

The exposition you have just read is sketched from the compared narratives of the evangelists. St. John who wrote the last of the four, has given us at length the words of the promise, which the three first had omitted; and has dispensed with the repetition of the fact of the institution described by the others. It is very remarkable that the evangelists relating the same facts at too remote periods to have an understanding with one another, and on that account varying almost always in the circumstances and expressions, all three agree, and St. Paul after them in relating these words of Jesus Christ: "*This is my body, this is my blood.*" This uniformity, no where else observable, denotes a particular design of the holy spirit who directed them, that of teaching us still more plainly the essential words of the mystery. Considering them in themselves; it is impossible not to be struck at once with their simplicity and their strength. This great prodigy is expressed by the plainest and simplest words to be found in human language: men would never have discovered such an expression, accordingly it is not from them that proceeds this sublimity of expression, but from him by whom the greatest wonders are as easily produced as spoken. These few words were understood in the sense of the real presence and of transubstantiation by the apostles, and after them by all the christians till the time of Berengarius and Wickliff, whose subtilties for a short time disturbed the Church. It was reserved for the sixteenth century to combat these dogmas more obstinately. And yet even the leader of the reformation could only prevail upon himself to do it by halves. He defended the real presence, and only declared himself against the way in which it was universally understood. He had at first desired, it is true, that some happy expedient might be suggested to him of getting rid of the reality, in order to do more essential injury to the cause of the papacy. A motive which was assuredly most worthy an apostleship like his, and which you might regard as a calumnious imputation on the part of the catholics, had not Luther himself inserted it in one of his letters. But God says Bossuet in his usual style, fixes secret boundaries to the wildest minds, and does not always permit innovators to afflict his Church as much as they would wish. Luther remained invincibly struck with the strength and simplicity of these words, *this is my body, this is my blood.*"

Carlostadius, archdeacon of Wittemberg, his disciple and partisan, proved a bolder man than his master. He was the first to leap the fence, and deny the real presence. To attack the sense of the reality, in which the words of our Saviour had been understood throughout the world, he bethought himself an of explanation, but so foolish & extravagant that it could only have come from a disordered brain. He pretended then that Jesus Christ when he pronounced the word *this* did not refer to what he held in his hand, but merely to his own body: and that thus the natural sense of his words was: "*This, that is my body, is my body.*" This unreasonable and ridiculous interpretation put his party too much to the blush not to be immediately abandoned. They preferred giving the honour of the renewal of the

sacramentarian doctrine to Zuinglius, the rival and antagonist of Luther, to whom he was a long time a subject of bitter vexation, by obstinately disputing with him the glory of being the first reformer.* Already five years had elapsed since Carlostadius had brought his discovery into the world, which paid no attention to it, when Zuinglius, who was held in great repute at Zurich, assembled in that city on the 11th of April, 1525 the famous synod which adopted his reform. This synod was composed of two hundred citizens, all as able theologians no doubt as one could reasonably expect to be found among the swiss burgesses in the sixteenth century. Here it was that in the presence of these new fathers of the Church, there arose a regular disputation between Zuinglius that the lay chancellor of the town upon the meaning that was to be given to the words of the Eucharist. Having only to deal with a mere burgess, and possessing likewise more boldness and fluency of language than he the cure of Notre-Dame-des-Ermites demonstrated without difficulty, and to the perfect satisfaction of all these powerfully gifted men, that they ought to acknowledge a figurative sense in the words, *this is my body*, as in the others of the parable, *the field is the world; the seed is the word.* These were the only examples he produced; having nothing better at the time to produce: for he had not then been favoured with the apparition of the black or white personage, who came afterwards to him in a dream, to point out to him a still more analogous passage in the Bible. This council of the burghers and burgesses however adopted unanimously his conclusions against the real presence, and from that very day abolished, by a decree, the celebration of mass. Such is the origin of the sacramentarian opinion and of the whole reformation in general at Zurich, where two hundred ignorant laics pronounced sentence against the faith of all ages and the perpetual doctrine of the Church, as if they had been deciding upon some acres of ground, or a few scraps of meadow-land near the borders of the lake. The other towns that afterwards adopted the same principles, imitated the conduct of Zurich, and proceeded just as wisely and canonically in their decisions.

