Reformer next proceeds to consider *to what extent* it is made to be ours. He declares that it is not sufficient to say that our communion with Christ makes us partakers of his Spirit, omitting all mention of flesh and blood, as if all were nothing which is said by Christ, of his “flesh being meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed,” and that we “have no life unless we eat that flesh and drink that blood,” and other words of the same tenor. Seeing, therefore, that full communion with Christ goes beyond this restricted account of it, he undertakes to show how far it does extend, before proceeding to speak of the contrary vice of excess. He promises to be brief here, for he must have a longer discussion with the hyperbolic doctors [that is, as afterwards appears, the *transubstantiators* and the *consubstantiators* as well] who, whilst, through their own grossness, they fabricate an absurd mode of eating and drinking, do likewise transform Christ, divested of his flesh, into a phantom. But here he gives expression to his doubts whether, indeed, it be lawful to put into any form of words this great mystery—a mystery which he freely confesses that he is not able to grasp with his mind, lest any should undertake to measure the sublimity of it by his (Calvin’s) infantile capacity. Wherefore he exhorts his readers not to confine their apprehensions within those too narrow mental conceptions of his, but to seek to rise higher than he is able himself to lift them. For whenever this subject is under consideration, after he has done his utmost, he always feels that he has spoken far beneath its dignity. And though the mind for thinking excels the tongue for speaking, the magnitude of this subject overcomes and overwhelms the mind likewise. All that remains then is to break forth in admiration of the mystery which the mind is as inadequate to comprehend as the tongue is to express it. He will now, however, undertake to give a summary of his views as best he can, which, as he doubts not himself the truth of it, he trusts will not be disapproved by pious hearts. (*Ibid.*, §7.)

5. We are persuaded that the thoughtful and candid reader has found nothing as yet in these statements of the great Genevese to justify the condemnation of Principal Cunningham. Let the same candor and thoughtfulness be employed in considering the most precise and exact account of this mystery which Calvin now proceeds in sections 8, 9, and 10, to give, and we are confident his doctrine must be pronounced both scriptural and reasonable and also edifying.

First of all, we are taught in Scripture that Christ was, from the beginning, the vivific Word of the Father, the fountain and origin of life, from whence all things should always receive life. Hence John calls him the Word of Life, and says that in him was life, and intimates that he was then pervading all creatures and instilling into them the power of breathing and living. But he adds, that the life was at length manifested, when the Son of God, assuming our nature, exhibited himself in bodily form to be seen and handled. For although he previously diffused his virtue into the creature, yet because man, alienated from God by sin, had lost the communication of life and saw death impending over him on every side, it became necessary, in order for him to regain the hope of immortality, that he should be restored to the communion of that Word. How little confidence can it give you to hear that the Word of God, from whom you are at the greatest distance, contains in himself the plenitude of life, whilst in yourself and all around you nothing but death meets your gaze! But, indeed, ever since that fount of life began to dwell in our flesh, he now lies not hidden and far away from us, but exhibits himself before us to be partaken of by us. Nay, the very flesh in which he is dwelling he renders vivific to us, so that by partaking of it we may feed for immortality. "I am (he says) that Bread of Life. I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven. And the bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Here he declares not only that he is life, as the eternal Word who descends to us from heaven, but that by coming down he diffused that same power of life through the flesh which he put on, so that from thence a communication of life can emanate to us. Hence it follows that his

“flesh is meat indeed,” and his “blood drink indeed.” Here then is wondrous consolation for the pious, that they find life now in their own flesh—not only easily reached by them, but set right before them, so that they will get it if they but open their bosom to receive it. (*Ibid.*, §8.)

The flesh of Christ, however, has not this vivific power in itself, but was originally subject to death; and now that it is endued with immortality, it lives not by itself. And yet it is called *vivific*, because pervaded with the fulness of life for the purpose of transmitting it to us. Thus Christ says, “As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself”—when he speaks not of the properties he had from the beginning with the Father, but of those with which he was invested in that flesh in which he appeared, so that in his humanity there dwells a fulness of life, and every one partakes of this who communicates in his flesh and blood. This can be illustrated thus: As a reservoir of water furnishes a supply to drink, to draw from, and to irrigate the fields, and yet does not itself possess this abundance for so many uses, but gets it from the source which with perennial flow sends forth continually fresh supplies, so the flesh of Christ is a full and inexhaustible reservoir transfusing into us the life which constantly flows into it from the spring-head of Divinity itself. Who does not see now that a communion with the flesh and blood of Christ is necessary to all who aspire to the heavenly life? Hence those expressions of the apostle in Ephesians about the Church being the “body” and the “fulness” of Christ, and our being “members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones,” which could not be said if he did not adhere to us wholly in body and spirit. At length Paul cries out, testifying that the matter is too high for utterance, “This is a great mystery.” Ephes. v. 32. (*Ibid.*, §9.)

And now Calvin concludes that the flesh and blood of Christ feed our souls just as bread and wine support our corporeal life. For the sign would have no aptitude, did our souls not find their nourishment in Christ; and this could not be, did not Christ truly form one with us and refresh our strength by the eating of his flesh and the drinking of his blood. But if it seem incredible

that the flesh of Christ so far removed by distance from us should be food to us, let us recollect how far beyond our conception is the secret power of the Holy Spirit, and how foolish it is to measure his immensity by our modes. What the mind, therefore, cannot comprehend, let faith apprehend. Now the sacred communication of his flesh and blood by which Christ transfuses his life into us, he testifies and seals in the Supper, and that not with an empty and vain sign, but he there exerts the efficacy of his Spirit, and so fulfils what he promises. And let none object that the language employed is figurative, as though it therefore set forth nothing real or true. We admit that the breaking of the bread is a symbol and not the reality, yet is the reality duly set forth and exhibited in the symbol. For unless one would charge God with deceit, let him never dare to say that any empty symbol is held forth by him. (*Ibid.*, §10.)

