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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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## Religious.

### COMMUNION.

BY DR. HOVEY.

#### Second Article.

"And on the first day of the week, when we were assembled to break bread, Paul preached to them,—about to depart on the morrow,—and continued his speech until midnight." To whom did Paul thus preach at Troas? To the members of the Christian church in that city, we reply; and for such reasons as follow: They were deeply interested in the apostle's discourse, listening quietly until midnight. No opposition was raised, no disturbance created; a young man fell asleep during the service. We read of no conversions, no first fruits of the gospel in Troas, as the result of this protracted address. Moreover, the meeting was on the first day of the week, and Paul seems to have tarried seven days, that he might be present. It may, therefore, be presumed that they were accustomed to meet on that day for worship and the breaking of bread. Indeed, every line of the narrative reminds us of an assembly of Christians. Besides, Troas had been visited twice before by the apostle, once on his way, for the first time, to Europe, and again in the period which elapsed between the writing of his first and second letters to the Corinthians. Both these visits were brief, yet not, perhaps, without fruit. Of the first, nothing is said which either warrants or forbids the hypothesis of his making known the gospel to some in that place. Luke appears to have joined him there. Of the second, he thus writes: "When I came to Troas for the gospel of Christ, and a door was opened unto me in the Lord, I had no rest for my spirit; but, taking leave of them, I went forth into Macedonia." Now if there were not previously a church in Troas, this language implies that he preached there long enough, at least, to learn the state of the city, and the attitude of its inhabitants towards the gospel. Some were doubtless converted, and, according to the uniform practice of the apostle, were presently brought together in a church. From these disciples he separated himself with great reluctance, impelled by his anxiety to see Titus, and learn the condition of the church at Corinth. With such hints on record, all conspiring to show that there was a goodly company of the faithful in Troas, we have ample grounds for believing them to have been associated in church order and fellowship, maintaining Christian worship on the Lord's day, and observing the ordinances of the gospel. If they had not been thus united, would Paul have tarried there a full week, and then left them again, without settling in order the things that were wanting, and ordaining elders in that city? It is evident, then, that the apostle broke bread with a Christian church in Troas, and that the narrative of this event by Luke strengthens our argument from the language of Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians.

Turning back, now, to the beginning of apostolic labor at Jerusalem, we have another record of similar bearing. With a few words inserted, to bring out the sense more distinctly, it reads thus: "On that day there were added" to the company of Christian disciples "about three thousand souls; and they applied themselves constantly to the teaching of the apostles and the communication of sacraments—the breaking of the sacramental bread, and the social prayers." Those Christians were baptized; they were under the guidance and teaching of the apostles; they met together almost daily for social worship; they provided for their poor with great liberality, and they were living in the same city. Were they not, then, to all intents and purposes, a Christian church, a distinct, organized, responsible body, prepared to act in concert upon all matters of discipline and common instruction, and united in worship—what is it but a church of Christ? Indeed, it is expressly called by this name, only a few verses further on. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." And after this record of their breaking bread together, they are habitually spoken of as "the church," "the church at Jerusalem." But

the Christians at Jerusalem, it may be replied, did not meet together and observe the Lord's supper as a church; for they are described as "breaking bread from house to house." This objection is more plausible than conclusive. For whether the words *kat' oikon* signify "from house to house," or rather "at home," "in private houses," instead of in the temple, no evidence can be gleaned from this expression that the Lord's supper was intended for the use of Christian families, or social circles, as such. The circumstances of the church at Jerusalem were peculiar. Although believers in Christ were suffered to meet with others in the temple for worship, it would have been manifestly improper, if not impossible, for them to celebrate the Lord's supper there. By so doing they would have been sure to inflame the wrath of the Jews, and make the courts of the Lord's house a theatre of strife and blasphemy. It may be taken for granted, that they could use neither temple nor synagogue for any service distinctly and visibly Christian. Hence, if they wished to act as a separate community, they had to meet in some place of their own. Meyer thinks they had a common meeting-house from the first, which is referred to by the words *kat' oikon*. This certainly may have been the case. But if it was not, if they had no one place large enough to receive them all, and therefore met in several places to break bread,—one or two of apostles presiding over each assembly,—this provisional arrangement might not have caused the holy supper to be esteemed a family or a social rite; it might have existed without violating the principles which were to be plainly expressed by the regular working of the church. The essential points were guarded. Only those who had been baptized, and were walking together in the faith of the gospel, partook of the supper. The emblems were not carried out of the church. They were not used at pleasure by families or groups of brethren. There was oversight, order, harmony, co-operation. In short, we conclude, from the narrative of Luke, that the Lord's supper was observed by the saints in Jerusalem as members of the church.

