

CANADA BAPTIST MAGAZINE,

AND MISSIONARY REGISTER.

No. 8.

JANUARY, 1839.

VOL. II.

CHRISTIAN ANTIQUITIES.

COMMUNION SEASONS IN THE EARLY CHURCHES.

Translated from Dr. Augusti's *Handbuch der Christlichen Archäologie*, vol. ii. pp. 595—601.

The universal concurrence of the ancient church in keeping *Thursday in Passion Week* [the day before Good Friday] as the anniversary of the institution, sufficiently shows that there was no uncertainty felt as to the questions which have so abundantly engaged the attention of the learned in modern times, viz: Whether Christ kept the Jewish Passover? On what day did he eat the paschal lamb? When did he institute the Supper?

As it was the opinion of the *Quartodecimani* that the Eucharist ought to be celebrated only on the anniversary of its institution, and should be omitted on all other days, it is easy to understand the hard judgment which the ancient church passed upon them. Their intention was certainly praiseworthy, since they wished to save this holy observance from the fate of what is common and ordinary; but the rest of the church deemed the more frequent repetition, not only as a thing needed by a religious

mind for the purpose of strengthening faith, but also as a command of the Lord and an order of the Apostles, in consequence of the words '*do this in remembrance of me,*' and of Paul's expression '*as often as*' (1 Cor. xi. 26). From which it was inferred that the annual observance was not a thing in itself complete and sufficient, but only a pattern and an inducement to frequent communion.

So early as the beginning of the second century we find the observance of Sunday. It is true the opinions of ancient and modern expositors and church historians have always differed on these points, viz: whether the keeping of Sunday was ordained by the apostles; whether "*the first day of the week*" (Acts xx. 7) means Sunday; and whether the time appointed for making contributions (1 Cor. xvi. 2) can be referred to the communion to be held on Sunday.

But even should this and other kindred questions be left undecided,