6. When Calvin comes to his long discussion with the “hyperbolic” consubstantiators, we hear him express himself on the subject of the presence of Christ in the sacrament. Two restrictions we are never to lose sight of: one is, that our ideas of the presence must never derogate from the heavenly glory of Christ; the other is, that no property be assigned to his body inconsistent with his human nature. Accordingly it is a great mistake these consubstantiators make, to imagine that there is no presence of the flesh of Christ in the Supper unless it be placed in the bread. Christ does not seem to them to be present unless he descends to us, as if we did not equally gain his presence when he raises us by faith to himself. They place Christ lurking in the bread; we deem it unnecessary and unlawful to draw his body down from heaven. For, seeing the mystery is heavenly, why bring his body to the earth to be conjoined to us? But as to the mode of this conjunction of Christ’s flesh to us, Calvin freely confesses the mystery too deep for his mind to comprehend or his words to express. He says he rather feels than understands it, yet, that without controversy, he embraces the truth of God and rests in that. Christ declares his flesh the food, his

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blood the drink of my soul; I give my soul to him to be fed with such food. In his sacred Supper he bids me take, eat and drink

his body and blood, under the symbols of bread and wine; I have no doubt that he will truly give and I receive. Only I reject the absurdities which appear to be unworthy of the heavenly majesty of Christ and are inconsistent with the reality of his human nature. But when these absurdities are discarded, he willingly admits any thing which helps to express the true and substantial communication of the body and blood of the Lord as exhibited to believers under the sacred symbols of the Supper; understanding that they are received, not by the imagination or intellect merely, but are enjoyed in reality as the food of eternal life; but also understanding at the same time that the bread and wine only exhibit and seal this sacred communion, for the presence is not in the bread, and the communion is only by faith. He proceeds to testify that there is no cause for the odium with which this view is regarded by the world and the unjust prejudice incurred by its defence, unless it be in the fearful fascinations of Satan; for that what he was teaching on this subject is in perfect accordance with Scripture, contains nothing absurd, obscure, or ambiguous, is not unfavorable to true piety and solid edification, and in short has nothing in it that could have offended if it had not been that for some ages while the ignorance and barbarism of sophists reigned in the Church the clear light and open truth were so unworthily oppressed. (*Ibid.*, §§19, 32.)

Thus in a comparatively brief space we have presented a full and we hope clear statement of Calvin's doctrine of the Supper. It may be useful now to give a yet briefer summary of it thus:

(1.) The Son of God has ever been the author and dispenser of life to all. But when man fell, life was lost by him and the dead sinner could no more reach the infinite Source of life; nor could he reach us except by coming nigh to us in flesh, taking our nature and our guilt so that he might make us partake of his righteousness and his nature. Not only the legal obstacle must be removed, but a vital connection be formed between the Redeemer and his people, as there was between the first Adam and his children. When Christ then assumes our nature and our guilt, life is brought nigh to us and within our reach. It is given to all who believe. This life is not in God, but in the Son

of God incarnate. The flesh of the Son of God is for us the seat of life. He pervades that flesh with his own immortality in order to communicate the same to us who could not otherwise be reached by him. He fills that reservoir with life from the spring-head of his divinity and it constantly flows with a perennial stream into us, so that we partake of his human-divine life. Life then, for us, depends on our being in communion with the flesh of Christ and not simply on our having his Spirit. He could never have reached us by his Spirit had he not first taken upon him our flesh and in that flesh made atonement and purchased grace for us. Those are, therefore, not empty words,—not mere figurative words without any real or substantial meaning,—which our Saviour spoke, “Except ye eat my flesh, ye have no life in you.” There is some deep and true sense in which we are “members of his body, his flesh, and of his bones.” But “this is a great mystery.” And we speak very properly of the union betwixt Christ and his people as “the mystical union.” This mystery is above our comprehension, like many other of the revealed things of God. Faith must apprehend what reason does not enable us to grasp intellectually. And the communion in the flesh of Christ is itself only by faith.

(2.) Now this communion with the flesh of the Son of God, which becomes ours when we believe in him, is signified and also sealed or confirmed to us in the Sacred Supper. The presence of Christ at that Supper is not in the bread, nor is it a physical presence of his body which is in the upper sanctuary. Yet it is a real presence by his Spirit to our faith, and we have in the sacrament especial communion with his flesh or human nature through the elements of bread and wine. In them we do after a peculiar manner apprehend our incarnate Lord and Saviour. Bread and wine set forth to our spiritual apprehension his body broken and his blood shed for us. The language of Christ on this subject is figurative, but it figures something real and actual. What he exhibits to us in the Supper is by emblems, but they set forth what is substantial and true, and we are not deceived with empty words.

Let the reader now judge for himself between John Calvin and William Cunningham. The one says these views are “in perfect accordance with Scripture;” and contain “nothing absurd, obscure, or ambiguous;” and are also “not unfavorable to true piety and solid edification.” The other says they constitute “an effort to bring out of Scripture” what was not in Scripture; “an effort of course unsuccessful;” and the result “about as unintelligible as Luther’s consubstantiation.” For ourselves we see “nothing absurd, obscure, or ambiguous,” in the doctrine of the Reformer, while all that is “unintelligible” in it is the mystery of the deep things of God.

But let us go now into a brief examination of Consubstantiation, with which Cunningham compares it.

