

within the reach of all, that all may benefit by them.

It is sad to notice into what strange positions the Quakers are driven in rejecting the Divinely appointed means of grace. 'What,' says a Quaker's Manual, 'do you understand, by Christ's words to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God"?' And the answer given is, 'I understand this to mean that as water is necessary for cleansing, so repentance is necessary for regeneration.'

But to return. We owe a debt of gratitude to the Quakers for emphasising, when it had been forgotten, that clause of the Creed which runs, 'I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life.' The Person and the work of the Blessed Spirit are even nowadays far too much in the background in Christian teaching. That He dwells in our hearts to sanctify us, that He strengthens and inspires, that He is still the Comforter amongst men as He was in the days of the holy apostles—this the followers of George Fox have told us again when we needed reminding of it, 'What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?' 'Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.'

But now it is for us to tell the Quakers that all these spiritual gifts, which they rightly set store by, are to be had in the old historic Church, and to be had in Christ's own appointed way. By using, not abusing or neglecting the means of grace, we shall best receive those gifts.

It is not we, but Christ who has appointed Baptism as the mode of admittance into His Spiritual Kingdom upon earth. The new birth is to be effected by water and the Spirit. The outward and visible sign is the pledge of the inward and spiritual grace. Christ has joined them together and we dare not separate them.

So with the Apostolic rite of Confirmation. So also with the Holy Communion. The direction is so plain, 'Do this in remembrance, or as a memorial, of Me.' And the Apostle's commentary upon it, 'As oft as ye eat this Bread and drink this Cup ye do show the Lord's death till He come.' The marvel is how Christians can bring themselves to disregard so clear a command.

The fact is the symbols and ordinances of Christianity become real, not by emptying them of their meaning and then casting them aside as worn out and obsolete, but by spiritually discerning that they are the instruments used by God the Holy Ghost to act powerfully upon the hearts of men.

Formalism vanishes when we realise that the presence of Jesus Christ is vouchsafed in His Sacred Feast. Then there is a deeper sense of the spiritual than is ever experienced at a Quaker's meeting. The Holy Eucharist satisfied all the yearnings of the Apostle's heart when he wrote: 'The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ? The cup which we bless is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ?' Yes, truly as our Catechism hath it, 'The Body and Blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.' And do we not pray in that solemn hour, 'Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the Flesh of Thy Dear Son Jesus Christ and to drink His Blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His Body and our souls washed through His most precious Blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us?' Union with God in Christ is the highest desire of Churchman and Quaker alike. We may look to obtain this supreme blessing only through those channels of grace which Christ Himself has appointed and which are dispensed through the living ordinances of His Church.

J. H. M.

