

THE HOLY COMMUNION

HISTORY

In ancient times God taught man that He must be approached through different sacrifices. The greatest of these was that of the Passover (Ex. xii. 3) which commemorated the salvation of the first-born and the deliverance from Egypt. This great sacrifice Jesus Christ transformed into the Holy Communion (1k. xxii. 15-20) which henceforth became the great service of the Gospel, celebrated every Lord's day (Acts xx. 7.) It was regarded as the hearthstone of the Christian family, around which all members gathered in loving communion with God and with one another. In later ages of spiritual laxity and drought this great Service was neglectfully allowed to sink into the back-ground, and its place taken by other services (Morning and Evening Prayer) which had been originally compiled for daily use in religious communities, in subordination to the great Divine Service of Holy Communion which marked the Sundays. Though this custom is still prevalent, the Holy Communion is gradually being restored to its proper place, and in increasing numbers the Father's children gather, like the Disciples of old, to celebrate the weekly Eucharist.

This is not now possible in all Churches, especially in rural districts, but, in so far as their privileges will allow, all new Communicants should in this as in other matters adopt regular systematic habits founded on Scriptural truth rather than on human custom.

Whether able to communicate frequently or infrequently, however, the main point to be aimed at is the realization and devotional use of this great Service as one of the chief Divinely-fashioned Instruments in the Divine Workshop for the gradual moulding of human character and the glorifying of God.