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Religious.

THE TABLE OF THE LORD.

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Second Article.

That there is such a thing as "eating and drinking unworthily,"—that the consequences are fearful indeed, that these consequences actually came upon members of a Church founded and instructed by an apostle, are facts, certified to us by the pen of inspiration. The warning comes to us from the pillar of age, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." What is there in the entire circle of human thinking more solemn or awful than this? Where is "that true bread and that true cup" to be found? And having found it, how may we "so eat and drink," as not to be "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord?"

Does this peril lie, wholly, in the state of heart of the recipient, or communicant? or does it surround the table itself, the persons who set it forth, the teachings connected with it, the right ordering of the entire service? Is every table that is set forth as the Lord's table, really such? Are there not, in our day, tables which are called the Lord's, really tables of "judgment," not of "blessing?"

In every instance when a table is set forth which is claimed to be the table of the Lord, these questions arise. The first is, Has that company of persons the right to set forth the Lord's table? Are they really competent to do it? The second is, If I am not one of that company, have they any right to invite me to participate? And, third, if they invite me, is it right for me to accept the invitation?

It is obvious that in the first of these questions, the primary and vital inquiry respecting rights and duties connected with the table of the Lord is contained. On the true answer to this first question, depends the true answer to those that follow. Till this is answered, it is impossible to tell who has the right to come, or whether any others, or who, ought to be invited to come. For, if they who profess to set forth the Lord's table have not the right to do so, then they have no right to invite others to come, nor have others the right to come, when invited.

Looking back, then, from this nineteenth century, to that eventful night, the first, the all important inquiry for every one who would come to the table, not for "judgment" but for blessing, is this:—*Who are the living persons, now in the flesh, in whom is the right, or on whom devolves the duty, to set forth the table which is really the table of the Lord?*

We are taught that not every thing that is called the Lord's Supper, is really so. 1 Cor. ii. 20. A company of professed disciples of Christ may "come together into one place," professing to eat the Lord's Supper, yet it "is not the Lord's Supper," but a supper of wrath from the Lord.

And if such consequences follow an unworthy partaking, on the part of individual communicants, much more must they come upon all, where the entire setting forth of the table is wrong, from inception to conclusion. And if such tables were set forth in the days of Paul, who shall say that they are not set forth in our day? If every person who may please has the right to set forth the table of the Lord, who shall say that anybody and every body who pleases has not the right to come to it? Is the right to set forth the Lord's table restricted to any description of persons? If so, who are they? What are their essential qualifications? What their distinctive marks? By what means can a sincere inquirer after the real table of the Lord, be certified that he finds it? May every company who profess to be the people of God, the disciples of Christ, however related or associated, set forth a table calling it the table of the Lord, at any time, according to their own judgment of fitness or utility?

It will be understood, of course, that we are not inquired about the right of performing the mere diaconal services; of arranging the physical substances or elements used at the table. Our inquiry is after the authority competent to appoint and direct the setting forth of a table which is really and truly the table of the Lord. We are told that our Lord baptized many disciples, but in the next sentence, that he did not baptize, it was his disciples who baptized. Because the authority to baptize was in Jesus, it is said that he baptized.

The table at which he appointed the Supper, was set forth as a passover table, under the law of Moses, pursuant to his personal order; he presided at that table, gave, with his own hands, the bread and the wine, which he appointed to be the memorial of his own life till he comes in glory.

It is often said, the Lord's Supper is a Church ordinance; that, therefore, the table of the Lord can only be rightly set forth under authority and by the direction of the Church. This brings up the question, What is a Church? If the authority of a Church,—a real Church,—one recognized as such in Heaven,—a true golden candlestick,—be essential to the right setting forth of the table of the Lord, then those who would not eat and drink the judgments of the Lord, should be very sure that they never participated at any table not set forth by a Church which is a Church indeed.

