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A  
RATIONAL ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
NATURE and END  
OF THE  
SACRAMENT  
OF THE  
LORD'S SUPPER.



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BY  
WILLIAM Lord Bishop of GLOUCESTER.

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LONDON:  
Printed for A. MILLAR, and J. and R.  
TONSON, in the Strand.

M.DCC.LXI.

(6)







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the Lord's table, and the value of that benefit we receive in worthily communicating.

The history of its institution is delivered by St. Matthew, in these words, " And as they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the Disciples, and said, Take eat; this is MY BODY: and he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is MY BLOOD of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of Sins. (3) "

The Rites and Ceremonies of the law were TYPICAL. A Type, as hath been shewn elsewhere (4), arose from the ancient mode of conversing by *signs*: For, by adding a *moral import* to a significative sign, the action becomes a TYPE (5). This sacred Rite, which (together with *Baptism*) was to take place of the whole Jewish ritual, is, like that ritual, Ty-

(3) c. xxvi. v. 26, &c. (4) Div. Leg. Book iv. Sect. 4. (5) Ibid.

*ypical*

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*pical* also: but with this difference,—  
The Jewish Rites were predictive of things *future*; and so, were obscure and intricate: this, significative of a thing *past*; and so, clear and intelligible.

Thus far as to its *form*. Its *specific nature* will be our next inquiry. To have an exact idea of this, two things must be well considered: The state of Religion at the time this Rite was instituted, and the particular season in which it was celebrated.

1. In those ages of the world when victims made so great a part of the Religion both of Jews and Gentiles, the *sacrifice* was always followed by a religious feasting on the thing offered; which was called, the *feast upon or after the sacrifice*; the partakers of which feast were supposed to become partakers of the *benefits* of the Sacrifice. Now, from the Gospel-history of the institution of the *Lord's supper*, and from St. Paul's reasoning upon it, a celebrated person hath long since shewn, with great compass of

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learning, and force of argument, That Jesus, about to offer himself a sacrifice on the cross for our redemption, did, in conformity to a general practice, institute the *last supper*, under the idea of a *feast after the sacrifice* (6). So far that learned writer.

2. As to the particular season in which this holy Rite was celebrated ; We are to consider, that the great SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS was typically prefigured

(6) Dr. Cudworth, in his *Discourse concerning the true notion of the Lord's supper*. — But to his own System, like a fair and able writer, who conceals nothing, and leaves nothing unanswered, he produces this Objection, “ That the true notion of the Lord's Supper is to be derived indeed from the Passover, but the Jewish Passover had no relation to a Sacrifice, being nothing else but a mere FEAST ; and therefore from analogy to the Jewish Rites, we cannot make the Lord's supper to be *Epulum Sacrificale*, a feast upon Sacrifice ? ” And then answers it at large, in the second and third Chapters of his *Discourse*, with that invincible force of learning and reasoning almost peculiar to him.

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by several of the Temple-oblations ; and especially by the PASCHAL-LAMB. Now just before the *passion*, and while Jesus was eating the *Paschal-supper*, which was a Jewish *feast after or upon the sacrifice*, he institutes this holy Rite. And as it was his general custom to allude, in his actions and expressions, to what passed before his eyes, or presented itself to his observation (7) ; who can doubt, when we see, in the very form of celebration, all the marks of a *sacrificial-supper*, but that the divine Institutor intended it should bear the same relation to his *sacrifice on the Cross*, which the *Paschal supper*, then celebrating, bore to the oblation of the *Paschal-lamb* ; that is, to be of the nature of a *feast after the sacrifice*. For if this was not his purpose, and

(7) See Sir Isaac Newton's *Observations on the Prophecies*, p. 148. where he takes notice how Jesus, from the *approach of harvest*, from the *lilies in bloom*, from the *fig-trees shooting out*, from the *sheep kept in folds near the Temple*, for sacrifices, &c. took occasion to inculcate his spiritual doctrines and precepts.

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that no more was intended than a *general memorial, or remembrance of a dead benefactor*, why was this instant of time preferred to all other throughout the course of his ministry, any of which had been equally commodious?

This reasoning receives additional strength even from what hath been supposed to invalidate it, namely the concluding words of the institution—*Do this in remembrance of me*. For tho' these words, considered alone, might signify no more than the remembrance of our obligations to him in general; yet when preceded by—*this is my body—this is my blood*, they necessarily imply the remembrance of his death and passion for us, in particular. And could there be a *feast after the sacrifice* in which that sacrifice was not commemorated?

It is true, the injunction of doing it *in remembrance* implies, that the celebration was to be continually repeated; which was not the case of *feasts after the sacrifice*; on which, as we say, this holy Rite was modelled. But this was a  
neces-

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necessary difference; for the great Sacrifice itself, of which this *Feast* was a type, differed in the same manner from all other sacrifices. The Jewish and Pagan Oblations had, or were supposed to have, only a passing and temporary virtue: The Sacrifice on the cross is of perpetual efficacy; and will continue to operate till the consummation of all things. It seemed fit, therefore, that the operating virtue of this Sacrifice should be perpetually set before us, in a constant celebration of the *Feast upon it*.

We have now seen what may be naturally, and indeed what must be reasonably inferred of Christ's purpose in the *last Supper*, from the history of its institution.

Let us try next what we can collect of St. PAUL's sense, in this matter, who hath occasionally spoken at large concerning it. And here we shall find, that this very sort of Feast, which the words of the institution tacitly allude to, St. Paul, in order to shew the *specific nature* of the Rite, expressly draws a comparison  
from



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from ; and at the same time, in order to shew the efficacy of it, informs us of the end and purpose of those *Feasts upon the sacrifice*. It is, in that place of his first epistle to the Corinthians, where he re-proves the profelytes to Christianity for the idolatrous practice of eating with the Gentiles, of things offered to idols, in their *feasts upon the sacrifice*. His words are these——“ I speak as to wise  
“ men : judge ye what I say. The cup  
“ of blessing which we blefs, is it not the  
“ communion of the blood of Christ ?  
“ The bread which we break, is it not  
“ the communion of the body of Christ ?  
“ For we being many are one bread and  
“ one body : for we are all partakers of  
“ that one bread. Behold Israel after  
“ the flesh : are not they which eat of  
“ the sacrifices partakers of the altar ?  
“ What say I then ? That an idol is any  
“ thing, or that which is offered in sa-  
“ crifice to idols is any thing ? But I  
“ say, that the things which the Gentiles  
“ sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and  
“ not to God : and I would not that ye  
“ should



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“ should have fellowship with devils.  
“ Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord,  
“ and the cup of devils : Ye cannot be  
“ partakers of the Lord's table, and of  
“ the table of devils (8).”

The Apostle professeth, in this place, to write to these Corinthians under their assumed character of *wise men*. And tho' perhaps he may use the term a little ironically, and in reproof of the *divisions*, before objected to them ; yet the logical inference drawn from an appeal to such a character, holds not the less, for the sarcasm in which it is conveyed. My meaning is, That we may fairly conclude, the reasoning to be such as *wise men* would not disdain to consider ; and so regularly conducted as *wise men* would best comprehend. In a word, pursued with that science and precision which leaves no room for a loose, popular, and inaccurate interpretation.

In the first place, therefore, we may collect, that *The Cup of blessing* is not

(8) 1 Cor. x. 15—21.

simply

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simply a general commemoration of a deceased benefactor, but a commemoration of Christ's death and passion: It is the *communion of the blood of Christ*; an expression, as will be seen hereafter, of the utmost elegance, to imply *a feast upon the sacrifice*. But the inference the Apostle draws from it, puts his meaning beyond all doubt — *For we being many are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread*. He says, *the partaking of one bread*, makes the receivers, of *many*, to become *one body*. A just inference, if this Rite be of the nature of *a feast upon the sacrifice*; for then, the *communion of the body and blood of Christ* unites the receivers into one body, by an equal distribution of one common benefit: But if it be only a general commemoration of a deceased benefactor, it leaves the receivers as it found them: not *one body*; but *many separate professors of one common Faith*.

The Apostle having thus shewn the last Supper to be of the nature of *a feast upon the sacrifice*; for the truth of which  
he

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he appeals to their own conceptions of it—*The cup of blessing—is it not the communion? &c. The bread, which we break, is it not the communion? &c.* He then endeavours to convince them of the impiety of their behaviour, from the nature of these feasts, as they were understood both by Jews and Gentiles; who equally held, that they who EAT OF THE SACRIFICES WERE PARTAKERS OF THE ALTAR. But what had either of these *eaters of the sacrifices* to do with the *partakers of the bread and wine* in the last Supper, if the last Supper was not a feast of the same kind with their feasts? But especially, if the three feasts, *Jewish, Pagan, and Christian*, had not one common nature, how could the Apostle have inferred that this intercommunity was absolutely inconsistent? *Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils, &c.* For tho' there might be IMPIETY in the promiscuous use of Pagan and Christian Rites; yet the INCONSISTENCY arises from their having a common nature; and so, consequently, (as they had opposite

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posite originals) from their destroying one another's effects, in the very celebration. The reasoning stands thus. Those who eat of the sacrifices were partakers of the altar. A sacrifice at the altar was a FEDERAL rite: consequently, the feast upon that sacrifice became a federal Rite likewise. *The Lord's table*, and *the table of devils*, therefore, being both federal Rites, the same man could not be partaker of both. This is the Apostle's argument to the *wise men* here appealed to: And we see it turns altogether on this postulatam, that the last Supper is of the nature of a *feast upon the sacrifice*: Suppose it now a *general commemoration only of a dead benefactor*, and all this reasoning vanishes; For tho' a man cannot *execute two federal Rites* which destroy one another; yet a *federal rite* and a *bare remembrance*, in two contrary religions, have none of this opposition; but may be *celebrated*, if not without *impiety*, yet without any of that *inconsistency* which the learned Apostle here charges upon his licentious Corinthians.

