

blood, abideth in Me, and I in him.” Leaving individual testimonies, let us take the testimony of patristic scholars and historians of doctrine. NEANDER says: “The most common representation of the Lord’s Supper was as the means of a spiritual corporeal communion with Christ.”* RUCKERT: “That the body and blood of Christ were given and received in the Lord’s Supper was from the beginning the general faith, and this, too, at a time when written documents were not yet extant or widely diffused. No one opposed this in the ancient Church, not even the arch-heretics.”† HAGENBACH—History of Doctrines: “The Christian Church attached from the beginning a high and mysterious import to the bread and wine used in the Lord’s Supper.”‡ GIESELER—History of Dogma: “The idea which lies at the basis of most of the statements about the Lord’s Supper is that as the Logos was once united with the flesh, so in the supper it is now united with the bread and wine.”§ KRAUTH, after an exhaustive critical inquiry, concludes: “The literal interpretation [of the Eucharistic words] is sustained by the universal usage of the Church Catholic, by the judgment of the greatest of the fathers, Greek and Latin, and by the most eminent dogmaticians and expositors, ancient and modern.”|| The unrivaled patristic scholar, PUSEY, thus summarizes: “I have now gone through every writer who in his extant works speaks of the Holy Eucharist, from the death of St. John to the Fourth General Council, A.D. 451. I have suppressed nothing. I have given every passage with context. There is no room here for any alleged corruption. All the earliest as well as the later fathers state the doctrine of the Real Presence—all agree in one consentient exposition of our Lord’s words, ‘This is My body, this is My blood.’”

The confessions of the Romish, Greek, and earliest Protestant Church Confessions are here essentially one. And if this consensus of universal Christendom, this sure belief of all the Christian centuries, amounts to nothing in the exposition of so cardinal a doctrine of the Scriptures, what assurance can we have as to any Christian article? How can revealed truth be the Rock of certainty, giving firmness to our feet amid the surging billows of fallible human opinion? And where will be the “fixity, the security, the eternal reassurance so needed by those who, to-day, are sadly wondering whether the sands under their feet are shift or no?” Last of all, how can we have any confidence that the conflicting modern inventions of unsupported individuals can give us any safer resting-place than this sublime array of the authority of the whole undivided past, and of nineteen-twentieths of present Christendom? Certainly here the exegetical canon of Bishop Lightfoot is in place, viz., “There is a strong presumption that the historical sense of seventeen or eighteen centuries is larger and truer than the critical insight of one late half-cen-

* Church History, vol. i., p. 647.

† Vol. i., p. 204.

§ P. 408.

† Lord’s Supper, p. 297.

|| Conservative Reformation, p. 634.