Any one but slightly acquainted with the condition of Christendom, knows that not only are there many combinations of people all claiming to be Churches, but many of them claiming to be, each, the only true Church. And they expound the nature, the meaning, and the utility of the Lord's Supper, in a great variety of ways. The Roman, the Lutheran, the German, all differ, radically, from each other; the most spiritual Pedobaptist differs from the Baptist; the Pedobaptist sect differ from each other. Can the table set forth by each and all, be exactly the table of the Lord? Can that table which is set forth as a physical transubstantiation, or consubstantiation of elements, or that which is declared to be a means of the grace of conversion to the unconverted, by the mere eating, as really the table of the Lord as that where Jesus is commemorated by those only who believe, love, and obey him?

If then "ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils," because they are diverse, the question is, *how diverse* the cups may be, yet each be "the cup of the Lord." This question is worth looking into a little further.

A QUAKER MEETING.

A correspondent thus describes a Quaker meeting that he attended not long since—and also one of the worshippers, whose name has become a household word in many families:

The meeting was held in a large, desolate looking building, which was furnished in the most simple manner. It was wholly destitute of a pulpit, gallery or organ,—at the further end of the house were raised seats for the elders.

In the place of pews were pine benches painted white, without cushions. There were no carpets on the floor, but it was as clean as soap and water could make it.

The women took their seats on one side of the house and the men on the other, each man keeping his hat upon his head.

There was profound silence for at least an hour. At last an aged woman arose and exhorted all present to lead pure and honest lives. She spoke for ten minutes, then sat down, and there was silence for nearly half an hour.

During this time I was occupied in looking at the tall gaunt form of a Quaker who sat in the seat before us. With head bowed upon the bench before him he seemed absorbed in silent worship. It was the poet Whittier. As he raised his head we recognized the features of the great man who is not only admired for his genius but is loved for rare personal qualities.

He looks about fifty-five; has a fine head, iron gray hair, high forehead with a kind and benevolent expression of face—just such a looking man as one would conceive him to be, from his writings.

The meeting broke up at a signal which we afterwards learned was simply a shaking of hands by the elders; most of the people of the congregation then cordially shook hands, and left for their homes.

ROBERT HALL AND HIS GUESTS.

In a letter to the *Leicester Chronicle*, the Rev. J. P. Mursell gives the following authentic version of an unpublished anecdote of Robert Hall while residing in that town:—The late Lord Roden, who was well known as an attached and devout member of the Church of England, on arriving at Leicester on Saturday took up his quarters at the Three Crowns Hotel, where he rested for the Sabbath. After a morning service held in the Harvey-lane Chapel, Mr. Hall received a note from Lord Roden, intimating the pleasure he had experienced in attending Divine worship in the above named place, and that he hoped to do so again in the evening of the day, at the same time asking the favor of the preacher's company to sup with him at its close. Mr. Hall replied to this very courteous invitation that he never left home on Sunday nights, but that he should feel highly honored if his lordship would take "bread and cheese" with him at his house. This invitation was readily accepted. Mr. Hall, who after the labours of the day, delighted in such companionship as would divert his mind without taxing his energies, frequently received Thomas Newcombe, a venerable, thoughtful, and exemplary man, who moved in the lowlier walks of life, well known to some now living as a poor stockinger residing on the London-road. On the evening when the preacher was honored with the presence of his distinguished guest, after some delay, Mrs. Hall entered the room and intimated that supper was quite ready, when Mr. Hall said, "Yes; but where is friend Newcombe, my dear?"—whom Mrs. Hall had, with great good feeling, retained in another apartment. After some time Mrs. H. made a fresh attempt, and, re-entering, reminded her husband that the supper had been waiting a long time. "But where's friend Newcombe?" was the rejoinder; "we can't go to supper without him"; and, turning to Lord Roden, Mr. H. said, "It's Thomas Newcombe my lord. I hope you are in no hurry. I daresay he won't be long." On which the lady of the house was obliged to uncease her captive, who on entering the room, bent down with age, was introduced to Lord Roden as a friend of Mr. Hall's, and was received with that courtesy—(not, I daresay, unaccompanied with a sense of the grotesque)—which gentlemanly breeding could not fail to offer. The preacher, the peer, and the stockinger met at a common repast.