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But this was not the only abuse they committed in the celebration of the *Lord's Supper*; nor this the only place in the Epistle declarative of the nature of that holy Rite. These Corinthians, as appears by the next chapter, had been guilty of celebrating the Lord's Supper in a very indecent manner, by confounding it with their ordinary repasts, or with convivial doings of their own invention, where charity and sobriety were too commonly violated. Now this indiscriminate celebration, the Apostle calls, the being *guilty of the body and blood of the Lord* (9). A charge surely much aggravated, were the Lord's Supper instituted only to commemorate a dead benefactor. The Corinthians did not make a due distinction between their more ordinary food and the eating and drinking in memory of a deceased friend. This doubtless was a high ingratitude. Yet to rank these criminals with the murderers of the *Lord of life* is a

(9) 1 Cor. xi. 27.

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feve-

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severity in which we can hardly see the justice. But let us only suppose, that St. Paul considered the last Supper as a *feast upon a sacrifice*, that is, as a Rite in which the benefits of Christ's death and passion were conveyed, and at the same time slighted, and all becomes easy and natural. The profanation of such a Rite, by rendering his death ineffectual, was indeed aiding the purpose of his murderers; and therefore might be fitly compared, and justly equalled to, the prodigious enormity of that crime.

Such then, I presume, is the true nature of the LORD'S SUPPER. And was the adjusting a precise idea of it, as it referred to a religious custom of antiquity, a matter only of curiosity and speculation, I might perhaps have left it to the ecclesiastical historian. But it appears to me to have important consequences with regard both to our FAITH and WORSHIP. For,

1. If the last Supper be of the nature of a *feast after a sacrifice*, then is it a declaration of Jesus himself, that his death

death upon the cross was a REAL SACRIFICE. For figurative expression (as some are apt to deem the Gospel representation of Christ's *sacrifice* and *atonement*) could never produce a religious Rite of divine appointment, arising from, and dependent on, a real specific action. I say, of *divine appointment*, because many of human original have been thus produced. Yet then only (which is a farther support to the preceding observation) when the *figure* had been mistaken for a *substance*.

2. If the last Supper be of the nature of a *feast after a sacrifice*, then is it productive of great and special benefits to the partakers. For the partakers of the Jewish and Gentile *feasts after a sacrifice* did, or were supposed to communicate of the benefits of the sacrifice.

However, a very learned writer, whose principles of reasoning, and method in deducing and conducting them, may serve for a model to the fair Inquirer, hath lately endeavoured to prove, in *A plain account of the nature and end of the sacrament of the*



*Lord's supper*, "that it was instituted  
 "merely in remembrance of Christ;  
 "that the bread to be taken and eaten  
 "was appointed to be the memorial of  
 "his body broken; and the wine to be  
 "drunk was ordained to be the memorial  
 "of his blood shed (1)." His intention  
 in this appears commendable. It was to  
 free the *last Supper* from Superstition;  
 whose untimely fruit is at best, but a  
 lifeless *rubrical piety*. Yet in pursuit of  
 this commendable design, he hath gone,  
 I presume, too far: He hath taken  
 away its SPECIFIC nature, and left it  
 nothing but its GENERIC. He hath ex-  
 cluded the idea of *a feast after the sa-  
 crifice*, in which the celestial benefits of  
 the Giver are conveyed, and confined  
 us to the notion of a mere *memorial*, in  
 which the gratitude only of the Receiver  
 is returned.

He proceeds upon this great PRO-  
 TESTANT PRINCIPLE; "That the Bible  
 "alone ought to determine our belief in  
 "all matters of faith and religious opi-  
 "nion." And this, which can never

(1) P. 24. 3d Ed.



be too much insisted on, he urgeth with a freedom becoming a lover of truth, and a candour expressive of his disinclination to controversy. This may fairly be said of his general conduct.

But whether he hath been as happy in the APPLICATION of his *principle*, may be reasonably made a doubt.

HIS METHOD of reasoning is not less judicious than the *choice* of his topics. He hath deduced a number of propositions tied and fastened to one another, till, with these *CORDS of a man*, he hath drawn the reader to his conclusion. Here, if he obtrudes upon us any false hook in the chain, the art or mistake is easily detected: If all be strong and sound, the force of it will be perceived to more advantage.

Let us examine his reasoning, therefore, with the same precision and brevity with which he urgeth it: And, as we deny his CONCLUSION, shew the FAULTY LINK which hath imposed upon his Readers; and, it may be, upon himself.

The Argument is comprised in the eight following propositions.

PROPOSITIONS.

I.

“ The partaking of the Lord’s Supper is not a duty of itself ; or a duty apparent to us from the nature of things : but a duty made such to Christians, by the positive institution of Jesus Christ.”

II.

“ All positive duties, or duties made such by institution alone, depend entirely upon the will and declaration of the person who institutes and ordains them, with respect to the real design and end of them ; and consequently to the due manner of performing them.”

III.

“ It is plain, therefore, that the nature, the design, and the due manner of  
“ par-

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“ partaking of the Lord's supper, must,  
“ of necessity, depend upon what Jesus  
“ Christ, who instituted it, hath declared  
“ about it.”

IV.

“ It cannot be doubted that he him-  
“ self sufficiently declared to his first and  
“ immediate Followers, the whole of  
“ what he designed should be understood  
“ by it, or implied in it.”

V.

“ It is of small importance therefore  
“ to Christians to know what the many  
“ Writers upon this subject, since the  
“ time of the Evangelists and Apostles  
“ have affirmed. Much less can it be  
“ the duty of Christians to be guided by  
“ what any persons, by their own Autho-  
“ rity, or from their own imaginations,  
“ may teach concerning this duty.”

VI.

“ The passages in the new Testament  
“ which relate to this duty, and they  
“ alone

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“ alone are the original accounts of the  
“ nature and end of this institution ; and  
“ the only authentic declarations, upon  
“ which we of later ages can safely de-  
“ pend ; being written by the immediate  
“ followers of our Lord ; those who  
“ were witnesses themselves to the Insti-  
“ tution ; or were instructed in it, either  
“ by those who were so, or by Christ  
“ himself ; and consent in delivering  
“ down one and the same account of this  
“ religious duty.”

VII.

“ The Writers of the new Testament  
“ give an account of the Institution of  
“ the Lord’s supper in the following  
“ passages, which therefore are princi-  
“ pally to be regarded, viz. St. Mathew,  
“ c. xxvi. v. 26, &c. St. Mark, c. xiv. v.  
“ 22, &c. St. Luke, c. xxii. v. 19, &c.  
“ and St. Paul, 1 Cor. c. xi. v. 23, &c.

VIII.

“ It appears from these passages, that  
“ the End for which our Lord instituted  
“ this

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“ this duty was the *remembrance* of him-  
“ self; that the bread to be taken and  
“ eaten was appointed to be the *memo-*  
“ *rial* of his body broken, and the wine  
“ to be drunk was ordained to be the  
“ *memorial* of his blood shed; or (ac-  
“ cording to the express words of St.  
“ Paul) that the one was to be eaten and  
“ the other to be drunk in *remembrance*  
“ of Christ, and this to be continued  
“ until he, who was once present with  
“ his disciples, and is now absent, shall  
“ come again” (2).

As this, which the learned writer uses,  
is the method of the Demonstrators, one  
would wonder by what force of invention  
he was enabled to deduce this conclu-  
sion. But we often see, that where force  
is wanting, a little matter of address will  
supply its place.

The 4th *Proposition*, which runs thus,  
performed the feat. “ It cannot be  
“ doubted (says he) but that he him-

(2) *Plain account*, p. 2—24.

“ self

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“ self [ Jesus ] SUFFICIENTLY DE-  
“ CLARED to his first and immediate  
“ followers the whole of what he de-  
“ signed should be understood by it [the  
“ *sacrament of the Lord's supper*] or im-  
“ plied in it.”

Now I apprehend *this* to be the *faulty* LINK ; and that all the connexion it hath with the *propositions*, which precede and follow it, lies in the unperceived ambiguity of the terms SUFFICIENTLY DECLARED : Which may either signify, *declared by express words* ; or on the other hand, *declared, by significative circumstances*, such as respect the time, the occasion, the mode of acting, or the manner of speaking. For the communication of our thoughts is carried on as well by EXPRESSIVE ACTIONS as by WORDS AND SOUNDS : nor did the first bear a small part in the converse of the Ancients (3) ; especially amongst the Jewish people of all ages, to the time in question.

(3) See Div. Leg. Vol. ii. Book iv. Sect. 4.