Transubstantiation (as Calvin points out) claims to convert the bread into the body, soul, and divinity of Christ, so that it is bread no longer. Thus the nature of the sacrament is overthrown, since, in the mode of signifying, the earthly sign no longer corresponds to the heavenly reality. True bread must represent the true body of Christ, or the truth of the sacrament is lost. Now Consubstantiation perceives that the analogy of the sign to the thing signified must not be destroyed, and it maintains therefore, contrary to Rome, that the bread remains unchanged. And yet it insists, from its literal interpretation of the Lord’s words, that the body of Christ is by a real physical presence included in, with, and under the bread. Of course, then, ubiquity must be ascribed to the body of our Lord, and it must also be invisible and immense, with dimensions not more circumscribed than those of heaven and earth. Thus the reality of Christ’s human flesh is denied, and he is no longer a true and proper man. The old Gnostic errors which made the body of our Lord a phantasm were no worse than this. Our Lord, however, in the emblems of the sacrament, gave to his disciples the day before he suffered, his mortal and true body which afterwards suffered death. Nor was that body attached by any physical tie to those elements which merely signified and set it forth, because then his flesh must have been dissevered from his blood. So, Consubstantiation affirms

that the blood is in the body, and again the body is in the blood, by what they call *concomitance*, but then the symbols which are separate from each other do not answer to the reality they set forth.

Now is there not something *absurd, obscure, ambiguous* here, and still more something contrary to Scripture? The real and true body of Christ is what he gave for us, and what he gave in symbols to the disciples at the Supper. It is then as fatal to the doctrine of the sacrament to construe away the real and true body set forth, as to construe away the real and true bread and wine which symbolize it. Rome transubstantiates the bread. Luther holds fast to the bread, but consubstantiates the body. And so the body given by Christ to his disciples is to be supposed ubiquitous, invisible, immense, fantastic; with the flesh of it separated from the blood, and the blood of it separated from the flesh.

Such is the theory which Principal Cunningham says is no more “unintelligible,” than Calvin’s doctrine of the Sacrament. But supposing this to be so, who would maintain that that quality is any absolute proof that a doctrine is not true? If Consubstantiation, or if Transubstantiation itself, were but revealed in the Scriptures, we could not object that it was *unintelligible*. Principal Cunningham is no Rationalist, and he must not talk like one. Does he claim that he finds the Trinity, or the humiliation of the Second Person, or the omnipresence of God, or the connexion of sovereignty and free agency, all plain and easy to be understood? And while complaining that Calvin’s doctrine is “unintelligible,” which is evidently as well as professedly drawn from our Lord’s own words in John vi., does the Principal presume to say that he comprehends those mysterious and sublime utterances themselves? As for us we discover no self-contradictoriness in Calvin’s doctrine, and are by no means stumbled at its mystery. We find mystery above and beneath and around and within us. If we abandon all the mysterious revelations which are unintelligible to our weak comprehension, we must just abandon our whole faith. Christianity itself moves always in the sphere of the supernatural.

And now let us quote the *summing up* by Calvin upon the theory of Consubstantiation, for it forms a beautiful contrast between that theory and his views, which two things Cunningham would identify:

“The presence of Christ in the Supper we must hold to be such as neither affixes him to the element of bread, nor encloses him in bread, nor circumscribes him in any way, for all these obviously detract from his celestial glory; at the same time it must neither divest him of his proper dimensions, nor dissever him into different places, nor assign him boundless magnitude diffused through heaven and earth, for all these are plainly repugnant to his true humanity. Never let us lose sight of these two restrictions: *first*, let no part of his heavenly glory be taken away, which happens whenever he is reduced under the corruptible elements of this world, or bound fast to any earthly creature; *secondly*, let no property be assigned to his body which is not consistent with his human nature which happens when either it is said to be infinite, or is said to occupy many places at once.”

We have disposed of two of the five charges of Principal Cunningham; there is but one more that we care to examine. It is that Calvin was “led astray” by the “perverting” influence of his desire “to keep on friendly terms with Luther and his followers.” Now, in the first place, it is unfair as well as unreasonable to take this ground against the Reformer, seeing that he claims to derive his doctrine so definitely and so clearly from the Scriptures. Again, if the doctrine of Calvin were the absurd and foolish theory it is represented by Principal Cunningham to be, then we might consent to let him explain the fact of Calvin’s making such a poor invention by the statement that he was trying by it to please Luther with some “unintelligible” nonsense like his own. But seeing that Calvin’s doctrine of the Supper has in it nothing “absurd, obscure, or ambiguous,” but everything sober and scriptural, the charge made by Principal Cunningham must be held to be an unfortunate blunder which recoils on himself. We have great respect for William Cunningham, but more for John Calvin. Instead of Calvin’s doctrine of the Supper being “the greatest blot on his labors as a public instructor,” this accusation of Cunningham is to be considered, so far as we know, the only serious blot on what he has otherwise so well written.

But the very chapter wherein Calvin sets forth his doctrine of the Supper furnishes evidence in denial of the charge that he was misled and fell into egregious error through an overweening anxiety to please the Lutherans. His earnest desire to bring both Zwinglians and Lutherans back from their erroneous extremes on two sides to the true scriptural middle where he stood himself, is very well known; but it is a gratuitous and most unjust allegation, that this desire led him to trim and twist his doctrine into a particular shape for the purpose of pleasing either party. And this is made manifest by the plainness of speech he employs in sections 16-21 of the chapter on the Lord's Supper. Does it sound like the language of a boot-licker to Luther to speak of Consubstantiation as "a monstrous dogma," and to complain that, so far from those who sent it forth "being ashamed of the disgrace," they "assail us with virulent invectives for not subscribing to" it? Surely the mean spirit ascribed by Cunningham to the Reformer does not consist with his saying of those who "fix the body itself in the bread," and so "attach to it an ubiquity contrary to its nature," and by "adding *under* the bread, will have it, that it [the body] lies hid under it," that he "must employ a short time in exposing their craft and dragging them forth from their concealment's." He proceeds to charge them with "rashness" and with "obstinacy," with "calling [the Gnostic] Marcion from his grave," and making the body of Christ, as he did, a mere "phantasm." And he calls one of their statements "a frivolous pretence," and speaks of them generally as "absurdities." All these offensive expressions are found in the sections referred to above, and they were of course calculated to offend Luther and his friends.