THE LAST GRAIN IN THE BALANCE.

The salvation of a soul is sometimes traced to a single circumstance, a particular sermon, entreaty, prayer. But in the majority of cases, the influence to which the change is ascribed is only the last of a long train, each of which has been leading the sinner toward Christ—carrying over the affections and will to God. In the mint at Philadelphia they have scales so perfectly balanced that a breath will swing them either way. Imagine a dealer in the precious metals to go there for a dozen ounces of the golden ore. They are weighed out. Carefully the shining particles are emptied in. Eight—nine—ten—eleven—the scales still are motionless. Twenty grains of the last pennyweight are in—no stir still—but when the twenty-fourth and last grain touches the balance it settles down at once. Each atom from the first has been bringing about this consummation, the last bit only finished up the work. And

so when one submits to be saved by grace the motives influencing thereto may have been accumulating for years. Argument, counsel, appeal have all been crowding the soul toward the Cross. And yet no movement is seen. No effect seems wrought. But by and by the last solicitation needed, the last particle of pressure requisite, is brought to bear, and the heart, long plied goes over to the Lord. And yet the renewing Spirit was making earlier means tributary to this result, less than the final agency employed. A thousand unsuspected forces have moulded many a spirit for eternal life.

FOLLOW CHRIST IN BAPTISM.

Lastly, Jesus! Oh think of Him, and of the duty you owe to Him! Baptism is not an ordinance of the Baptists. It is Christ's ordinance. Were it not for the Baptist churches, you see that this ordinance would be abolished. And, now, will you aid in maintaining or abolishing Christ's ordinance? Suppose all who regard this ordinance as you do, were to join other Churches, who would ever advocate it? The preacher in other churches constantly attack it. The members of other churches oppose it; and, as I said before, this appears their duty, believing as they do. But how plain is your duty! How solemn your obligation to give your aid to the Redeemer—to identify yourself with those who are engaged for his truth in this matter—and, thus, to prove your love to him, and your devotion to his cause.

Jesus looks to you. Shall he look in vain? Will you say that you love some church, or some society, or some prejudices too much to enlist for his truth? Oh let it not be! Be true to truth—to yourself, to your Saviour! You may and will have to endure trials. But oh, His blessing will more than compensate for all; and soon he will put a crown of gold upon your head, saying—before admiring saints and angels—"Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—*R. Fuller.*

CONVERSION OF CHILDREN.

Parents and children may consult the following "Bible Testimonies," on this subject:

- Matthew, Chapter 21, Verses 15, 16.
- Matthew, Chapter 18, Verses 1–14.
- Matthew, Chapter 11, Verse 25.
- Hebrews, Chapter 2, Verses 13, 14.
- Isaiah, Chapter 54, Verse 13.
- Isaiah, Chapter 40, Verse 11.
- Psalms 34, Verse 11.
- Proverbs, Chapter 8, Verse 17.
- Mark, Chapter 9, Verses 35–37.
- Mark, Chapter 10, Verse 24.
- Ecclesiastes, Chapter 12, Verse 1.
- 2d Timothy, Chapter 3, Verse 15.
- 1st Samuel, Chapter 3.

Young children can and should become Christians.

CHANGE OF HEART NO OBJECTION.

A zealously busy Episcopalian, a rector, not many miles from us, called upon a lady, a few days since, and urged her to join "the Church." "But," said she, "do you not think a person ought to experience a change of heart, and become converted, in order to take that step?" "Well," replied the clergyman, "I do not know that *that would be any objection*, but you need not wait for that!" Doubtless the lady should feel comforted by the possibility that conversion would be "no objection" to membership in the Church.—*Christian Secretary.*

Beecher compares a text to a gate opening in the Lord's garden, and says that many ministers, instead of unlatching the gate and leading their hearers in to pluck the fruit and flowers, content themselves by getting upon it and swinging to and fro.