Hence

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Hence it comes to pass, that tho' we are agreed in the Proposition, that *Jesus sufficiently declared the whole of what he understood by his last Supper*, we draw so different conclusions; The learned writer, that it was simply a *remembrance of Christ*; I, that it was of the nature of a *feast upon the sacrifice*. For he considers only what Jesus in express words SAID, at the institution of this holy rite: I take in both what he SAID and DID; and not only that, but the MODE of saying and doing; relative to the time, the occasion, the manners, and the customs of the Age; as being persuaded, that the speaker's meaning can be but very imperfectly understood without taking in all these things. A rule of interpretation, in which, I suppose the learned writer would concur with me, were the point concerning a difficulty in CLASSICAL expression.

This then, I understand to be the only remaining question, Whether or no the Disciples of Jesus (as it is agreed, their Master did not, in express words, call this



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this rite, *a feast upon sacrifice*) could collect, from the whole of the circumstances attending the institution, that it was indeed of the nature of such a feast? namely, from the critical time of the celebration, which was just before his passion, and at the Jewish paschal-supper; from the peculiarity of phrase employed in the institution, of which more hereafter; and from his accustomed manner, in the execution of his ministry, to adapt his words and actions to the scene or subject before him? Now, I suppose, that, from these circumstances, one may fairly conclude, the Disciples might and did collect that the *last Supper* was of the nature of a *feast upon sacrifice*.

For 1. it was much in the genius of those times to convey information, as well by actions and indirect circumstances, as by speech and explicit words. So that the hearer would be naturally as attentive to the one mode of instruction, as to the other.

2. Nothing can be conceived clearer or more expressive of such a *feast*, than the  
the



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the circumstances attending the institution of this; as may appear from hence, That we, who live in an age when such modes of converse are, and have been long disused, yet see, in these circumstances of time, occasion, and mode of expression, such an aptitude to convey the idea of a feast *after the sacrifice*, as, I am persuaded, sufficiently informs every capable person of the nature of this feast.

3. Tho' the Disciples are indeed represented by the Evangelists as exceeding slow and dull to apprehend *the things of God*, yet this concerned only the *spiritual meaning* of such things; from which their inveterate prejudices for a *carnal œconomy* had shut up all their faculties; so as to deny any introduction to a new Religion, opposite to the *temporary* purposes of their old one. It doth not appear, they had any natural defect of apprehension to understand a plain allusion to the rites and customs of their Law; which the institution in question directly objected to them.

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But what is here urged will receive further light as well as strength from the remarkable reasoning of St. Paul upon this holy *Mystery*. We have seen above, that the language he employs to explain his ideas, and the similitude he brings to enforce his reasoning, are adapted only to the consideration of the last Supper's being *a feast upon a sacrifice*. Now one or other of these things will needs follow, Either that he had an express revelation, as well of its nature as of the History of its institution, from Christ himself, at the time of his conversion; or that he logically inferred this its nature from the several circumstances of the history of the institution.

If we hold the first, The dispute is at an end: If the second, What hindered the rest of the disciples from doing the same?

I should be inclined to the latter opinion; and that all which was revealed to him by Jesus, was the history of the institution as we find it recorded in the Gospel. His own words, where he tells

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us, how he came by his knowledge, seem to decide in favour of this opinion. " For I have received (says he) of the " Lord, that which also I deliver unto " you, That the Lord Jesus, the same " night in which he was betrayed, took " bread: And when he had given thanks, " he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this " is my body, which is broken for you : " this do in remembrance of me. After " the same manner also he took the cup, " when he had supped, saying, This cup " is the new testament in my blood: this " do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remem- " brance of me. For as often as ye eat " this bread and drink this cup, ye do " shew the Lord's death till he come (4)." This is the whole of his account concerning the history of the institution. He then proceeds, in the next verse, to reason from it — " Wherefore whoever shall eat this " bread and drink this cup of the Lord " unworthily shall be guilty of the body " and blood of Christ."

(4) 1 Cor. xi. 234

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So far then as to the SUFFICIENT DECLARATION of the mind of Jesus to his *immediate followers*, concerning the nature of this holy Rite. The Reader, perhaps, may think this reasoning not a little strengthened by what the excellent Cudworth says of this matter. “ But “ lest we should seem (says he) to set up “ fancies of our own, we come now to “ DEMONSTRATE that the Lord’s Supper “ is a *feast upon sacrifice*; in the same “ manner with the *Jewish and Heathen*. “ And that from a place of Scripture “ where all these three are compared to- “ gether and made exact parallels to one “ another. 1 Cor. x. 14—21. Where “ the Apostle’s scope being to convince “ the Corinthians of the unlawfulness of “ eating things sacrificed to Idols, he “ shews, that tho’ an idol was *physically* “ nothing, yet *morally*, to eat of things “ sacrificed to Idols in the Idol’s temple “ was to consent with the sacrifices, and “ to be guilty of them. This he illu- “ strates *first* by a parallel Rite in the “ Christian religion, where eating and drink-

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“ drinking of the body and blood of  
“ Christ in the Lord's Supper is a real  
“ COMMUNICATION in his death and sa-  
“ crifice. *Secondly* from another parallel  
“ of the same rite amongst the Jews,  
“ where always they that ate of the sa-  
“ crifices were accounted partakers of  
“ the Altar. Therefore, as to eat the  
“ body and blood of Christ in the Lord's  
“ Supper, is to be made partaker of *his*  
“ sacrifice ; as to eat of the Jewish sacri-  
“ fices was to partake in the *legal* sacri-  
“ fices themselves ; so to eat things of-  
“ fered up in sacrifice to idols was to be  
“ made partakers of the idol sacrifices,  
“ and therefore was unlawful. The  
“ things which the Gentiles sacrificed,  
“ they sacrificed to *Devils*, but Christ's  
“ body and blood was offered up in sa-  
“ crifice to God, and therefore they could  
“ not partake both of the sacrifice of the  
“ true God, and the sacrifice of Devils.  
“ St. Paul's argument here must needs  
“ suppose a PERFECT ANALOGY between  
“ these three, and that they are ALL  
“ PARALLELS to one another, or else it

“ hath no strength. Wherefore I con-  
 “ clude from hence that the *Lord's Supper*  
 “ is the same amongst Christians, in re-  
 “ spect of the Christian sacrifice, that,  
 “ amongst the Jews, the feasts upon the  
 “ legal sacrifices were; and, amongst  
 “ the Gentiles, the feasts upon the idol-  
 “ sacrifices; and therefore *epulum sacri-*  
 “ *ficale* or *epulum ex oblatis.*” (5)

But this apostolic reasoning, so well  
 enforced by the modern Doctor, our  
 learned Writer found himself obliged to  
 explain away, before he could establish  
 his own Hypothesis.

First then, he gives us a long para-  
 phrase on the reasoning of St. Paul (6);  
 which, you may be sure, he makes very  
 conformable to his own System. But to  
 this, it is enough to oppose the short one  
 of Dr. Cudworth just now delivered.  
 And what is wanting in the weight of its  
 authority, some may think to be suffi-

(5) A discourse concerning the true nature of  
 the Lord's supper. Chap. iv.

(6) From p. 32 to 39.

ciently

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ciently supplied by the advantage of a certain favourable prejudice, "That the sense which is easiest, and needs the fewest words to explain, is the most likely to be the true." However, where the learned writer supports his own paraphrase by *criticism* or *reasoning*, he will deserve all our respect and attention.

First then, on the words—*The cup—*  
*which we bless, is it not the communion of*  
*the blood of Christ? The bread which we*  
*break, is it not the communion of the body*  
*of Christ?*—he observes, that "tho' this  
" be interpreted by many learned men  
" to signify a *communion*, or partaking of  
" *all the benefits of Christ's body* broken,  
" and *blood* shed, yet, he thinks, the  
" words cannot have that signification—  
" That, the greek word *Koinonia*, used  
" by the Apostle, and the word *com-*  
" *munion*, which is latin, both signify  
" a JOINT PARTAKING, or a partaking  
" of something in common with others  
" of the same society. And this *joint*  
" *partaking* of Christ's body and blood  
" can signify no more than eating his  
" body



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“ body and drinking his blood as a society of his disciples (7).”

To this, it may be sufficient to observe, that if, by the word *κοινωνία*, the Apostle had meant, as the learned writer supposeth he did mean, *a joint partaking, or a partaking in common with our fellow Christians of the bread and wine*, he would have expressed his meaning. In the text, there is not a tittle of *fellow Christians* or *others* of the same society. It is *κοινωνία τῷ αἵματι* — *κοινωνία τῷ σώματι* — *the communion of the blood—the communion of the body*. Had he meant what the learned writer makes him to mean, he would doubtless have said *κοινωνία ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ σῶμα*—*Your communion in the body*, i. e. your eating of it jointly. St. Paul knew how to express himself properly. And if this had been his meaning, he would have expressed himself in some such manner; as appears from a passage in his epistle to the Philippians, where he is professedly speaking of this joint

(7) P. 39—40.

par-



participation of a blessing. Κοινωνία ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (8)—*Your communion in the Gospel*, i. e. your joint belief and profession of it.

