

ned intellectual and thinking men. One who knows him well thus writes of him:—"He was a Catholic, and therefore was unable to wear the chains of a church party; a liberal, and therefore could not endure the fetters of a Broad Church party; an evangelical to the core, and therefore would not be in bondage to the Low Church party. Probably no other theologian in the Church of England had so extensive a knowledge of the modern history and biography of the various Dissenting communities. There was not one atom of ecclesiastical intolerance in his character. Perhaps the most remarkable feature at the celebration of that part of the Burial Office which was rendered in the Church was the strikingly intellectual aspect which characterised the large congregation. The men seemed for the most part to belong to the professional classes. It was a touching evidence of the late great preacher's power and hold over their affections to see the tears running down the cheeks of so many strong men. Tenderness, without feebleness; an unparalleled humour, without a touch of vulgarity; generous communications of his wide and unique stores of knowledge to all who asked to be helped out of his treasure; a theology which was never separated from humanity; intense devotion to the Church, without a fibre of bitterness to any who were outside it; the most conscientious, the most transparent, but most unpharisaic piety—these are but a few of the characteristics of the late Dr. Evans."

THE DUTY OF MUTUAL TOLERATION BY PARTIES WITHIN THE CHURCH.

LETTER VI.

IN my last letter I expressed the hope that I might strengthen and illustrate more fully the view of our Communion Office which is presented by Dean Hook, in certain extracts which I quoted from his writings.

In attempting to do this, I would first enquire, for what purpose, according to the teaching of our Church, the gift of the most precious body and blood of Christ is vouchsafed to us in the Supper of the Lord. We are taught, in the first exhortation, that God "hath given His Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, not only to die for us, but also to be our spiritual food and sustenance in that holy sacrament:" we are again taught, in the prayer of humble access, to ask of God that we may so "eat the flesh of His dear Son Jesus Christ, and drink His blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body, and our souls washed through His most precious blood;" we are taught, in the second prayer in the post-communion office, to render thanks to God "that He vouchsafes to feed us with this spiritual food;" we are taught, in the Catechism, that "the body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper;" we are taught in the 28th Article that "the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ, and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ." I cannot think that the teaching of the Church of England, taken by itself, would ever suggest to her members any purpose for which these Divine gifts are vouchsafed to us other than that most gracious purpose which she has indicated in the passages cited. Yet it seems to be only too evident that, in consequence of the adoption of language which the Church has not authorized, expression has been given, or seems to have been given, to opinions which are alien to her teaching, and that serious offence has thus been occasioned, and the breach between opposing parties in the Church most unnecessarily, and

most disastrously, widened. We have been told (to cite the language of a pamphlet recently published in England) that "In whatever sense the body and blood of Christ are present in the Eucharist, in that sense we present them as a gift to God for the purpose of communion with Him, and in that consists the sacrifice." Our Church holds no such language—gives no such teaching. Nor let it be alleged that she has been restrained by any unworthy fears, arising out of the troubles of these latter days, from making to her children a distinct avowal of her faith on these high matters. She does not speak to us, as some have said, "with the stammering lips of ambiguous formularies;" if she is silent or reserved, it is because she knows full well that she is not authorized to dogmatize on the points on which she keeps silence; that faith and reverence are alike best secured by not intruding beyond the limits of clearly revealed truth.

I believe, further, that her teaching on the point in question may be most fully vindicated by an appeal to the earliest liturgical records—or indeed to the ancient liturgies as a whole. She teaches, by implication at least, all that was in early times taught more explicitly, and expresses, in subdued and chastened tones, all which was set forth in the more fervid utterance of early, and especially of Eastern, worship. What then was the subject of the oblation in the early liturgies? What did Christians then deem that they were in a position to offer to God? Omitting points respecting which there is no dispute, let us enquire respecting the oblation of the eucharistic elements. We are often told that the oblation of these took place before consecration. This statement is substantially correct; but, without explanation, it may easily be misconceived. The Creator was first acknowledged by the solemn presentation of His creatures of bread and wine, as He is in our own service; this oblation being found in the Proanaphora, or introductory portion of the Greek Liturgies. But this was not all; the bread and wine, after they had been set apart to their most holy purpose, by reciting the solemn words of institution, were again presented or offered before God. The Liturgy which is found in the 8th book of the (so called) Apostolical Constitutions, and which represents the Oriental rite towards the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth century, makes this oblation in the following terms: "We offer unto Thee, our King and God, this bread and this cup, according to Christ's appointment;" but, after this presentation or offering before God, the prayer follows, "That Thou wouldst propitiously look upon these gifts which lie before Thee, and send down Thy Holy Spirit upon this sacrifice, that He may declare this bread the Body of Thy Christ, and this cup the Blood of Thy Christ."