N. Baptist.

### Ancient Music.

The disinterment of Assyrian sculptures and deciphering of Assyrian and Egyptian inscriptions have opened new fields of investigation in almost every department of knowledge. Among the branches of science which have shared in these discoveries that of music has been benefited largely. The accounts of ancient musical instruments were vague, and our ideas especially of Hebrew music were confused, till recently sculptures and paintings have been brought to light which delineate the ancient musical instruments of the early Oriental nations, and in some cases veritable specimens have been disinterred. Such, for example, is an Egyptian harp found in Thebes, with its strings yet perfect enough to vibrate again, after a silence of 3000 years.

The most recent investigations prove that the parent of all known musical science was Assyrian. From the Assyrians, the Hebrews and the Egyptians, and indeed all Eastern nations, derived their knowledge of music. The unveiled monuments show that in the time of Sennacherib music was a highly cultured art, and must have existed through generations. This polished nation used a harp of twenty-one strings, which accompanied minstrel songs or was borne in the dance. The lyre of tortoise shell, the double pipe, the trumpet, drum, and bell, were common. Even of the bagpipe, representations have been discovered, though none of stringed instruments, like the violin, played with a bow.

In all delineations of social or worshipping assemblies, musical instruments very like our modern ones have a prominent place. The Hebrew music at the time of the Exodus was purely Egyptian; but it was much modified subsequently by association with Asiatic nations. In the temple of Jerusalem, according to the Talmud, stood a powerful organ, consisting of a wind chest, with ten holes containing ten pipes, each pipe capable of emitting ten different sounds by means of finger holes, so that a hundred sounds could be produced by it. It was provided with two pair of bellows, and ten keys, so that it could

be played with the fingers. According to the Rabbins, it could be heard a great distance from the Temple.—*Observer*.

### Union not Uniformity.

We have heard it asserted that this is not a dispensation of unity, but of division and scattering, and that there has been no such thing as unity since the days of the apostles, or the period referred to by the words, "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul." This was unity no doubt, but still imperfect. Many of the disciples of whom this was written were very crude in their apprehensions of those truths which must ever be the basis of true unity. Some were scarcely delivered from their Jewish prejudices, and, like Peter, would no doubt have refused to eat with the uncircumcised; and others no doubt still participated in the Jewish hope of a personal reign of Christ upon earth which should give to them a spiritual and temporal supremacy among the nations. Since this period, the mind of God being more fully revealed to us, and other higher and more exalted truths than were then made known to these primitive disciples, a more spiritual and exalted union has been and is being realized by many good men. There ever has been and ever will be a vital, true, and essential union subsisting between Christ and his spiritual body—the church; and this should never be overlooked.

