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CONDUCTED BY W. W. EATON.

Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.—*Peter.* On this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.—*The Lord Messiah.*

RESTORATION OF THE ANCIENT, ORDER OF THINGS.

No. IX.

ON THE BREAKING OF BREAD—No. IV.

I do not aim at prolixity, but at brevity, in discussing the various topics which are necessary to be introduced into this work. We are not desirous to shew how much may be said on this or any other subject, but to shew how little is necessary to establish the truth, and to say much in a few words. We shall not, then, dwell any longer on the scriptural authority for the weekly breaking of bread; but for the sake of those who are startled at what they call innovation, we shall adduce a few historical facts and incidents. We lay no stress upon what is no better than the traditions of the church, or upon the testimony of those called the *primitive* fathers, in settling any part of christian worship or christian obedience. Yet, when the scriptures are explicit upon any topic which is lost sight of in modern times, it is both gratifying and useful to know how the practice has been laid aside and other customs been substituted in its room. There is, too, a corroborating influence in authentic history, which, while it does not authorize any thing as of divine authority, it confirms the conviction of our duty in things divinely established, by observing how they were observed and how they were laid aside.

All antiquity concurs in evincing that for the three first centuries all the churches broke bread once a week. Pliny, in his Epistles, book 10th; Justin Martyr, in his Second Apology for the Christians; and Tertullian, De Ora. p. 135, testify that it was the universal practice in all the weekly assemblies of the brethren, after they had prayed and sang praises—"then bread and wine being brought to the chief brother, he takes it and offers praise and thanksgiving to the Father, in the name of the Son and the Holy Spirit. After prayer and thanksgiving the whole assembly says, Amen. When thanksgiving is ended by the chief guide, and the consent of the whole people, the deacons (as we call them) give to every one present part of the bread and wine, over which thanks are given."

The weekly communion was preserved in the Greek church till the seventh century; and, by one of their canons, "such as neglected three