But the fallacy of the reasoning seems to lye in the sense the learned writer gives to the Greek and Latin words, as if they could signify nothing but a *joint partaking* with some other man, or body of men: and then indeed they could signify nothing else, in this place, but what they signified in all others. But He seems not to have considered, that tho' indeed this be their direct and original sense, yet, as is common to moral modes, they had taken another, by their being applied to *spiritual* beings, as well as to man; nay even to inanimate things, as may be seen in St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, Κοινωνία παθημάτων αὐτοῦ, (9) *the fellowship or communion of his sufferings*. Now, when thus applied, the idea of our joint fellowship with men is not contained, except where that fellow-

(8) Phil. i. 5. (9) Phil. iii. 10.

ship

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ship is expressed : as will appear from the following words of the same Apostle. Κοινωνία τῷ υἱῷ — *the communion of the Son* (1) ; Κοινωνία τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι — *the communion of the Holy Ghost* (2). In these instances, there is no pretence for admitting the idea of a *joint-partaking with our fellow-Christians* ; with whom, however, we believe in common in the *Son*, and in the *Holy Ghost* ; because here is no joint act, defined by time and place, as in the institution of the last Supper : which, I suppose, is the reason of the learned Author's giving this sense to *the communion of the body and blood*.

But to make it still more apparent, that where the sacred writers use the word Κοινωνία in this construction, to signify our *union with our salvation*, no such *joint-partaking* is to be understood, it will not be improper to consider the following passage, where St. John expressly distinguisheth the communion with Christ, from the communion or fellow-

(1) 1 Cor. i. 9. (2) 2 Cor. xiii. 13.

ship

of the LORD'S SUPPER. 35

ship with one another. Ἐὰν εἴπωμεν ὅτι κοινωνίαν ἔχομεν μετ' αὐτοῦ — κοινωνίαν ἔχομεν μετ' ἀλλήλων (4). But if we say we have fellowship with him—we have fellowship with one another; and by this mode of inference, and only by this, the communion of the blood, and the communion of the body, may likewise signify what the learned Writer would have it, a joint-partaking, or communion with one another.

The learned writer then goes on, to reason on the passage in question: and, when he hath done that, returns afresh to criticise the word Κοινωνία. It may not be improper, therefore, before we proceed to his reasoning on the passage, to consider what he further urgeth in behalf of his sense of Κοινωνία; and so, lay all his criticisms together. He tells us then, that “there is little ground for the remark of some learned men, that the word Κοινωνία (*communion*) is used where the inward or *spiritual* part of

(4) 1 Gen. Ep. i. 6, 7.

“ the

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“ the Lord’s Supper is spoken of ; and  
 “ the word *μετέχων*, (*partaking*) after-  
 “ wards used, where the *external* only is  
 “ meant ; when we see the word *κοινωνοὶ*  
 “ (*communicants*) here used with regard  
 “ to idols ; where no *spiritual* part could  
 “ be thought of. For the whole argu-  
 “ ment supposes an *Idol* to be *nothing* ;  
 “ and the Christians concerned, to have  
 “ no thought of receiving good or harm  
 “ from those idols. — Now the same  
 “ words being used with with regard to  
 “ Christ and those *Dæmons* [*κοινωνία*  
 “ and *κοινωνοὶ* in one verse ; and *μετέχων*  
 “ in another] it follows that *Communion*  
 “ and *partaking* are words of the same  
 “ signification in both cases (5).”

There is no ground, he says, for the distinction ; since, in the place in question *κοινωνία* is used when no *spiritual part* could be thought of. What, no *spiritual part*, when the question was of communicating with *Idols* ? No, for St. Paul says, *an Idol is nothing*. This is true.

(5) P. 45, 46.

But

of the LORD'S SUPPER. 37

But he says, at the same time, that these *Idols* were *Devils*; for that the *Gentiles* sacrificed to *Devils*, and that those who eat of such sacrifices had communion with *Devils*. Now, the *DEVIL*, in St Paul's opinion, was *something*. He says, indeed, *an Idol is nothing*. But does he mean a metaphysical non-entity? Surely, not: for he immediately adds, that the *thing offered to them* was likewise *nothing*. He must use the negation therefore in a *moral* sense, "That no *benefits* could accrue to the idolatrous worshippers." But this is consistent enough with the moral entity of the Devil: and while that remained, a *spiritual part* might well be thought of, when the Apostle spoke of *communicating with him*. The consequence is, that the criticism of those *learned men*, who distinguished between *Koinōνία* and *μετέχειν* stands good, for any thing this learned writer hath said to the contrary. Consider the words—*What say I then? That the Idol is any thing, or that which is offered to Idols any thing? But I say that the things*

E

*which*

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*which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to Devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship (or communion) with Devils.* There seems to be no great difficulty in the Apostle's meaning; which amounts plainly to this—“a Gentile idol, as a protector and benefactor, is indeed *nothing*, their Idols being the celestial bodies, deceased Ancestors, Legislators, or Kings: but the Author of Gentile Idolatry was the *Devil*; therefore, says he, tho' ye can possibly receive no benefit from Idols, ye may yet receive real damage from the Devil, the declared enemy of mankind.” So that admitting with the learned writer, against all evidence of Antiquity, That the *Christians concerned, had not any thought of receiving good or harm from those Idols,* yet, (which is more to the purpose) we see St. Paul had.

For whatever notions the Gentiles, or the gentilized Jews of this time, had of *Demons*, every man who reads the New Testament with attention will be forced to confess, that the sacred writers never

use



*of the LORD'S SUPPER.* 39

use the word (and they use it often) but they always mean Satan and his Angels, the Powers of darkness, Reprobates from God and goodness. *The good and evil Dæmons of Gentilism*, were indeed those *Idols*, not of the *Altar*, but of the *brain*, which the sacred writers esteemed moral NOTHINGS: And yet, of that capital enemy of mankind, the Pagans seem to have received some obscure tradition; but not unmixed with their own-invented superstitions: Which preserving some traces of resemblance to the truth, and giving some conformity in the languages of Truth and Error, hath made some men draw strange conclusions, as if the Founders of our holy Religion had taken the advantage of Pagan Superstition to form a System of DEMONOLOGY agreeable to the preconceived fancies of their Converts.

We now come to the learned writer's REASONING on the passage. "If we observe the Apostle's design in this argument, it will appear that he had

E 2 " not



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“ not the least occasion to speak here of  
“ the BENEFITS of Christ's death. His  
“ design was to incite the Corinthians to  
“ *see from Idolatry*, by shewing them  
“ what a crime it must be in a Christian  
“ to do what was accounted honour to  
“ the Gods of the Heathens, by feasting  
“ upon and *partaking* of their sacrifices.  
“ In order to do this it was not his pur-  
“ pose to say, *By eating bread and drink-*  
“ *ing wine in the Lord's supper, you par-*  
“ *take of all the BENEFITS of Christ's*  
“ *death*; and therefore you cannot eat of  
“ the Heathen sacrifices. Neither do I  
“ see that this is any argument at all to  
“ the point in view. But to say, *by eat-*  
“ *ing bread and drinking wine, &c. you*  
“ *eat, drink, and partake of them, not as*  
“ *at a common meal, but of bread and*  
“ *wine, called the body and blood of Christ,*  
“ *in remembrance of and in honour to him,*  
“ *and acknowledgment of his being your*  
“ *master, therefore you cannot, without*  
“ *great absurdity and guilt, pay the same*  
“ *sort of honour to false gods by feasting*  
“ *with their votaries, upon their sacrifices.*  
“ This

*of the LORD'S SUPPER.* 41

"This, I say, is an argument to his purpose, and proves all he aimed at (6)."

I. First then, Admitting the learned Author's representation of St. Paul's *design* to be fairly given "that it was only "to incite the Corinthians to flee from "Idolatry," yet I do not see, according to the Author's own way of reasoning, why it was not as much to the purpose of the Apostle to urge the last Supper's being a *communion of the body and blood in a feast upon the sacrifice*, as to urge that the last Supper was not a *common meal, but celebrated in remembrance of and in honour to Christ*. Now, this last, he owns is an *argument to the purpose*. Why then will he exclude the other? He immediately subjoins the reason—*this ALONE proves all that he [the Apostle] aimed at*. But here, as I suspect, lurks a fallacy.—Because *this alone* proves the great absurdity and guilt of these idolatrous Corinthians; Therefore, they were not to be pushed further. According to this reasoning, Whenever a Minister of justice

(6) P. 40, 41.

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prosecutes a transgressor of the Laws, it would be to the purpose to prove him guilty of *theft*, but to prove that theft, a *sacrilege*, utterly impertinent. In a word, the learned writer argues as if he thought it much to the purpose to urge the *genus* of the action, which proves them, as the learned writer says, *guilty of a great crime and absurdity*, but nothing at all to the purpose to insist on the *species* of it, which proves them, as St. Paul says, *guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*, i. e. his murderers.

But it will be objected, That this illustration of the learned person's argument hath a glare of absurdity which we do not see in the argument itself. It is true, it hath so: For in the argument itself, the glare is taken off by the artful or accidental substitution of one term for another, *benefits* for *communion*; the *effects* of the thing for the thing itself. The learned person observes, that it was not to St. Paul's purpose (when his design was to excite the Corinthians to flee from idolatry) to talk of the BENEFITS of Christ's death.

*death.* I do not know any one who thought it was : Not even St. Paul himself, if we may judge by his silence. For he hath not a syllable about BENEFITS. *Of the communion of the body and blood of Christ* he indeed speaks largely : And this seemeth to the purpose : For if the celebration of the Lord's Supper brought them to so near a conjunction with Him, it must be an aggravation both of their guilt and their absurdity to assist at the celebration of a similar feast, in a religion at enmity with His. *The benefits,* arising from this near conjunction, is another consideration ; which doth not *directly,* but *obliquely only,* affect the point in question.