When Christ's members, by spiritual life and faith, become united to Him as the Living Vine, they become united to each other; when they came near to Him, they came near to each other; when their hearts touch his, they touch each other. Like as in the radii of a circle, the nearer the lines approach the centre, the more closely they come to each other, so the nearer souls approach to Christ, the more intimate, and true, and intelligent is their union with each other; and if men, instead of dwelling so much upon the circumstantial differences obtaining among Christians, would state the true nature and grounds of real union as it exists among them, less injury would be done to the cause of truth, and the enemies of Christ would find less cause for joy, and be furnished with fewer weapons to use against our common cause. To say there has been no unity in the Church since the days of the apostles, is to impeach the truth and the work of the Spirit. As there is a true and living union now between Christ and his people, so there is also a true and vital union between the people themselves thus united to Him and which will be matured in heaven itself. This vital union sometimes shows itself in different forms in the Church below. Some minds, perceiving certain truths overlooked or neglected, or even despised by others, take hold of them and exhibit them. On account of this course, certain names are applied to such, and you have denominationalism, as it is called, as the outcoming of living union to Christ and his people. Then again, people looking at the names applied to such, and overlooking the essential life and unity from whence they spring, exclaim, "What a want of unity among the Christians!" Many in the present day, who hold a scattering and disintegrating creed, are perpetually dwelling upon the little differences they perceive among Christians as a proof that there is no real unity in the Church of Christ. Such a course grieves the Spirit of God, and is fraught with many evil consequences. Many mistake a dead uniformity for that unity which is a fruit of divine grace. Some years ago, it was thought that nature could be improved by cutting all the trees of the garden into one shape. Here was uniformity with a vengeance; but who would not rather have had nature's picturesque diversity in unity—the unity of life and beauty? And who is there that would not prefer the unity of the spiritual Church, though marked with the divergences of life, thought, and conviction, to the stereotyped and dead uniformity of Rome? Still we want the public and visible expression of this secret and sublime unity, and how are we to have it? By giving up our personal convictions, breaking up all sects, or merging them all into one? Would this do it? We think not. Let each church, or branch in the true Vine, show its union to the true and the other branches by

its greater fruitfulness. Were all Christians now existing of one name and persuasion, did they all form but one visible church, and could they all meet together in one place and under one roof, the world would not believe they were one or real Christians, if they were lifeless, and cold, and barren. No; by their fruit they would have to carry conviction, and this conviction the churches can produce now if the fruit is exhibited, and will any say that the Spirit cannot produce them, if sought?

Let us not say, then, that there is no unity in the army of Christ; but let us look to our Captain, and keep to our company, and have united as well as individual and scattered effort. If men point to our regimentals, and say, because we are not all dressed exactly alike, that we are sadly divided, we will say that our diversity is proof of our common subordination to our Great Chief's orders, and anxiety unitedly to get at his foe.

### Never did anything right.

There had been a revival in the village, and a number came forward to unite with the church. Among them was Mr. Orton, who was, perhaps, more highly esteemed for his integrity and kindness than any man in the township. It was frequently said that if all church members were as good as Mr. Orton, there would not be much fault found with religion. Such was his blameless and exemplary walk, that if he had professed himself a Christian, no one would have doubted his piety.

He attended church as constantly as any one in the village, and rarely failed to be present when special services were held. And yet he was not a Christian. When awakened in course of a revival, his convictions of sin were deep and pungent. In a few days, he found peace and joy in believing.

There was a good deal of curiosity excited to hear him relate his experience, when he applied for admission to the church. Several unconverted men attended the meeting, and heard his remarks.

In speaking of his past life, he said: "I always had a great respect for religion—I inherited it from my parents—and I always led a moral life, but I never did anything right. My whole life was one unbroken course of sin."

As Mr. Alcott left the house, he said to his neighbor: "How these religious people love to accuse themselves—love to make themselves out worse than they are! I don't understand it. It's all a kind of fashion they have, but I don't see now the fashion came into vogue."

"I don't think your remark is correct," said Mr. Danielson; "I have no evidence that Christians try to make themselves out worse than they are."

"You heard what Mr. Orton said this afternoon. He said he had never done anything right. Now, we all know that he is

one of the most upright of men. There couldn't be a more honest man. It is nonsense for such a man to say that he has done nothing but sin."

"I guess he told the truth; indeed, I am sure he did."

"Well, you must have a singular way of looking at things," said Danielson. "Mr. Orton meant that he had not had reference to God's will as the supreme rule of his life—that he had not performed his duties towards men out of love to God. There was an element wanting in his motives, which rendered all his deeds sinful through defect."

"I don't understand you."

"Suppose a parent tells a child to go to a certain place. The child don't obey. By and by a number of boys come along, and ask him to go with them to a place a little beyond that to which his father told him to go. He goes with the boys. You would not call him an obedient child?"

"No; I suppose not."

"And yet he did what his parent told him to do—went to the place; but the motive was not right. He did not go out of regard to his father's authority. He went not to please his father, but to please himself. The right element was wanting in the motive that led him to act. The act was not right, because the motive was not right."