Looking into Calvin's *Short Treatise on the Lord's Supper*, we discover still further proofs how impossible it is that he could ever have truckled to Luther, much and rightly as he did undoubtedly honor and love him. In paragraph 41, we read:

"To wish then to establish such a presence as is to enclose the body within the sign or to be joined to it locally, is not only a reverie, but a damnable error derogatory to the honor of Christ and destructive of what we ought to hold in regard to his human nature."

Again we read in paragraph 42:

" To fancy Jesus Christ enclosed under the bread and wine-, or so to conjoin him with it as to amuse our understanding there, without looking* up to Heaven, is a diabolical reverie."

Again in paragraph 58, which is headed, *Attempted Reconciliation--Cause of Failure*, it is thus written:

"We thus see wherein Luther failed on his side, and Zwinglius and Ecolampadius on theirs. It was Luther's duty first to have given notice that it was not his intention to establish such a local presence as the Papists dream; *secondly*, to protest that he did not mean to have the sacrament adored instead of God; and *lastly*, to abstain from those similitudes so harsh and difficult to be conceived, or have used them with moderation, interpreting them so that they could not give rise to any scandal. After the debate was moved, he exceeded bounds as well in declaring his opinion as in blaming others with too much sharpness of speech. For instead of explaining himself in such a way as to make it possible to receive his view, he, with his accustomed vehemence, in assailing those who contradicted him, used hyperbolical forms of speech very difficult to be borne by those who otherwise were not much disposed to believe at his nod."

Surely this does not sound like undue homage to Luther. And yet Calvin could speak of Luther as "a man whose memory I revere, and whose honor I am desirous to consult." [Exposition of Heads of Agreement in the Mutual Consent.] It is also worthy of note that the treatise on the Lord's Supper, wherein Calvin speaks so freely about Luther and his doctrine, was "not only generally welcomed, but received commendation in quarters from which it was least to have been expected [as Henry Beveridge, who translates Calvin's Tracts, remarks]—even Luther speaking of it in terms alike honorable to himself and gratifying to the heart of Calvin." Mr. Beveridge certainly perceived clearly that Calvin did not basely court the Saxon Reformer's favor.

As for Westphal and Heshusius, they come on the stage after Luther's death; so that the severity of Calvin's lash administered to these worthies, affords no positive proof that he did not pay any undue homage to Luther. And yet we are satisfied the candid and careful reader must feel that the man who could deal so

sharply with Lutheran ideas after the death of their great author, cannot, without being both a coward and a knave, have winked at them, much less been controlled by them, whilst Luther was alive.

There is one more witness whom we shall now introduce, as not only denying Principal Cunningham's charge, that Calvin's doctrine of the Supper was the fruit of a "perverting" spirit of compromise, but as confirming the account we have given of *what* and *of what character* really was the doctrine taught by Calvin. This witness is very competent. The editors of his latest volume, (published since his death,) describe him as the man who for fifty years had lived in close intercourse with Calvin, who had made his writings, his works, his person, the objects of his continual study, and had become impregnated with his spirit more, perhaps, than any one in our age—the man who was the first to hold in his hand, to read without intermission, and to analyse, almost all the innumerable pieces that proceeded from the pen of the Reformer." It is the late Dr. Merle d'Aubigne of Geneva. Now, what does he say, who surely knew well what we wish him to testify about? Describing the Synod of Berne, which met in 1537, where Bucer represented that portion of the Swiss ministers who were more disposed to stretch out the hand to Luther, and Megander the others who would make no terms with him, and where the discussions between these Helvetic leaders were hot and angry, D'Aubigne says:

"A young man of only eight-and-twenty, but known for his love of the holy Scriptures and his slight respect for tradition, was sorrowfully contemplating these discussions. It was John Calvin, he who called the discussions 'a deadly plague' for the Church. His convictions were free and spontaneous. *They did not proceed, as with others, from a desire for compromise, [the italics are our own,] but from a perception of what is the essence of the faith. He would not at any price have sought some expedient for the union of minds by a sacrifice of the truth. But he knew by experience the power of the Holy Spirit.* And he was the man called to stand between the two armies, to get the sword returned to its sheath, and to found unity and peace."

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"We almost hesitate to report his words, because they will be difficult to comprehend. He spoke for the faithful, of a complete union with

Christ, even with his flesh and blood, and nevertheless of a union which is effected only by the Spirit. Calvin's speech was of so much importance that we cannot think of suppressing it. Vulgar minds insist on comprehending everything as they do the working of a steam engine; but the greatest minds have acknowledged the reality of the incomprehensible. Descartes said that 'in order to attain a true idea of the infinite, it is not in any sense to be comprehended, inasmuch as incomprehensibility itself is contained in the formal definition of the infinite.' 'Infinity is everywhere, and consequently incomprehensible likewise,' said Nicole. The Christian, however, comprehends to a certain extent the mystery which we are now considering; and above all, he experiences its reality. 'If, as the Scriptures clearly testify,' said Calvin at the Synod of Berne, (1537,) 'the flesh of Christ is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed, it follows that if we seek life in Christ, we must be thereby veritably fed. The spiritual life which Christ gives us, consists not only in his making us alive by his Spirit, but in his rendering us, by the power of his Spirit, partakers of his life-giving flesh, and by means of this participation, nourishing us for eternal life. Therefore, when we speak of the communion which the faithful have with Christ, we teach that they receive the communication of his body and his blood, no less than that of his Spirit—so that they possess Christ wholly.' "

"It is true that our Lord has gone up on high, and that his local presence has this been withdrawn from us. But this fact does not invalidate our assertion; and that local presence is by no means necessary here. So long as we are pilgrims on the earth, we are not contained in the same place with him. But there is no obstacle to the efficacy of the Spirit; he can collect and unite elements existing in far separated places. The Spirit is the means by which we are partakers of Christ. The Spirit nourishes us with the flesh and blood of the Lord, and thus quickens us for immortality. Christ offers this communion, under the symbols of bread and wine, to all those who celebrate the Supper aright, and in accordance with his institution.' Such was Calvin's speech. 'I embrace as orthodox,' said Bucer, 'this view of our excellent brothers, Calvin, Farel, and Viret. I never held that Christ was locally in the Supper.' "

[*D'Aubigne's Reformation in the time of Calvin*, Vol. VI., pp. 330-332.]