II. But secondly, To excite the Corinthians to flee from Idolatry was not (as seems to be insinuated) the *whole* of the Apostle's intention in this place. That matter is particularly enforced in the *eighth* Chapter : and tho' it be here taken up again in the *tenth,* it is only as it maketh part of a different subject, namely the  
VARIOUS PROFANATIONS OF THE  
LORD'S

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LORD'S TABLE, of which, the Corinthians had been guilty. And this is handled from the first verse of the tenth Chapter to the thirty fourth verse of the eleventh; interrupted by a digression, concerning *order in their assemblies* (7): For they had neglected the rules he left with them concerning that point of Discipline. And his words, *Be ye followers of me, &c.* (8) suggesting a reproof, it occasioned the intermediate digression: from whence, he returns to his main subject, *the profanations of the Lord's table*: which he had introduced by an observation of the same misbehaviour in their Forefathers: Who, like them, when under the conduct of Moses, had, in various ways, abused those miraculous blessings of manna from Heaven, and water from the Rock; which St. Paul elegantly accommodates to this occasion—*For they did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual rock that fol-*

(7) From ver. 2 to 16 of chap. xi.     (8) Chap. xi. ver. 1.

*lowed*

*of the LORD'S SUPPER.* 45

*lowed them; and that rock was Christ* (9). Now the profanations in question consisted in these two points, The frequenting the Pagan feasts (1): And the making no distinction between the Lord's Supper and their ordinary repast (2). But the crime of profanation rising in proportion to the dignity of the thing profaned, it was much to the Apostle's purpose, if not to speak of the *benefits* of Christ's death, yet to shew the last Supper to be the *communion of the body and blood of Christ*.

The learned writer's other argument against the received interpretation, is as follows — “*Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of Devils, Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and the table of Devils,* is the conclusion of the Apostle's reasoning. And this cannot possibly signify “*Ye cannot be partakers of the BENEFITS of the Lord's table and of the BENEFITS of the table of the heathen deities:*” for

(9) Chap. x. 3, 4. (1) Chap. x. (2) Chap. xi. from ver. 17.



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“ no benefit could possibly be supposed  
“ by him to accrue from these, even to  
“ the heathen worshippers themselves.—  
“ Consequently, when, at the beginning  
“ of the argument, and to introduce  
“ only his conclusion, he asks, *The cup—*  
“ *is it not the communion, &c.* he must be  
“ supposed to mean what alone was to  
“ his purpose, “ Is not our *joint-partak-*  
“ *ing* of bread and wine in the Lord’s  
“ Supper a *religious* partaking of what  
“ are *memorials* of Christ’s body and  
“ blood ?”—the premises therefore can-  
“ not be supposed to contain in them  
“ what has no relation to the conclusion  
“ drawn from them. In the *conclusion*  
“ *of partaking of the table of Devils* it  
“ must be allowed that nothing is said  
“ about *benefits*: in the *premises* there-  
“ fore, *of the communion of the body and*  
“ *blood*, which lead to this, it was not  
“ the Apostle’s design to speak of *bene-*  
“ *fits*; but only of the *significancy* of that  
“ rite, as an *act of religious honour* paid  
“ by Christians to their Master (3).”

(3) P. 43, 44.

Now



*of the LORD'S SUPPER.* 47

Now, not to repeat what hath been already observed of the Fallacy, which runs thro' the learned person's whole argument, by substituting BENEFITS for COMMUNION; which, however, is of much importance; for, tho' the partakers of the Pagan feasts could receive no *benefits* from Devils, yet they might be in *communion* with them: Not, I say, to repeat what hath been already urged, It will be sufficient to observe against the learned person's reasoning, that it is founded on a supposition, that St. Paul could not argue, *ad hominem*, as the logicians speak: For if He could *so* argue, the observation hath no force. It is agreed, that *St. Paul believed no benefits could accrue to the heathen worshippers from their Idols.* But, if those worshippers themselves believed they *could*, what should hinder a good reasoner, like St. Paul, from telling these paganized Christians, that the benefits from Idol-feasts, and the benefits from the Lord's table, were incongruous and inconsistent; what, I say, but the supposed illogical liberty  
of

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of arguing *ad hominem*? That these *early Christians*, who went knowingly to the idol feasts, were as likely to expect benefit from them, as the *early Jews*, who joined idolatrous worship to that of the God of Israel, is what, I think, no man can deny. Against such Christians, St. Paul might reason hypothetically; and, for argument's sake, grant the benefits of the Idol-feasts to be real, like those of the Lord's table. And this, I suppose, is the common practice of all mankind in their reasoning on the like occasion.

The learned writer then proceeds to the confutation of those who hold the last Supper to be an *eucharistical Sacrifice*, *commemorative* of that upon the Cross. But tho' with this, neither I, nor, as I apprehend, the Church of England, are at all concerned, yet as the vindication of the *Lord's Supper* in this point is against a common Adversary, I am proud to join with the learned writer to confute this strange idea of an *Eucharistical commemorative Sacrifice*, which the pious and truly respectable Mr. Robert Nelson hath endeavour-

deavoured to free from the apparent absurdity of one sacrifice's being commemorative of another, by this Argument. "That it's being commemorative no more hindered it from being a proper sacrifice than the typical and figurative sacrifices of the old law hindered them from being proper sacrifices. For as to be a type (saith this learned man) doth not destroy the nature and notion of a legal sacrifice, so, to be REPRESENTATIVE and commemorative doth not destroy the nature of an evangelical sacrifice (4)." This is well put; but will by no means bear the test. In order to detect the fallacy of this ingenious reasoning, I must beg leave to have recourse to the principles laid down in the *Div. Leg.* (5).

It is allowed then, that the *paschal Lamb*, and the *Lord's Supper*, are both Signs with a moral import; and, consequently, are both TYPES. How comes it then to pass, (might Mr. Nelson ask)

(4) Life of Bp. Bull, p. 483. (5) Book iv. §. 4.

F that

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that the *pascchal Lamb* will admit the nature of a *sacrifice*, and yet the Lord's Supper will not? For this plain reason. The relation which the *pascchal Lamb* bore to the *Archetype* on the Cross was, at the time of the institution, for the wise ends of Providence, kept a secret from the followers of the Law. Its *moral import* therefore, (and as a TYPE it must have a *moral import*) could be only a *Sacrifice*. The case is widely different in the institution of the *Lord's Supper*. It is declared, by the Institutor himself, to be a *commemoration* of his death and sufferings. Here, the relation between the *type* and *archetype* is declared to all: consequently, its *moral import* is a *commemorative feast on a sacrifice*; but the idea of such a feast necessarily EXCLUDES a *sacrifice*; for the *Thing done*, and the *commemoration of the thing done*, can never be an action of the same kind. However, admitting it could be so; yet this *type* having its *moral import* in a *commemoration*, can never acquire another, of a *sacrifice*: which, in *metaphysical* conception, would

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would be as monstrous as a *double body*, in *natural*. But, to shew, in one word, a difference, where the learned person thinks there is none—Take away the nature of a *sacrifice* from the Type of the *paschal Lamb*, and you leave it *no moral import*: that is, you deprive it of its nature of a Type. But take away the idea of a *sacrifice* from the *Lord's Supper*, and it still remains a Type; having still a *moral import*, by being a *commemoration* of the death and sufferings of our Lord.

Mr. Nelson himself seemed to have some confused suspicion of the weakness of his inference from the *typical Sacrifices of the old Law*; and therefore seeing but small connexion between a *Sacrifice* and a *Commemoration*, (the latter of which conveys the idea, Scripture gives us of the *Lord's Supper*) he adds the word, REPRESENTATION; which is indeed consistent enough with a *Sacrifice*: for tho', of a *commemorative sacrifice*, we have no instance in practice, and can see no propriety in idea; yet a *representative sacrifice* is very good sense, and may be well supported in the command to

*Abraham* to offer up his Son. But then, the History of the Institution of the Lord's Supper is not only absolutely silent, concerning this *representation*, but excludes the idea of it by making it a commemoration. In conclusion however, let us observe, That a *commemorative sacrifice*, in the sense Mr. Nelson contends for, is one thing; and *sacrifices at a commemorative feast*, of which Antiquity has many examples, is quite another.

But tho' this matter fell so fairly in my way, and that I have only followed the example which the learned Writer set me, yet it will be of more use to return to the *Plain Account*, and consider the Author's method of establishing his own Hypothesis. It hath been hitherto esteemed an essential canon of true criticism, that, in order to form a right judgment of the specific nature of any Ordinance or Institution of Antient times, we should have a special regard to the notions, manners, and customs of those times; since it can hardly be supposed, that any solemn, or public Rite  
of



*of the* LORD'S SUPPER. 53

of religion would be instituted without some reference to the then prevailing Opinions. But the learned Writer of the PLAIN ACCOUNT, as if the very title of his book would have been falsified by such an inquiry, hath attempted to explain *the nature and end of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper* with as little regard to the genius and manners of Antiquity, as an English Lawyer would take of them, in his reading on a modern act of Parliament.