Undoubtedly, Sir, you can have no difficulty in acknowledging the absolute illegality and prodigious temerity, with which the sacramentarian opinion and the reformation were admitted at Zurich and from thence in the other cantons. You will tell me that you are but little concerned with what took place on this subject in the towns of Switzerland, Germany and France: that the Church of England alone has any claim to your

* Zuinglius had published that from the year 1516 before the name of Luther was known, he had preached the gospel in Switzerland. Piqued at this his pretension, Luther wrote to the inhabitants of Strasburgh, that he confidently assumed to himself the glory of having been the first to preach Jesus Christ, but that Zuinglius wished to rob him of this glory. "How are we to hold our peace (said he) while these people disturb our Churches, and attack our authority? . . ." He declares, in conclusion, "that there is no medium, and that he or they must be the ministers of satan."

interest, and that upon the article of the Eucharist the canonical forms have not been laid aside, because the bishops and doctors held a convocation, which pronounced, indirectly at least, against the real presence, and most positively against transubstantiation. This observation, I grant, is not devoid of reason; in fact we perceive in the convocation an appearance of canonical form. This is not the place to expose the too positive defects that nullified all its acts and proceedings: I shall be satisfied with observing, in my turn, that drawing its objections from the holy scriptures, as all the reformers did, and none of them having seen or found any thing more than another, it will read its own refutation in that which I am now going to give to every thing that bears the name of the reformation, whatever country it may inhabit, or under whatever denomination it may be distinguished. We will examine the difficulties brought against the real presence, and afterwards those against transubstantiation. It would be useless to treat separately of the adoration, an inevitable consequence of the real presence: for to believe Jesus Christ present in this sacrament, and not pay to his divine person divine honors, would be an outrage, an impiety, and a kind of apostacy. Have we not learnt from Saint Paul that even at the name alone of Jesus every knee shall bow, in heaven, on earth, and under the earth?

THE REAL PRESENCE.

We have already remarked the address of your lords spiritual of 1562 in not openly rejecting the real presence, which still had its partisans in this Convocation, and which was afterwards admitted and defended by many doctors of your Church. perhaps I may have occasion further on to make you acquainted with them. It is nevertheless true, that the Zuinglian and Calvinistic opinions, at last prevail with you to such a degree, that, upon discoursing on this subject in your country, I have often been astonished at persons, otherwise well instructed, when I advanced that the doctrine of the real presence had found most able defenders in the Church of England: I have even been obliged for my justification to produce writings and passages that I had at first cited from memory. Permit me now to ask you, what great discoveries your modern theologians have made in the holy scripture, to induce them to reject a doctrine as ancient in your country as its conversion to Christianity; to reject the natural sense which is presented to every unprejudiced mind by the words repeated by the three evangelists and by Saint Paul, *this is my body*, and according to the Syriac version of Saint Mark *this is my very body*:* to reject the only sense

* Amongst the most judicious critics, some are of opinion that Saint Mark himself was the author of this Syriac version, and that he made it for the use of the converted Jews, to whom this language was then natural. Others, among whom is found Walton, the learned Bishop of Chester, attribute it to some disciple of the apostles. According to the spirit of the original it should be translated: *This is my body, my own body, which is given for you. This is my blood, my own blood.* For it is also for this reason that the Syriac, which is as ancient as the Greek, and which was done in the time of the apostles, reads, *this is my own body*; and that in the liturgy of the Greeks it is declared that what is given to us is *the very body of Jesus Christ and his very blood.* Bossuet, *Medit. sur l'Evangile*, 22e jour.