

The Catholic.

Quod semper; quod ubique; quod ab omnibus.

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AMICABLE DISCUSSION.

Continued.

LETTER VII.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

We have shown, against the reformed Zuinglians, Calvinists or Anglicans, that a figurative sense cannot be given to the words, *this is my body*. We are now going to shew against the Lutherans, that the literal sense that must there be admitted, and which they admit with us, necessarily conduces to the dogma of transubstantiation. This word, which is not in scripture, but which the Church has adopted to give its doctrine with more precision, expresses the change of the substance of bread into the substance of the body of Jesus Christ. Now the literal sense most necessarily supposes this change. In fact, what our Saviour blesses and distributes to his apostles, he assures them, when giving it to them, that it is his body. Before, it was visibly bread and nothing else; actually, after his assertion, it is his body. There has, therefore, a change taken place; for no substance whatever can at one and the same time remain what it is, and become another, because then it would be and would not be itself at the same time: it would be itself, having remained what it was: it would not be itself, having become something else, which is evidently absurd.

Will it be said, with Luther, that the bread having undergone no change, the body is come to be joined; or united to it? In that case, the words of our Saviour are changed; and his proposition amounts to one or other of these two, *this is at once bread and my body*, or *this bread is also my body*. The literal sense of the words is manifestly abandoned by explaining them in this manner, or rather the words are not explained at all, but others are substituted in their place. Who in fact does not see that, *this is my body*, and *this bread is also my body*, are two different propositions? Moreover this latter is in every respect opposed to the grammatical expression of the phrase. Our Saviour did not say, *this bread*, but *this*, employing an indefinite term, a demonstrative neuter pronoun which interpreters render by *hoc*. Now the neuter pronoun cannot refer to bread, which is of another gender; it must then refer to the body, or be taken in general to denote indistinctly the object that our Saviour was holding in his hand; and then the literal sense is *this*, that is to say, what

I hold in my hand, is my body, but in no wise *this bread is my body*. The rules of grammar could not permit it, neither does good sense admit of it: for bread, remaining such, cannot be the body: it is one or other, but not both, one and the other at once: there is therefore necessarily a change of the bread into the body, that these words, *this is my body*, may be found true to the letter. Again, the words of institution are explicit on the subject: "He took bread, says St. Paul, and giving thanks broke and said: *Take ye and eat, this is my body, which shall be delivered for you*; and St. Matthew; "Drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the new Testament which shall be shed for you." Jesus Christ gives to his apostles the body which was going to be delivered, the blood, which was going to be shed: and most certainly there was no mixture of bread in the body that was going to be delivered.

The Calvinists have perceived this as well as ourselves. They have felt the necessity of a change in the bread: but this change, according to them is not real, it is only moral. For them, from ordinary aliment, the bread becomes the figure of the body, and the words signify, *this is the figure of my body*. This opinion is absolutely inadmissible, as we have proved in the first part; and the Lutherans join with us in shewing them that they must absolutely adhere to the literal sense. In their turn the Calvinists here unite with us against the Lutherans, and demonstrate to them that their defending the literal sense must lead them to transubstantiation, and to acknowledge that dogma of the Catholic Church. As they borrow from her the arguments they employ against the Lutherans on this question, I will press them into my service for the purpose of laying those arguments before you. Our proofs may perhaps appear stronger to you when coming from their mouths. At least, by bringing them on the stage one after another, you will find it more singular and striking to hear the Calvinists prove to the Lutherans the Catholic dogma.

Let us produce first the great enemy of the real presence. Zuinglius speaks out plainly upon this point in his reply to Billicanus: "Certainly (says he) if we take the word *is* in its literal signification, those who follow the Pope are right, and we must believe that the bread is flesh." That is to say, according to Zuinglius, the simple and literal sense of these words, *this is my body*, necessarily includes transubstantiation. He has recourse to the same argument in his treatise on the Lord's Supper, "If we explain without figure the

word *is*, in the sentence *this is my body*, it is impossible that the substance of bread should not be changed into the substance of the body of Jesus Christ, and that, thus, what before was bread is no longer bread. Fieri nequit given panis substantia in ipsam carnis substantiam convertatur. Panis ergo amplius non est, qui antea panis erat." He expresses himself moreover in the same manner, in a work against Luther: "If the word *this* marks the bread, and no figure can be tolerated in these words, it follows that the bread becomes the body of Jesus Christ, and that what was bread, on a sudden is made the body of Jesus Christ. Jam panis transit in corpus Christi, et est corpus subito, quod jam panis erat." He had said to him a little before: "If you obstinately persist in not receiving the figure, it follows that the Pope is right in saying that the bread is changed into the body of Jesus Christ."

Beza maintains against the Lutherans in the conference of Monbelliard, that of the two explanations which confine themselves to the literal sense "that of the catholics departs less from the words of institution, if they are to be expounded word for word." And he proves it thus: "The advocates for transubstantiation say, that, by virtue of these divine words, what before was bread, having changed its substance, becomes instantly the very body of Jesus Christ, in order that the proposition *this is my body* may thus be correct: whereas the exposition of the advocates for consubstantiation saying that the words *this is my body*, signify my body is essentially, within, with, or under this bread, does not declare what the bread is become, nor what it is that is the body, but merely where the body is." This proof is striking and decisive. For Jesus Christ, when he says *this is my body*, declares that such an object is his body, whereas in Luther's explanation he declares where his body is, within, with, or under the bread; but in no wise what his body is. "It is clear (observes Bossuet on this passage) that Jesus Christ having taken bread to make something of it, was bound to declare to us what it was he wished to make it: and it is not less evident that this bread became what the Almighty wished it to be made. Now these words shew that he wished to make it his body: in whatever manner it may be understood; because he said *this is my body*. If then this bread did not become his body in figure, it became so in effect: and we must necessarily admit either the change in figure or the change in substance. Thus, by merely attending with simplicity to the word of Jesus Christ, we must pass to the doctrine of the