But the ill effects of such a partial View cannot be better understood than by reflecting, that the very same method of interpretation, which hath led the learned Writer into one extreme, concerning *the NATURE OF THE THING*; hath led the Papists into the direct opposite, concerning the MEANING OF THE WORDS. The celebrated BOSSUET, the most artful, as well as most eloquent, Advocate of the papal Cause, rests all the strength of the LITERAL interpretation of the words, *This is my body—This is my blood*—on this very PRINCIPLE, That the institution of the Lord's sup-



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per stands single and alone ; detached from all preceding discourse ; and unrelated to any contemporary Rite. His words are these — “ Zuinglius said  
“ in plain terms, that there was no miracle, nor any thing incomprehensible  
“ in the Eucharist : that the bread  
“ broken was a representation of the  
“ body offered, and the wine poured out,  
“ of the blood which was shed : that  
“ Jesus Christ, when he instituted these  
“ sacred symbols, gave them the Names  
“ of the things signified : however, that  
“ these were not naked Signs, nor a  
“ simple Representation ; for that the  
“ remembrance and belief of the body  
“ offered and the blood shed for us,  
“ nourished and sustained our souls ; and  
“ further, that the holy Spirit sealed the  
“ remission of sins, in our hearts. This,  
“ he said, was the whole of the Mystery.  
“ Now it must be owned, that NEITHER  
“ HUMAN REASON NOR COMMON SENSE  
“ SUFFERED THE LEAST FORCE IN  
“ THIS EXPLANATION. The words of  
“ Scripture only, made all the difficulty.  
“ And yet, when one party urged, —  
“ This

of the LORD'S SUPPER. 55

“ *This is my body* ; The other had their  
“ answer ready — *I am the vine — I am*  
“ *the door — that rock was Christ —*  
“ It is true, that these instances came not  
“ up to the point. When Jesus Christ said  
“ — *This is my body — This is my blood —*  
“ he was neither propounding a Para-  
“ ble, nor explaining an Allegory. The  
“ *Words, WHICH ARE DETACHED AND*  
“ *SEPARATE FROM ALL OTHER DIS-*  
“ *COURSE, carry their whole meaning*  
“ *in themselves. The business in hand*  
“ *was the institution of a new Rite, which*  
“ *required the use of SIMPLE TERMS :*  
“ *And that place in Scripture is yet to be*  
“ *discovered, where the Sign hath the*  
“ *name of the Thing signified given to*  
“ *it at the moment of the institution of*  
“ *the Rite, and WITHOUT ANY LEAD-*  
“ *ING PREPARATION (6).*” On the  
foun-

(6) Zuingle disoit positivement, qu'il n'y avoit point de miracle dans l'Eucharistie, ni rien d'incomprehensible ; que le pain rompu nous representoit le corps immolé, et le vin, le sang répandu ; que Jesus Christ en instituant ces signes sacrés leur avoit

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foundation of this reasoning it is that the celebrated Prelate observes, in another place, " That Luther continued invincibly struck with the force and simplicity of the words, — *This is my body* —

avoit donné le nom de la chose ; que ce n'étoit pourtant pas un simple spectacle, ni des signes tout à fait nûs ; que la mémoire et la foi du corps immolé et du sang répandu soutenoit notre ame ; que cependant le Saint-Esprit scelloit dans les cœurs la remission des pechés ; et que c'étoit la tout le mystere. La raison et le sens humain n'avoient rien à suffrir dans cette explication. L'Ecriture faisoit de la peine ; mais quand les uns oppoisoient, *Ceci est mon corps*, les autres repondoient, *Je suis la vigne, je suis la porte, le pierre étoit Christ*. Il est vrai que ces exemples n'étoient pas semblables. Ce n'étoit ni en proposant une parabole, ni en expliquant une allegorie, que Jesus Christ avoit dit, *Ceci est mon corps, ceci est mon sang*. Ces PAROLES DETACHEES DE TOUT AUTRE DISCOURS portoient tout leur sens en elles-mêmes. Il s'agissoit d'une nouvelle institution qui devoit être faite en TERMES SIMPLES, et on n'avoit encore trouvé aucun lieu de l'Ecriture, où un signe d'institution reçût le nom de la chose, au moment qu'on l'instituoit, et SANS AUCUNE PREPARATION PRECEDENTE. *Histoire des Variations, Tom. i. p. 73—4. Ed. Par. 1730, 8vo.*

" *This*

of the LORD'S SUPPER. 57

“ *This is my blood*—The Church had believed, without difficulty, that Jesus Christ, in order to consummate his sacrifice, and fulfil the ancient Figures, hath given us to eat the real Substance of his flesh, offered up for us. She had the same idea of the blood shed for our iniquities. Accustomed, from her birth, to mysteries incomprehensible, and to the ineffable favours of divine love, those impenetrable wonders contained in the literal sense did not shock her Faith: And Luther never could persuade himself, that Jesus Christ either purposely obscured the institution of his Sacrament; or that words so simple were capable of conveying so VIOLENT A FIGURE (7).”

Thus

(7) Luther demeura frappé invinciblement de la force et de la simplicité des ces paroles: *Ceci est mon corps, Ceci est mon sang*;—L'Eglise avoit cru sans peine, que pour consommer son sacrifice et les figures anciennes Jesus-Christ nous avoit donné à manger la propre substance de sa chair immolée pour nous. Elle avoit la même pensée du sang répandu pour nos pechés. Accoutumée dès son origine à des mystères incompréhensibles et à  
des

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Thus, we find, the learned Writer of the *Plain Account*, and M. Bossuet, both lay the foundation of their different reasonings in one COMMON PRINCIPLE, "That the institution of the Lord's Supper was detached from all other discourse, unrelated to any other Rite, and unconcerned with any foregoing preparation." Now, even tho' the falsehood of this principle had not been fully evinced, as, in truth, it has, where I shew the relation it bears to the Paschal Supper; and how easily and naturally that Supper introduced this Christian Institution, Yet the extremes, into which it hath carried these two learned Writers, of a MERE COMMEMORATION on the one hand, and a REAL PRESENCE on the other, would raise a suspicion that this

des marques ineffables de l'amour divin, les merveilles impénétrables que renfermoit le sens literal ne l'avoient point rebutée; et Luther ne pût jamais se persuader, ni que Jesus-Christ eût voulu obscurcir exprès l'institution de son sacrement, ni que des paroles si simples fussent susceptibles des FIGURES SI VIOLENTES—Id. ib. p. 43.

com-

*of the LORD'S SUPPER.* 59

*common principle* was neither founded in reason, nor supported by fact.

I have said enough of the *commemoration*: And now turn to the REAL PRESENCE of the Catholic Bishop.

He rests it, we see, upon the force of the WORDS; which, in his opinion, can admit of no *figurative* sense, without doing extreme violence to human language and expression. Indeed, as far as regards *the hardness* of the figure, I believe, most protestant Doctors have been ready enough to join with him.

But this difficulty, great as it is, I presume, the preceding account of the *specific* nature of the Lord's Supper will entirely remove. By that account it appears, that the words of the institution are FIGURATIVE; and so far from suffering any violent conversion, that the sense of *bread* and *wine* fall into the figure of *body* and *blood*, naturally and easily; Nay, what is above all, NECESSARILY.

We have shewn the last Supper to be of the nature of the *feasts upon sacrifice*:  
in



in which feasts, the very *body* sacrificed was eaten. Now as this Rite was to be instituted, and first celebrated, by the very person himself who was offered up for our Redemption, the Institution must needs precede the Sacrifice. Of necessity therefore, some *symbolic elements* must be given, to be received by the Participants, instead of the very body and blood. But, as the flesh of the animal sacrificed was the meat eaten in the *feast after the sacrifice*, the symbolic elements OF BREAD AND WINE are naturally, properly, and elegantly called, his BODY AND BLOOD.

Again, if it were the purpose of divine Wisdom to give this *specific* nature to the last Supper, we must needs conclude that Jesus would *intimate* such it's nature to the first Participants.

But if (as, in fact, was the case) the same Wisdom thought proper (in conformity to ancient religious Custom) to intimate this only by the *occasion*, and through the *words* of the institution, then the figurative expressions of BODY  
AND



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AND BLOOD became NECESSARY: These only, being fully declarative of the nature of the Rite. And as *a feast upon sacrifice*, made the use of the terms *body and blood* to be necessary, so, on the other side, the terms *body and blood* shew this rite to have been *a feast upon sacrifice*.

On the whole, We have indeed, no conception how divine Wisdom could contrive a more natural, proper, and elegant way of acquainting his disciples, that the Rite, now instituted, was of the nature of *a feast upon sacrifice*, than by terming the elements of BREAD AND WINE communicated, his BODY AND BLOOD.

Thus doth the establishment of the specific nature of this Rite, serve to remove a difficulty which hath long embarrassed all the several Opposers of the doctrine of TRANSUBSTANTIATION; by shewing that the FIGURATIVE WORDS of the institution are easy, natural, elegant, and necessary.

It likewise very well accounts for another difficulty, which the Advocates for

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## 2    *The Nature and End*

*real presence* throw in the way of common sense. They say, "If the words of the institution were only metaphorical; and especially, if the FIGURE was expressive of no more than a *death commemorated*, they might, and probably would, have been changed in the narratives, five times repeated, by the four Evangelists and St. Paul, in distinct Histories, and on different occasions: for that, no reason can be given of the unvaried use of the same words but because they are to be understood LITERALLY: and then, as they were declarative of one of the greatest mysteries in Religion, there was a necessity to record the *very terms* employed, whenever the history of the institution was related."