It is of course to be expected that the three great volumes of "Systematic Theology," put forth recently by the eminent and venerable Princeton Professor—the fruits of his laborious and learned investigations during fifty years—should receive continuous and repeated examinations by Calvinists and Presbyterians. We devote the remainder of this paper to a brief review of what

he has published on Calvin's doctrine of the Supper. His second volume contains some forty pages on the Reformed doctrine, besides many more on the Lutheran and Romish views. Also, in the *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* for 1848, there is an elaborate article, manifestly from his pen, discussing Calvin's doctrine at great length. It contained some statements which the author has corrected in his Systematic Theology, and some others, which appeared to us to need correction or qualification, have been omitted by him.

Before proceeding to point out what we consider to be still objectionable in Dr. Hodge's treatment of Calvin, as touching his doctrine of the Lord's Supper, let us first hear him on the difficulty which necessarily attaches to the subject. We quote from the *Princeton Review* for 1848:

"Whatever obscurity rests on that union, [of believers with the Lord,] must in a measure rest on this sacrament. That union, however, is declared to be 'a great mystery.' It has always, on that account, been called 'the mystical union.' We are therefore demanding too much when we require all obscurity to be banished from this subject. If the union between Christ and his people were merely moral, arising from agreement and sympathy, there would be no mystery about it, and the Lord's Supper, as the symbol of that union, would be a perfectly intelligible ordinance. But the Scriptures teach us that our union with Christ is far more than this. It is a vital union—we are partakers of his life: for it is not we that live, but Christ that leaveth in us."

Over against what Principal Cunningham objected to Calvin's doctrine as "unintelligible," may be therefore put these wise and scriptural words of the Princeton theologian.

But let us quote further from Dr. Hodge, stating the points relating to this union of believers and Christ, about which there is "a general agreement amongst Christians:"

- (1) A federal relation by a divine constitution.
- (2) On Christ's part, a sharing of our nature.
- (3) A participation by us of the Spirit of Christ, and his indwelling within us.
- (4) This union relates to body as well as souls. Our bodies are temples of the Spirit, and even in the grave they are still united by the Spirit unto Christ. All these features of the union

are certainly not a little unintelligible; and yet, *being revealed*, “almost all Christians,” says Dr. Hodge, believe them. He adds: “This union was always represented as a real union; not merely *imaginary*, nor simply moral, nor arising from the mere reception of the benefits which Christ has purchased.” Dr. Hodge might have added that this union is no mere *figure of speech*; for of course he believes so. And we submit that he ought to have added a fifth point to the four named above, namely, that whilst Christ shares our nature, we, on our part, share also in his, and therefore participate not only in his Spirit, but also in his flesh and blood. This would have made the statement not only Christian, but Calvinistic in full. The Scriptures as plainly say this as that other wondrous thing Dr. Hodge names—that our bodies even in the grave are by the Spirit united to Christ; and Christians in general, we suppose, do believe the former, just as much as they believe the latter. Indeed, how can the Lord be of the same nature with us, and we not be one with him in that flesh and blood which he assumed for the very purpose of giving us life by becoming one with us?

Now, what we regard as objectionable in Dr. Hodge's treatment of Calvin's doctrine, is, *first, that he does not state it fairly*. Indeed, it would have been strange if he could have stated the doctrine fairly, seeing that he really makes no attempt at any *articulate* statement of it. Calvin himself devotes one long chapter to the sacraments in general; and when he takes up the Lord's Supper in particular, he first devotes seven octavo pages to it, and then, in three more, gives what he calls a “summary” of his view, after which he proceeds to a full discussion of the subject in some fifty-five more pages. What, then, could Dr. Hodge possibly achieve in the way of a fair statement of what Calvin teaches on this subject, when, instead of giving to his readers at least the Reformer's “brief summary” of this doctrine in three sections, (see sections 8, 9, and 10,) he quotes merely the half of the last one of these, and so furnishes but eighteen lines from this long discussion, adding two more short paragraphs from some other writings of Calvin? We do not hesitate to say that it is quite impossible for any student of the “Systematic Theology”

to obtain an adequate idea of what Calvin really teaches about the Lord's Supper, from the brief, imperfect, and, as it were, *haphazard* quotations made—just as impossible as it would be to judge of a fine building from three specimen bricks.

But in some dozen lines of his own, which precede and introduce these inadequate quotations, Dr. Hodge, we are constrained to say, caricatures the doctrine of the great Genevese. He says it was "that from that glorified body there radiates an influence, other than the influence of the Spirit. (although through his agency,) of which believers in the Lord's Supper are the recipients. In this way they receive the body and blood of Christ, or their substance, or life-giving power. He held, therefore, that there was something not only supernatural, but truly miraculous, in this divine ordinance." (Vol II., p. 628.) Again, elsewhere, he represents Calvin's doctrine as being "that what is received by the believer in the Lord's Supper, is a supernatural influence emanating from the glorified body of Christ in heaven." (*Ibid*, p. 656.)

