

interior and spiritual. Of this our Lord speaks, when, with divine authority, he pronounces that his flesh is meat indeed and his blood drink indeed.—Wherefore we must give no place to incredulous doubts in our minds, seeing that the author of this heavenly gift himself testifies to its truth and reality.”

Had the primitive ages believed and taught what is now generally believed in your Church and what has always been taught among the Calvinists, that the bread and wine are the signs and figures of the body and blood, the memorial of Christ present in heaven, but absent from earth, how happens it that the fathers say nothing of the kind on those occasions, when they were able, nay, even bound to give a clear exposition of the doctrine? I allude to the instructions given to the newly-baptized before their admission to the Eucharist. You have seen these instructions; all of them that are extant, have, to the best of my knowledge, been laid before you. Here is not a word said about figures or signs to represent the absent object. It is in these plain and dogmatical instructions, however, that such expressions ought of necessity to be found. Why do they not appear? Why are the bread and wine never presented to us in this simple point of view, so plain and easy to our conception? Why, on the contrary are we perpetually reminded every time that it is the true and real body of Jesus Christ, the body that was crucified, the blood that flowed from his side, and that a change of substance is effected by the all-powerful word of a God? And why do the fathers, to establish the certitude of this astonishing change, and to give additional motives of its credibility, remind the neophytes of the wonders of the creation, the miracles of Moses, Elias, and Eliseus, of the birth of Christ, the miracle of the marriage feast of Cana, and that of the multiplication of the loaves? Would it not be the height of folly to search heaven and earth for the greatest prodigies ever worked therein by an almighty power, merely for the purpose of proving to these neophytes, that a God made man, had most evidently the power of changing also the bread and wine into the signs and figures of his body and blood, a thing which the poorest mortal among us can declare and do, whenever he pleases.

Again, Sir, let me ask you, how, in your opinion will your modern notions respecting the Eucharist, accord with the following exhortation of St. John Chrysostom? “When you approach the holy table, believe that the King of all things is there present; for he is really present.—Consider, what a victim you have to handle, what a table you have to approach; think within yourselves that, being but dust and ashes, you receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ.—Consider that we eat Him, who sits on high and is adored by the angels.—O wonderful mystery! O the goodness of God! He who sits on high with his Father, is received into the hand of every one! How I should wish, do many exclaim, to behold his countenance and his garments! God grants you even more than you desire—he gives you himself; you receive him you eat him in reality.”

And when your teachers mount the pulpit to communicate to you their cherished and boasted conceptions respecting the sacrament, will they address you in the language of St. Hilary? “It would be foolish and impious to say what we do of the natural verity of Christ within us, if he himself had not taught us it, for it is he that said: my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed: he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him: he leaves no place to doubt of the reality of his body and blood; for now by the profession of the Lord himself, and according to our belief, it is truly flesh and truly blood.”

Will they say with St. Augustine: “Does it not appear foolish and extravagant to say, eat my flesh and drink my blood: he that doth not eat my flesh and drink my blood, shall not have life in him? It did indeed appear foolish and extravagant; but only to the ignorant and the foolish.” Have you ever heard your preachers adopt language similar to that which has been quoted above? How, in fact, should they speak the language, having so openly repudiated the doctrine of antiquity?

I had proposed here to conclude my observations on the doctrine of the fathers, and to close a discussion that you must by this time perceive to be decisively terminated. But the subject is inexhaustible: these ancient writings still detain me by force among them: proofs in profusion start up on every side of me. You have just learnt their sentiments and expressions respecting the majesty and sublimity of the mystery, and the insurmountable difficulties attendant upon the belief of the real presence and transubstantiation. I would willingly proceed a step further, and shew you, that they have been not less alive to the striking consequences deducible from such doctrines, nor less distinct and clear in developing the same. In fact, if the bread be really changed into the body of Christ, it is correct to say with Gelasius of Cizicum and St. Chrysostom; that the body is proposed to us, that the lamb is lying before us;” with St. Cyril of Alexandria; that it is not the Deity, but the body of the Word that is presented upon the sacred tables of the Church; with Optatus of Milibus; “that the members of Christ are stretched upon the altar: the altar is the seat of the body and blood of Christ;” with St. Augustine: “that we receive with faithful heart and mouth the mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ made man, who gave us his body to eat and his blood to drink, although it seems more horrible to eat the flesh of a man than to kill him, to drink human blood than to shed it.”

If the body of Jesus Christ is present in the Eucharist, his body must either be received in part, or whole and entire, by each communicant. We hold that each communicant receives the entire and indivisible body of Jesus. This dogma, supposing as it does, his simultaneous presence in a thousand places, we look upon as a wonderful miracle, capable of raising doubts, which are to be dissipated by faith and confidence in the all-powerful word of

God. Now we find that this wonder has struck the minds and excited the astonishment of the fathers. We must consider, says St. Gregory of Nyssa, how it can be that this single body, being distributed to thousands of the faithful should be found whole and entire in each person who receives it, and still remain whole and entire in itself.”

This question evidently supposes the unity and indivisibility of the body of Christ in every receiver to have been believed and taught. The reply, as you are prepared to expect, attempts not to explain the mystery, but proves the change of substance in the Eucharist. “The power of the Word who as man was nourished with bread, rendered the bread that he eat his holy body. In like manner, this bread is sanctified by the word of God and prayer, not passing into the body of the Word, by eating and drinking, but being instantly changed into the body of the Word, according to what he said: this is my body.”

“We always offer the same victim, says St. Chrysostom, not as in the old law, sometimes one and sometimes another: here it is always the same; for which reason there is but one sacrifice: for, if the diversity of places, in which the sacrifice is offered, multiplied the sacrifice, we should have to allow that there were many Christs. But there is but one Christ, who is entire here and entire there, possessing still but one body: for which reason there is but one sacrifice.”—He who receives but a part of the consecrated species, says St. Eutychius, receives, notwithstanding, whole and entire the most holy body and the adorable blood of the Lord: for although the body be distributed to all, being mingled up with each of them, it nevertheless always remains indivisible in itself; as one only seal, being employed to make many impressions on wax, leaves at each impression its perfect figure and form and still remains one and the same, neither changed nor divided by its image being stamped upon a multiplicity of objects.

If Jesus Christ is present in the Eucharist, it follows that, when he communicated with his apostles he bore his own body in his hands and drank his own blood. The consequence is rigorously correct: and you shall now see whether the fathers were aware of it. Saint Augustine explaining the title of psalm XXXIII. in which it is said, according to the Septuagint, that he was carried in his own hands expresses himself as follows: “Who can comprehend, my brethren, how such a thing can be performed by a man? Who is it that holds himself in his own hands? A man may indeed be held in the hands of another, but never in his own. We cannot therefore discover how this can be understood of David in the literal sense: but can easily see how it can be understood of Christ according to the letter; for Christ bore himself in his own hands, when giving his body to us, he said: This is my body, for he then bore that body in his own hands.”

“Jesus Christ,” says Saint Chrysostom, “himself drank from his chalice, least his apostles hearing these his words should say within themselves: Do we then drink his blood and eat his flesh? and