To this we reply, that indeed, were the words used FIGURATIVELY, and the *figure* only expressive of a *death commemorated*, as the learned Author of the PLAIN ACCOUNT supposes, it is reasonable to think, the terms would have been varied, in one or other of the sacred  
Writers:

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Writers: Because, in such a case, it is natural to believe, that Writers of so different genius and acquirements would not all have the same sentiment concerning the use of these precise *terms*; so as to esteem them preferable to any other: as, in fact, on this supposition, they would not be. But we can by no means allow the consequence, That therefore they are to be understood LITERALLY: since, if we admit the Institution to be of the nature of *a feast upon sacrifice*, as we have proved it is, there will be the same necessity for the unvaried use of the terms, altho' they are *figurative*, as there would be, altho' they were *literal*. For these precise terms are as necessary to denote *a feast upon sacrifice*, the Rite we contend for, as to denote a *Sacrifice*, the enormous idea of the Church of Rome.

Here too let me observe, both against our Catholic and Protestant Writer, that on this idea, of *a feast upon Sacrifice* (which no one, I think, can doubt but the primitive Christians had of the Lord's Supper) it would naturally follow, that

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Antiquity should always speak of this Rite in the strongest terms of veneration; as that, thro' which, the highest benefits of our Religion, are conveyed. And this they might do, without much EXAGGERATION on the one hand; or any conception of a REAL PRESENCE on the other.

The learned Catholic Bishop saith true, that Protestants have but lamely justified the FIGURE of, *This is my body,* &c. by those other of, *I am the wine—I am the door.* And his reason is solid. *Jesus,* saith he, *in the institution of this Rite, was neither propounding a Parable, nor explaining an Allegory.* But when he would have us infer from hence, that there could be no other occasion for *such a figure,* he imposes his usual art upon us. He would not speak out. He knew there were other occasions; such as *The declaring the NATURE of a Rite;* which was the case in question. But he would cut off our way to this, by supposing it to be allowed on all hands, That *the words are detached and separate from all*  
other

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*other discourse* — that there is no *leading Preparation*. Now this, we have shewn to be an absolute falsehood: The *leading preparation* was a plain one: It was the PASCHAL SUPPER. The *preceding discourse* was an affecting one: It was the mention of his approaching DEATH AND SUFFERINGS. Therefore, the words of the Institution do not, as M. Bossuet pretends, carry their whole meaning within themselves; but refer to things preceding and exterior. He trifles with us, when he challenges us to find a place in Scripture where the sign hath the name of the thing signified, given to it at the moment of the institution of the Rite, and WITHOUT ANY LEADING PREPARATION. We have shewn there was a *leading Preparation*. And that circumstance proved, the Bishop, I suppose, would retract his challenge.

In the mean time, his triumphant conclusion loses much of it's Lustre.—

“ That, in a word, (says he) which I  
“ pretend to evince is, the embarras into  
“ which the words, *This is my body,*

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“ throws

“ throws all the Protestant party. For  
 “ either we must confound all the My-  
 “ steries of Religion, or else, give a rea-  
 “ son why Jesus hath not used these  
 “ forcible terms in any of his Institutions  
 “ but that of the *last Supper*. If his  
 “ body and blood are equally present, and  
 “ as really received by the Faithful else-  
 “ where, in the celebration of every  
 “ other act of faith, there was no reason  
 “ for chusing these STRONG TERMS for  
 “ the institution of the *Eucharist*, rather  
 “ than for *Baptism*; and eternal Wisdom  
 “ would, in this case, have expressed it-  
 “ self at random. This point I foretell  
 “ shall be the eternal and inevitable con-  
 “ fusion of the Defenders of the *figura-*  
 “ *tive sense* (7).”

(7) Car ou il faut embrouiller tous les Mysteres, ou il faut pouvoir rendre une raison pourquoi Jesus Christ n'a parlé avec cette force que dans la cene. Si son corps et son sang sont aussi présens et aussi reellement reçus par tout ailleurs, il n'y avoit aucune raison de choisir ces FORTES PAROLES pour l'*Eucharistie* plutot que pour le *Batême*, et la sagesse eternelle auroit parlé en l'air. Cet endroit sera l'éternelle et inevitable confusion des Defenseurs du sens figuré. *Histoire des Var.* Tom. i. p. 477, 8.

We



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We see, this mighty difficulty, which is eternally to embarrass the Defenders of the figurative sense, is confessed to be at an end, on the discovery of one good reason, Why such *forcible terms* are employed in the institution of the *last Supper*, and not in *Baptism*, or in the other rites of our Religion. To send it a going therefore, we need but observe, That the last Supper, as a *feast upon sacrifice*, referred to the *Sacrifice on the Cross*, in which, the *body and blood* of Christ were offered for our redemption. Now, to design and indicate *such* a feast by the *words* of the institution, the *forcible terms* in question were naturally, properly, nay *necessarily* employed. And the reasoning which evinces this, evinces likewise that they were used in a *figurative sense*. On the contrary, the initiatory Rite of *Baptism* referred to another *Baptism* already in use; in both of which the matter administered being *water*, an element at hand, it was rightly called, in the institution of the Christian *Baptism*, by it's proper name.

But



But *flesh and blood* being the things administered in the ancient *feasts upon Sacrifice*, and they not being at hand at the institution of the last Supper, the elements, substituted in their place, were, in an elegant conversion, called by the *improper*, and very *necessary* names of *body and blood*.

To illustrate this matter a little further.—It may be proper to observe, that another Rite, the Rite of *imposition of hands*, for procuring the descent of the Holy Spirit, is called the BAPTISM OF FIRE: in which, both the terms are *figurative*: as, in the *Baptism of Water*, both are *literal*. And why this difference? Because the Agent or instrument, employed in the latter case, being *spiritual*, there was need of figurative names, taken from material things, to aid the grossness of our conception concerning his manner of operation: But *material* things at hand, as in the former case, needed no such conversion of terms. So that all the mystery in this affair, I mean so far forth as concerns  
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the *terms* by which a religious Rite is instituted, is only this, That when the things are of a spiritual nature, as the gifts of the Spirit ; or of a material nature, not yet in *esse*, (as the flesh of a sacrifice not yet offered, and therefore needing another body to be substituted in it's place) There a necessity of employing *figurative* terms becomes apparent. But when the thing is a material substance, at hand, and actually employed, as water in Baptism, it would rather confound than aid our conceptions, to use improper, that is, figurative terms.

Thus we see, how, by interpreting Scripture on the common rules employed in the study of other ancient Writings, that is to say, having a special regard to the manners, customs, and opinions of those Times, the true nature and genius of the last Supper is discovered ; and the sacred Institution freed from the injuries to which these two extremes have long rendered it obnoxious.

But now I suppose the followers of both Systems will be ready to object ;  
what

what the unbeliever will not be backward to applaud ; “ That it seems hard to imagine, that one of the most essential Rites of an universal Religion, designed for all times and places, should stand in need of the customs and opinions of a particular age and country to explain it's nature and genius. For the consequence of this would seem to be, the rendering it's nature precarious, and in course of time, obscure, and unintelligible.”

To which we reply, That many good ends may be discovered in this ordinance ; and, therefore, many more may be reasonably supposed, which we cannot discover.

1. A Religion, however universal, when promulged in the manner, and propagated by the instruments, which God thought fit to employ when he gave us the Religion of his Son, must needs have many dependencies on the Times which saw it's rise and progress.

2. As the *Christian* Religion rose upon the foundation of the Jewish, and became the final completion of God's religious

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ligious dispensations to Mankind, it was very natural for several of it's parts to bear a reference to that on which it was erected; it was very commodious that it should do so, both to perpetuate it's *relation*, and to manifest it's *completion*. So that, on this account, such a Religion, however universal, could not stand alone, or be independent of every thing exterior.

3. This reference to the customs and opinions of the times, was further useful, by impressing on the Religion so circumstanced, one *INDELIBLE MARK* of Truth, for the use of all ages. Had that Religion, pretending to have arisen in a remote age, brought down with it no tincture of the times, which saw its birth and increase, we might have reason to suspect or disbelieve the traditional accounts which informed us of it's high antiquity.

But when we find upon it so strong a mark of ancience; and impressed in a manner so *natural* as to cause no suspicion; and in a manner so *sure* as to afford no handle for Imposture, we may  
be

be confident, that it is of the times it pretends to be. Each Age hath it's character of manners, just as it hath it's character of style and writing; and as the Critics pronounce on the date of a manuscript from the turn of the phrase, and the formation of the letters, so Divines settle the æra of a Religion by the relation it bears to contemporary customs and practices. But were the MANUSCRIPT composed in an *universal Character*, and did the RELIGION contain *only the bare principles* of natural Law, delivered in the abstract, they would both want one necessary mark to ascertain their respective ages.

4. Again, This *restrained peculiarity* objected to, on the point in question, serves a still further, and greater end. It is contrived to be declarative of the TRUE NATURE of the death and sufferings of Christ.—That his death on the Cross was a SACRIFICE for the sins of the world had been always held part of the Catholic Faith; founded on the express declarations of Scripture. But those  
Sects

*of the LORD'S SUPPER.* 73

Sects who oppose the doctrine of a real REDEMPTION, have always striven to evade the notion of a real *sacrifice*; as that on which the doctrine of *Redemption* is founded; upon pretence, that the scripture-expressions of Christ's *sacrifice* were only figurative and allusory. Now if the *last Supper*, the rite which commemorates the death of Christ, be of the nature of the *feasts upon sacrifice*, it is self-evident that the death itself was a REAL *Sacrifice*, and not merely called so by conversion of terms, or accommodation of ideas.

