

the ordinance of the Lord's Supper has yet another aspect, subordinate but still important, in that it carries the believer forward in hope to Christ's second coming as Judge. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." Matt. xxiv. 30; Acts, i. 11; Rev. xxii. 20.

THE SACRAMENTAL ELEMENTS.—

The sacramental or Communion elements (as they are commonly called) are bread and wine. Along with these, as possessing a similarly special character are the words of institution concerning each, "Take, eat; this is My body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me." "This cup is the new testament in My blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me." The bread and wine are so made use of as to represent, symbolically, the manner of our Saviour's death on the cross. The bread is *broken* and the wine is *poured out* in emblem of the violent death on Calvary, when the body of Jesus was mangled and his blood shed. Also the nourishing and refreshing qualities of bread and wine are outwardly representative of the spiritual nourishment received from Christ by those who believe in him and live by faith.

Unhappily, the Communion elements have been made the ground of much contention in different branches of the Christian Church, according to the degree or mode of interpretation adopted for them.

Roman Catholics hold that the bread and wine after consecration are changed into the real body and blood of Christ (Transubstantiation); that there is thus a real presence of Christ in the Sacrament, and that the mass is a real sacrifice. This is also, or very nearly, the view of the High Church party in England, and of the High party among Lutherans on the Continent.

What is called the *figurative* interpretation that practically began with the

Swiss reformer Zwinglius, and has been adopted by Arminians and Socinians, assigns no special presence of Christ of any kind to the ordinance, but regards the elements as simply pictorial, representative, or commemorative. This view is a recoil from the extravagance and violence to our five senses, inseparable from Transubstantiation and Consubstantiation, but as an opposite extreme fails in due reverence and speciality for the Lord's Supper.

The position occupied by the Church of Scotland, and by the divines who drew up the Shorter Catechism, is intermediate between these extremes—not miraculous, idolatrous, or sacrificial, like the former, yet not cold and poor as the latter. We hold a spiritual presence of Christ in the ordinance—that there is no oblation, but a memorial of an offering once made—that the efficacy depends not on the minister, but on the communicant in connection with the grace of God—that in such a case it is a seal as well as a sign—and that the true believer therein enjoys a close and blessed fellowship with Jesus, having here in him spiritual life and joy and fruit more than from any other ordinance of divine worship.

As regards communion doctrine, the Church of Scotland and the Church of England, as sister Churches of the Reformation, were originally at one, and are so still in so far as they are consistent with their own standards respectfully. Both alike followed Calvin and his school at first and for a long time. More recently special circumstances have influenced each in different directions. In Scotland, intercourse with various denominations, where the personal or congregational idea prevails over the ecclesiastical, has partly tended towards Zwinglianism, especially in slipshod, popular ways of speaking. In England, on the contrary, the prevalence of the ecclesiastical idea over the personal or congregational has tended toward tradi-