The elements, be it observed, are offered, and are called a sacrifice, before the invocation of the Holy Ghost to make them the Body and Blood of Christ. The same order is uniformly observed in other liturgies; in the Liturgy of Alexandria, bearing the name of St. Mark; in that of Antioch or Jerusalem, bearing the name of St. James; in that of Cæsarea; in that of Constantinople, bearing the name of S. Chrysostom. The Liturgies of Rome and Italy contain an oblation, corresponding in position and in terms to the oblation of the Liturgies already mentioned, but they contain also another oblation, after the consecration has been completed, expressed in the following terms: "We do offer unto Thy most excellent majesty, out of thine own donations and gifts, a pure sacrifice, an immaculate sacrifice, the holy bread of eternal life,

and the cup of everlasting salvation, upon which vouchsafe to look propitiously, and to accept them. On this Sir William Palmer observes that it "is evidently an oblation of the elements as they are bread and wine, God's 'donations and gifts' for the use of man. For it would be altogether vain, and indeed impious, to beseech God to 'look propitiously' on the body of His own Son and to accept it." Other writers have pointed out the startling inconsistency between similar terms, which are still employed in the oblation which is found in the Roman Canon of the Mass, and the present doctrine of that Church as to the Eucharistic sacrifice. We may infer, then, that the usage of the Christian Church fully justifies our own branch of it in abstaining from using any language, suggestive of the belief that the most sacred gifts of our Lord's Body and Blood are vouchsafed to us to be offered to the Father in the Holy Supper. The Church ever seems to have recognized intuitively that all which it could offer must be the material earthly symbol, not the heavenly grace—the sign—not the thing signified. Even when, in the Liturgies of Rome and Italy, this oblation was misplaced after the consecration had been completed, the truth seems to have been recognized that the sacramental union between the sign and the thing signified did not identify the one with the other, and that God might still be entreated to accept and bless the symbols, in terms glaringly inappropriate, if referred to that which they signified.

It is then, I hold, a circumstance most carefully to be noted that, in the ancient liturgies, the bread and wine, as such, constituted that portion of the Eucharistic sacrifice, which stood in the nearest relation to the one Great Sacrifice commemorated: that the Church was wont to bring forth Bread and Wine—pronouncing over them before God her Lord's words of institution, and then to present these earthly things as the offering of her faith, having first hallowed them in obedience to her Lord's institution, and declaring them to be, as thus hallowed, a sacrifice to God.

Our own Church has probably designed to present the service itself to us, as being more truly the sacrifice than the elements are: the sanctifying of the bread and wine by the solemn words of her Lord and by prayer, being regarded as the oblation which we make to God; rather than the material substances which are thus sanctified. "A verbal oblation of the bread and wine," Sir R. Palmer observes, "is not essential to a real oblation." For they are offered to God, by the very act of fulfilling, in respect of them, our Lord's command. The Prayer of Consecration is itself a Christian sacrifice, and here be it observed that of this service, which the Church would teach us to regard as the sacrifice, communion is an essential portion, and, indeed, the crowning act; so that, as Mr. Scudamore has abundantly shown, by testimonies both ancient and comparatively modern, to "offer" was the same thing as to communicate; offering included partaking, and partaking implied offering."

Yet we are told that, if there be a Eucharistic offering, "the gift which we present to God is the Body and Blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" or, as Mede expressed it long ago, "a Real and Hypostatical oblation of Christ Himself" has been substituted in the Western Church for the oblation of the ancient Liturgies. It was not the Sacred Person of our Lord Himself—it was not the substance of His Blessed Body and Blood, which the Church of old throughout the world deemed herself to be instructed and empow-