Now, we request the candid reader to compare for himself with this statement, the full and articulate account given in this paper, of what Calvin really did teach. We challenge any one to produce a word from Calvin to support the representation of his doctrine which Dr. Hodge has made. The Reformer says "it is a fixed point that the office of the sacrament differs not from that of the Word, which is to hold forth and offer Christ to us." He says: "We get invisible food from the body and blood of Christ; and the signs which represent this are bread and wine." He says: "The end, then, of this sacrament is to assure us that the body of Christ was once crucified for us," and "to seal and confirm the promise that his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed." He says that, "in the Supper, with special clearness, Christ offers himself to us, with all his blessings, and we receive him in faith." He says that Christ "gave himself to be bread for us when he was crucified for the redemption of the world; and daily he gives himself as bread when he offers himself in the Word to be partaken of by us inasmuch as he was crucified, when he seals that offer by the sacred mystery of the Supper, and when he accomplishes inwardly what externally he

designates;” and he bids us not to “extol the signs immoderately, lest we should seem even to obscure the mysteries themselves.” He says: “The Son of God is the eternal source of all life, and that for sinful man life now is in the incarnate Saviour; that in order to partake of life again, we must be in communion with that flesh and blood of the Son of God, which is the seat of it for us; and that the sacred communion of his flesh and blood, by which Christ transfuses his life into us, he testifies and seals in the Supper.” He says that “the bread and wine only exhibit and seal this sacred communion, for the presence is not in the bread, and the communion is only by faith.” He says: “Life for us depends on our being in communion with the flesh of Christ, and not simply on our having his Spirit;” and that “he could never have reached us by his Spirit, had he not first taken upon him our flesh, and in that flesh made atonement and purchased grace for us; and that those are not empty and merely figurative words, ‘Except ye eat my flesh, ye have no life in you,’ but that there is some deep and true sense in which we are ‘members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones;’ that this communion with Christ is ‘a great mystery;’ and that this communion with the flesh of the Son of God which becomes ours when we believe in him, is signified, and also sealed or confirmed to us in the Sacred Supper.” He says: “The presence of Christ at that Supper is not in the bread, nor is it a physical presence of his body which is in the upper sanctuary; yet it is a real presence by his Spirit to our faith, and that we have in the sacrament especial communion with his flesh or human nature, through the elements of bread and wine.” But there is nowhere to be found, so far as we know, any such language used by Calvin as that “from the glorified body of Christ there radiates an influence other than the influence of the Spirit, although through his agency, of which believers are recipients at the Supper;” or that “what is received by the believer in the Lord’s Supper, [as though there and only there,] is a supernatural influence emanating from the glorified body of Christ in heaven;” or that there is “something not only supernatural, but truly miraculous, in the divine ordinance.” Not only Calvin uses no such language as this, but he does not express

these ideas in any form. The Reformer ascribes no influence to the body of Christ, apart from the influence of the Spirit. There is life in the body of Christ for all in whom the Spirit works true faith, and only thus, and only for these. And the Reformer ascribes no power to the Supper, other than what the Word also has, for bringing to believers any supernatural influence emanating from the body of Christ. Nor does Calvin ever speak of this ordinance itself as being, or as having in it, anything "miraculous." We feel sure he would have characterised such language as "immoderately extolling the sign, and thereby obscuring the mystery itself." The fault committed by the eminent Princeton theologian is the drawing certain inferences of his own from Calvin's principles, and then ascribing these inferences to the Reformer, which he would doubtless have repudiated.

In another place (pp. 646, 7,) Dr. Hodge undertakes to explain away what Calvin says about "the life-giving flesh of Christ," so as to save "the illustrious Calvin" from the accusation of being "inconsistent" with himself. For he says, that in the *Consensus Tigurinus*. Calvin expressly *denies* that any "supernatural influence flows from the glorified body of Christ." With profound respect for Dr. Hodge's learning we venture to say, that he appears to us to mistranslate the Latin passage which he quotes from the *Consensus* as completely as he misconceives the doctrine of the Reformer.

But *secondly*, what we regard as objectionable in Dr. Hodge's treatment of this subject is, *that he separates between the Calvinistic Confessions and Calvin*. He says (p. 626): "There were three distinct types of doctrine among them, (the Reformed,) the Zwinglian, the Calvinistic, and an intermediate form, which ultimately became symbolical, being adopted in the authoritative standards of the Church." He can hardly mean to say *three distinct types*, for immediately afterwards he remarks, that "there was no essential difference as afterwards appeared between the churches of Zurich and Geneva." And yet it must be Dr. Hodge's meaning, that if Zurich and Geneva came to be one, it was *in spite of* and not because of Calvin, and only through means of an intermediate form of his doctrine which afterwards

became symbolical. The doctrine of Calvin Dr. Hodge misrepresents, and then he affirms that it was not admitted into the Reformed Confessions! What was admitted was an intermediate form of it, that is, we suppose a compromise of it with the views of Zwingli! Accordingly, he gives us, *first*, the Zwinglian Confessions; *then* Calvin's doctrine (so called) where he refers to the Gallican, Scotch, and Belgic Confessions as those *most nearly* conforming to Calvin's peculiar views; and *thirdly*, he names those Confessions where the intermediate idea appears.

Now the Gallican Confession was adopted in 1559, the Scotch in 1560, and the Belgic in 1561, when Calvin was at the very height of his widespread influence amongst all branches of the Reformed Church. And the testimony of all three of these Confessions is as direct and as positive and strong for Calvin's doctrine of the Supper as if written with his own pen. And there were no more important sections of the Reformed than these three. Our failing space forbids quotation from these documents lying open before us. But we may tell the reader who has not access to them or cannot translate Dr. Hodge's Latin extracts from them, (which fully confirm our assertions respecting their Calvinistic character,) that he may easily lay his hand upon a document in English, appearing nearly one century later than these, but speaking the very same language with them respecting the Sacraments. Untold numbers of the descendants and followers of the Reformed, acknowledge at this day the true doctrines of that document. Let the reader look into the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter XXIX., § viii., and he will there find Calvin's doctrine of the Supper in full. But so surely as the Westminster Confession is altogether Calvinistic on this point, so surely were the Gallican, the Scottish, and Belgian Confessions, not the "most nearly," but strictly and completely Calvinistic likewise.