5. As it was contrived to declare the real nature of Christ's death, so it likewise served this further purpose, a purpose of great importance, to declare the ABOLITION OF SACRIFICES IN REVEALED RELIGION. For if in the most solemn act of Worship, where a *Sacrifice* always took place, a *commemoration only of a Sacrifice* is celebrated, it is plain, all sacrificial rites are excluded from that Religion: And, (if that Religion be the completion of God's religious dispensa-

H tions)



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tions) consequently, *abolished*. The Sacrifice on the Cross does, indeed, in its nature, abolish all those Jewish Sacrifices, which evidently prefigured it; but to be assured of the abolition of sacrifice in general, some more express declaration, like what we find in this significant Rite, seemed to be expedient.

6. But lastly, The very notion of an UNIVERSAL RELIGION, unrelated to, and unconnected with, the times in which it was first divulged, is, in truth, repugnant to common sense and the nature of things. This Religion, as the Objectors tell us, is designed for all times and places. Some good method therefore of conveying it to posterity, and of perpetuating the conveyance, must be thought of and employed. There are but two ways of doing it, by one or other of these means of human communication, ORAL TRADITION OR WRITING. *Tradition* hath been ever found insufficient for the purposes of Truth and Religion; and incapable of securing either their purity or existence. The only method which  
re-



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remains, is by *Scripture*: and this being to be composed in the living language of the age in which the Revelation was given, some parts of it must, in course of time, grow obscure: as depending on the circumstances of the users, whose customs and manners give the shape and colouring to all their discourse. So that, to understand the exact sense of the terms, and the full energy of the phrase, the customs and manners of the times, which fashioned the words and ornamented the idiom of the language, must of necessity be diligently studied, if we would arrive at any competent skill in the interpretation of such writings. Now this circumstance, which produced the objection, resulting from the very nature of things, we see how little force it hath against the truth of an *universal Religion*.

The conclusion from the whole is this, That we should, with all submission, take God's Laws, as he, in his wisdom, hath been pleased to give them; and as the order and condition of things, by him established, permits us to receive them.

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Having now so largely enquired into the SPECIFIC NATURE of this holy Rite; we are enabled, in very few words, to shew, (which we proposed, as the principal end of the Enquiry) what those benefits are which we receive at the *Lord's Table*; and what the obligations are, which we lye under, of frequenting it.

Christ, by the SACRIFICE of himself upon the cross, purchased the *Redemption* of Mankind: And this Rite being by it's nature commemorative thereof, as it is a *feast upon Sacrifice*; each partaker receives, of consequence, the seal of pardon, and consequently, of restoration to his lost Inheritance.

But as this operates only on the terms of *repentance, and newness of life*, the gift would be defeated, by being bestowed on a condition which our perverse Nature so much opposes, was not this Nature softened and subdued by the power of GRACE; that promised blessing, peculiar to the Gospel-Dispensation. Now as the influence of the HOLY SPIRIT constitutes the most intimate

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COMMUNION OF GOD WITH MAN, What *time* can we conceive so highly sanctified for the reception of it, as that in which we renew our federal union with our Lord and Master, in his last Supper; called by St. Paul, the *communion of his body and blood*.

This leads us to what only remains to be considered, THE OBLIGATION TO FREQUENT COMMUNION: and this obligation will be best understood, by considering the reasons of an Institution which procures us so high a prerogative as *an union with the God of our Salvation*.

We are, by the Sacrament of BAPTISM, united, as members to the MYSTICAL *Body of Christ*, his CHURCH. And since Church-membership is not only an outward but a public, rather than a private thing, One single administration of such Rite is sufficient to make that union lasting.

But, by the Sacrament of the LORD'S SUPPER, we are united, as members, to the SPIRITUAL *Body of Christ*, his GRACE. This is an inward union, and

a particular : and lasts no longer than the right disposition of heart and affections shall continue : and this, by reason of our corrupt nature, and perpetual commerce with an evil world, being always impairing, it has always occasion to be strengthened and renewed. This, as we said, is the office of the *Holy Spirit*; whose gracious influence more peculiarly sanctifies that holy season. Hence the use and necessity of FREQUENT COMMUNION; intimated in the words of the institution, *Do this in remembrance of me*: Which imply, as we have shewn, more than *preserving the memory of a dead benefactor*; they imply, the *continuing to receive his benefaction*; which is conveyed to us, from time to time, and *as often as we shew forth the Lord's death till he come*. So true is the account given of this sacred Rite in the ARTICLES of our Church, That *it is not only the badge or TOKEN of a Christian man's profession, but rather a certain and sure witness and effectual sign of Grace, and God's good will towards us; by which he doth work invisibly in us,*  
and

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*and doth not only quicken, but also STRENGTHEN and confirm our faith in him (8).*

All this duly considered, we shall, I hope, be enabled to regain a proper veneration for this *holy Mystery*; which hath of late been so fatally impaired, as by other liberties, so principally by the prostitution of it to CIVIL PURPOSES; Not a prostitution by the LEGISLATURE; but by those licentious men, who, contenting themselves with the observance of the form and *letter*, neglect the end and *spirit of the LAW*.

(8) Art. xxv.

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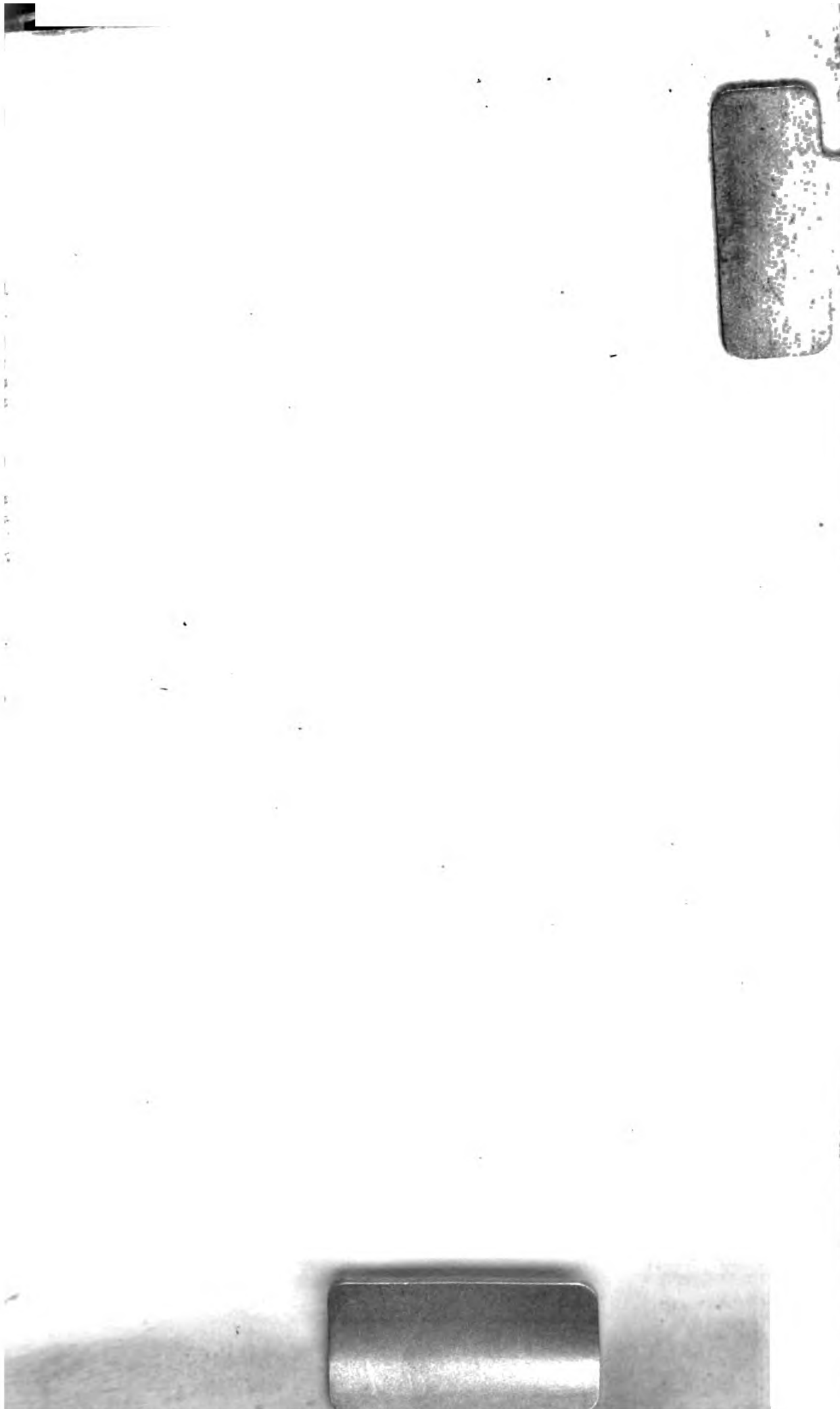
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