

inconformity, which the Governors of the Church would not have so much as nominal, may be taken away from them : and the Church of England may be put in a state in this regard more justifiable against the Roman than formerly it was, being hereby enabled to say to Papists (whensoever these names are objected) we also use the Names of Priests and Altars, and yet believe neither the corporal Presence, nor any proper and propitiatory Sacrifice ?

That the word *Altar* was used in the earliest times of Christianity to describe the holy table, is shewn distinctly by Bingham, in the eighth book (cap vi.) of the *Antiquities of the Christian Church*.—A short Extract from the passage is given below. It will be remembered that Ignatius was a contemporary of the Apostles, that Irenæus was a disciple of Polycarp, himself a disciple of St. John, and that Tertullian flourished in the second century, and the beginning of the third, Origen in the beginning of the third.

"Great dispute has been raised in the last age about the name of the Communion-table, and whether it was to be called the Holy Table, or an Altar. And indeed any thing will afford matter of controversy to men in a disputing age : but we never read of any such dispute in the primitive Church. For the ancient writers used both names indifferently ; some calling it Altar, others the Lord's Table, the Holy Table, the Mystical Table, the Tremendous Table, &c., and sometimes both Table and Altar in the same sentence together. Mr. Mede thinks it was usually called Altar for the two first ages, and that the name Table is not to be found in any Author of those ages now remaining. Ignatius uses only the Name *θυσιαστήριον*. Altar, in his genuine Epistle three of which are alleged by Mr. Mede, to which the reader may add another testimony out of his Epistle to the Magnesians, where he uses both the name Temple and Altar. Irenæus and Origen use the same name when they speak of the Communion-table. Tertullian frequently applies to it the name of Ara Dei and Altare. * * * * *

On the other hand it is certain they did not mean by the Altar what the Jews and Heathens meant, either an Altar drest up with Images, that is, Idol Gods, as the Heathens commonly had theirs adorned ; or an altar for bloody sacrifices, which was the use of them both among Jews and Gentiles."

In accordance with what is here seen to have been the language of the primitive Church, it is pointed out in an official opinion recently rendered by Dr. Phillimore, that "the Church of England has used the words *Table* and *Altar* as synonymous terms both before and since the Reformation, as is manifest from the writings of Divines of that and of a later period, as well as from the Coronation-service, the Church Building Acts, and other authorities."

The use of the word *Altar* at Heb. XIII. 10, although it cannot be understood to favor the idea of a repetition of the one sacrifice once for all offered upon the Cross, nor, in any sense, of a proper, literal sacrifice, yet can hardly be understood