The first one of the third class of Confessions named, is the *Consensus Tigurinus*, or Agreement of Zurich, Dr. Hodge would have it appear that Calvin, who was its author, in his zeal to gain over the Zurich brethren, softened away his own views. Yet this

is the language used in it, and to this extent only is there any *softening*:

§ 23. *“Of the Eating of the Body.*

“When it is said, that Christ, by our eating of his flesh and drinking of his blood, which are here set forth in emblems, feeds our souls through faith by the agency of his Holy Spirit, we are not to understand it as if any mingling or transfusion of substance took place, but that we draw life from the flesh once offered in sacrifice and the blood shed in expiation.”

This is the passage which we ventured to say Dr. Hodge had mistranslated. He gives the Latin of it on page 632, and on page 647 declares, that in it Calvin “expressly” says, “that what the believer receives in the Lord’s Supper is not any supernatural influence flowing from the glorified body of Christ in heaven, but the benefits of his death as an expiation for sin.” Certainly neither *expressly* nor *impliedly* does the Reformer say in this section what Dr. Hodge finds in it, but he is giving just his own doctrine so often set before our readers in this paper, not softened away here, but only guarded in this as in several other sections from flagrant abuse and misunderstanding.

Of this Agreement of Zurich, the church historian Dr. Kurtz says, (contrary to Dr. Hodge.) “In the *Consensus Tigurinus* (1549) prepared by Calvin, German Switzerland embraced Calvin’s view of the Lord’s Supper. (Vol. II., p. 92—Edinburgh translation.) We refer also to Dr. Dorner’s History of Protestant Theology, Vol. I., p. 409, in correcting Dr. Hodge’s translation of this passage.

The next one of Dr. Hodge’s third class of Confessions where he would have us suppose we shall find the compromise between Zwinglians and Calvinists, is the Heidelberg Catechism. This is one of the symbolical and authoritative standards of the Reformed, which is put by many in the front rank of such Confessions. Dr. Hodge chooses to represent it as one of those in which Zwinglians and Calvinists agree. We have had to rub our eyes several times in encountering this representation. It is no doubt true enough; but so in the same sense it is true also, that Zwinglians

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and Calvinists would agree in the Gallican, Belgic, Scotch, and Westminster Confessions as to the Lord's Supper. The history of this Catechism may be thus given: Tilemann Heshusius, a violent advocate of pure Lutheranism, is driven away from Heidelberg by the Elector of the Palatinate, Frederick III., who determines that his kingdom shall hold Reformed doctrines. He appointed Calvinistic teachers throughout his country, and directed two Heidelberg professors, Ursinus and Olivian, the former a friend of Melancthon, and the latter a disciple of Calvin, to prepare the Heidelberg Catechism for the use of the schools of the Palatinate. Such is the account of it given by Kurtz the Church Historian. (See Vol. II., pp. 132,3—Edinburgh Ed.) This famous symbol is perfectly clear in setting forth the peculiar doctrine of Calvin. It says, Christ "feeds and nourishes my soul to everlasting life, with his crucified body and shed blood, as assuredly as I receive from the hands of the minister, and taste with my mouth, the bread and cup of the Lord, as certain signs of the body and blood of Christ;" also that "to eat the crucified body and drink the shed blood of Christ, is *not only* to embrace with a believing heart all the sufferings and death of Christ, and thereby to obtain the pardon of sin and life eternal; but also, *besides that*, to become more and more united to his sacred body by the Holy Ghost, who dwells both in Christ and in us; so that we, though Christ is in heaven, and we on earth, are, notwithstanding, flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone; and that we live and are governed forever by one spirit, as members of the same body are by one soul;" also that through the Spirit "we are as really partakers of his true body and blood as we receive" the signs by the mouth.

Now, this Heidelberg Catechism is the peculiar symbol of the German Reformed Church, which comprises the Reformed churches of the Palatinate, (Germany,) and of the German part of Switzerland, and which has a branch in the United States also. It was also solemnly approved by the Synod of Dort in 1618, and so has the endorsement of the Reformed Dutch Church. It is just another Calvinistic symbol as truly as the Gallican, Belgic, Scotch, and Westminster, though Dr. Hodge sees proper to put

it down as amongst the Confessions of his “intermediate form” where two distinct types of the doctrine of the Supper meet and blend. But really so far is it from having any distinctively Zwinglian features that Dr. Kurtz (see *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. II., p. 133) actually declares, that it “makes the nearest possible approach to the Lutheran dogma concerning the Lord’s Supper.” Dr. Dorner, also in his *History of Protestant Theology*, (Vol. I., V. 405,) puts it down as amongst the most distinctively Calvinistic symbols.

Next comes, (will our readers believe it?) as one of this “third class” of Confessions, that of the Synod of Dort itself, which makes us rub our eyes again. But passing this by as quite inexplicable, let us go to the next, which is the Second Helvetic. This was written by Bullinger in 1562, but became of public authority in a few years later, when the Elector Frederick III., anxious to meet the extreme intolerance of the Lutherans at this time against all the Reformed, but himself and his subjects particularly, and desirous to make at the Imperial Diet which was at hand as fair a showing as he could for the side he had espoused, writes to Bullinger for some such statement as might serve to repress the cavils of the Lutherans. Dr. Hodge says he wanted one that “might, if possible, unite the conflicting parties, or at least meet the objections of the Lutherans.” This is enough to evince that it was to be *pretty highly Calvinistic*, else how could it possibly satisfy the Lutherans? To give it more authority, it was adopted by the Helvetic churches. Dr. Hodge says, that, as drawn up by Bullinger, the successor of Zwingle, “it cannot be supposed to contain anything to which a Zwinglian could object.” We answer, of course not; but then, as prepared by Bullinger to satisfy, if possible, the Lutherans, it cannot be supposed that the Zwinglians were now other than Calvinistic on this subject, which, indeed, we know very well they had generally become.

Examining now this Second Helvetic, it is found to be full and clear in the statement of Calvin’s doctrine. It says: “Believers receive what is given by the minister of the Lord, and eat the Lord’s bread and drink the Lord’s cup; *inwardly*, however, in the meantime by the work of Christ through the Holy Spirit, they

partake also of the Lord's flesh and blood, and are fed by these unto eternal life. For the flesh and blood of Christ are true meat and drink unto eternal life, and Christ himself as delivered up for us and our salvation is that which mainly makes the Supper," &c. It speaks of a threefold manducation or eating: the corporal with the mouth; the spiritual by faith; and the sacramental. In the second, we "receive not an imaginary food, but the very body of the Lord delivered up for us, which, however, is received by believers, not corporally, but spiritually by faith." In the third, "the believer not only spiritually and internally partakes of the true body and blood of the Lord, but outwardly by drawing nigh to the table of the Lord accepts the visible sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord."

This is the Confession of which Kurtz says, in his History of the Christian Church, (Vol. II., p. 92,) that it "was acknowledged by all the Reformed countries, and is decidedly Calvinistic." And Dorner, having elsewhere referred to it by name as "entirely" Calvinistic, says (Vol. I., p. 418): "Of all the Confessions belonging to the second period of the Reformed Church, it was the only one which obtained more than a local or national recognition, being formally approved by the Scotch Church in 1566 and 1584, by the French Church, the Hungarian, and the Polish, as well as by the whole Reformed Church in Switzerland, and by the Palatinate." And yet Dr. Hodge, seeking to evince that Calvin's doctrine was not, but that some intermediate form between his and Zwingli's was, the *Symbolical*, undertakes by a sort of double mistake to put this down as one of his *third class*.

This third class of Dr. Hodge is completed by the Confessions of the Church of England, respecting which he declares, that they are rather Zwinglian than Calvinistic; and then he accounts for this "by the fact, that it was less important for the English than for the German churches to conciliate the Lutherans;" which appears to us not fair nor respectful to the memory and good name of our Reformed forefathers.

What we are objecting to then in Dr. Hodge's treatment of Calvin, is his labored endeavors to deny to the Reformer the honor so justly his, of being the author (so far as any man was or could

he) of that doctrine which the Reformed churches have generally held respecting the Lord's Supper. The Reformed held three types of doctrine on this subject, says the distinguished theologian of Princeton—the Zwinglian, and the Calvinistic, and another intermediate between these, which became symbolical, and is found in the authoritative standards. So then the Agreement of Zurich (written by Calvin) is not Calvinistic, nor is the Heidelberg Catechism, nor yet the Confession of Faith of the Reformed (Dutch) Church, nor yet the Second Helvetic! No, not one of these gives us the doctrine of Calvin in purity, while the Dutch, Scotch, and French Confessions approach it, but yet do not give it fully or without mixture! So that the Reformer does not really live and move and make himself felt in the Reformed Confessions, except as his extreme views were modified by wiser men and deeper students of the word!

Over against these views, which not disrespect for Dr. Hodge, but loyalty to what we think true, just, and right, requires us to pronounce *preposterous*, let us set before our readers as we close a few quotations from the eminent Dorner of Berlin:

“The Reformed Church . . . has as it were two stages of reformation, a less ripe and a riper; and only by means of both together did she become what—over against the Romish Church—she is, the twin sister of the Lutheran Church, which spread in the west of Central Europe, from Geneva, through France, and along the Rhine to Holland, England and Scotland, and afterwards took possession also of the northern half of the new world. In the first of these two stages it is Zwingli who certainly occupies the first place, but alongside of him every canton has its own Reformer, almost none of whom (some Zurich's excepted) bears his stamp in the way that so many fellow-workers of Luther in Germany are moulded by him. Hence too, as the Confessions of the Reformed Church show, Zwingli's mind and manner of doctrine, so far as his peculiarities are concerned, no where achieved (only Zurich again being partially excepted) a symbolic expression and currency.” (Pp. 283,4.)

After a full exposition of what Zwingli's views of the Supper were at the first, what they became afterwards, and then how “towards the end of his life,” he “rather inclined again to the more positive views he had held at the outset,” it is thus Dorner speaks of Calvin:

<http://www.pcanet.org/history/periodicals/spr/v27/27-1-6.pdf>

“In the doctrine of the Sacraments also, as well as in the doctrine of sin, guilt and justification, Calvin has sought to draw nearer to Luther than Zwingli did. He has also effected the adhesion to his type of doctrine of the Reformed Confessions of the second formation, which are at the same time the most important, while the doctrine held by Zwingli in the middle period of his life found reception in no symbol.” “Calvin’s fundamental thought follows up that which Zwingli taught at the outset and again at the close, namely, that the Sacraments are not bare signs nor merely a performance of gratitude or confession, but are a pledge and a seal of divine and present grace, and are in so far efficacious and mysterious. Entirely to this effect are the Heidelberg Catechism, the Helvetic Confession of 1566, the Gallic, Belgic, and Scotch Confessions.” (Pp. 404,5.)

“But the understanding which had been effected between Zurich and Geneva, was still more fruitful of results for the Reformed Churches outside of Germany. For now that the point of crystallization had been given, the power of the mind of Calvin drew the different Reformed Churches into his sphere; his doctrine of the Supper in particular passed over into the chief Reformed Confessions.” (P. 414.)

Of Calvin’s “small but very important treatise *De Cæna Dei*,” Dorner gives these statements as a kind of summary:

“The purpose of the sacred procedure is the divine sealing of the promise of the body and blood of the whole Christ as food unto life eternal. . . . In comparison with the Gospel, the Supper secures a fuller enjoyment and greater certainty . . . Christ, his humanity also included, is the matter and substance of the Sacraments; the graces and benefits of Christ are the power and effect of this substance. The substance must be conjoined with the effect so that the effect may be based in a sure reality. The fruit would be nought, if Christ, the substance and basis of the whole matter, was not given to us in the Supper; the *Cæna Sacra* is *communicatio Christi*. But Christ, his humanity included, is the source and matter of every benefit, (fons, origo, materia bonorum omnium.)” (Pp. 466,7.)