

ART. IV.—*The Mystical Presence. A Vindication of the Reformed or Calvinistic Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist.* By the Rev. John W. Nevin, D.D., Prof. of Theo. in the Seminary of the Ger. Ref. Church. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1846. pp. 256.

WE have had Dr. Nevin's work on the "Mystical Presence" on our table since its publication, some two years ago, but have never really read it, until within a fortnight. We do not suppose other people are quite as bad, in this respect, as ourselves. Our experience, however, has been that it requires the stimulus of a special necessity to carry us through such a book. Being called upon to investigate the question, What was the real doctrine of the Reformed church on the Lord's Supper? we naturally turned to Dr. Nevin's work, and we gratefully acknowledge the assistance derived from it. We differ from him indeed, essentially, as to the whole subject, not only as to the historical question, but as to what is the true doctrine. We are, however, on that account only the more disposed to give him credit for the diligence with which he has collected materials (though almost entirely on one side) for the proper decision of the question. So much has of late been said by Dr. Nevin of the apostacy of the Reformed church; his uniform tone is so disparaging, if not contemptuous, when speaking of all the branches of that church, except his own; the charge of Puritanism and Rationalism is so constantly flowing from his pen, that he has reason, we think, to be surprised that all this has been so long endured in silence. We, however, do not purpose on this occasion to travel out of the record, or do more than endeavour to answer the question, What is the true doctrine of the Reformed church on the Lord's Supper? Having done this, however, we shall give our reasons for thinking that Dr. Nevin is tenfold further from the doctrines of our common fathers, than those whom he commiserates and condemns.

It is confessedly a very difficult matter to obtain clear views of what was the real doctrine of the Reformed church on the Lord's Supper, during the sixteenth century. This difficulty arises from various sources. The subject itself is mysterious. The Lord's Supper is by all Christians regarded as exhibiting,

and, in the case of believers, confirming their union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever obscurity rests on that union, must in a measure rest on this sacrament. That union, however, is declared to be a great mystery. It has always, on that account, been called the mystical union. We are, therefore, demanding too much when we require all obscurity to be banished from this subject. If the union between Christ and his people were merely moral, arising from agreement and sympathy, there would be no mystery about it; and the Lord's Supper, as the symbol of that union, would be a perfectly intelligible ordinance. But the scriptures teach that our union with Christ is far more than this. It is a vital union, we are partakers of his life, for it is not we that live, but Christ that liveth in us. It is said to be analogous to our union with Adam, to the union between the head and members of the same body, and between the vine and its branches. There are some points in reference to this subject, with regard to which almost all Christians are agreed. They agree that this union includes a federal or representative relation, arising from a divine constitution; and on the part of Christ, a participation of our nature. He that sanctified and they who are sanctified are all of one. On this account he calls them brethren. Inasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same. (Heb. ii. 11-14). It is in virtue of his assumption of our nature that he stands to us in the intimate relation here spoken of. It is agreed, further, that this union include on our part a participation of the Spirit of Christ. It is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ, and dwells without measure in him as our head, who dwells also in his people, so that they become one body in Christ Jesus. They are one in relation to each other, and one in relation to him. As the human body is one by being animated and pervaded by one soul, so Christ and his people are one in virtue of the indwelling of one and the same Spirit, the Holy Ghost. It is further agreed that this union relates to the bodies as well as the souls of believers. Know you not, says the apostle, that your bodies are the members of Christ; know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, who dwelleth in you? The Westminster Catechism, therefore, says of believers after death, that their bodies being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves until the re-

surrection. This union was always represented as a real union, not merely imaginary nor simply moral, nor arising from the mere reception of the benefits which Christ has procured. We receive Christ himself, and are in Christ, united to him by the indwelling of his Spirit and by a living faith. So far all the Reformed at least agreed.

Do the scriptures teach, besides all this, that we are partakers of the human nature, of the real flesh and blood of Christ? This question Romanists and Lutherans answer in the affirmative. They teach the actual reception and manducation of the real body of Christ. This the whole Reformed church denied, in England, Belgium, and Germany, as well as in Switzerland. But as Christ speaks of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, and we are said to have communion in them, the question is in what way this is to be understood? All the Reformed answered, that by receiving the body and blood of Christ, is meant receiving their virtue or efficacy. Some of them said it was their virtue as broken and shed, i. e., their sacrificial virtue; others said, it was a mysterious, supernatural efficacy flowing from the glorified body of Christ in heaven; and that this last idea, therefore, is to be taken into the account, in determining the nature of the union between Christ and his people. Apart, therefore, from the mysteriousness of the subject, the diversity of views among the Reformed themselves, is one reason of the difficulty in determining the real doctrine of the church, on this subject. In some of the confessions we have the one, and in some the other of these modes of representation, brought to view.

Another source of difficulty is found in the fact, that almost all the Reformed confessions were framed for the express purpose of compromise. One great object of Calvin's life, was to prevent the schism between the two branches of the Protestant church. He and the other authors of these symbols, therefore, were constantly endeavouring to frame a statement of this doctrine, which all parties, Lutheran, Zuinglian, and Calvinistic, could adopt. Union was at that time a matter of the last importance, not only on religious and ecclesiastical grounds, but for reasons connected with their political well-being and safety. The question about the Lord's supper, was the only one which kept the parties separate. Here Luther was inflexible and

be contemplated, for the senses we have the sacrament of this thing. . . . We never have denied that Christ is sacramentally and *in mysterio* present in the Lord's supper, as well on account of believing contemplation, as the whole symbolical service."

The confessions which most nearly conform to this view are the Confessio Tetrapolitana, The First Basel, and The First Helvetic Confession. All these are apologetic. The last named protests against the representation that the Reformed regard the sacraments as mere badges of profession, asserting that they are also signs and means of grace. In art. 22, the Lord's supper is called *coena mystica*, "in which Christus truly offers his body and blood, and hence himself, to his people; not as though the body and blood of Christi were naturally united with the bread and wine, or locally included in them, or sensibly there present, but in so far as the bread and wine are symbols, through which we have communion in his body and blood, not to the nourishment of the body, but of the spiritual or eternal life."

The most concise and perspicuous statement of this form of the doctrine is to be found in "The Sincere Confession of the ministers of the church of Zurich," dated 1545. Those ministers say: "We teach that the great design and end of the Lord's supper, that to which the whole service is directed, is the remembrance of the body of Christ devoted, and of his blood shed for the remission of our sins. This remembrance however cannot take place without true faith. And although the things, of which the service is a memorial, are not visible or present after a corporal manner, nevertheless believing apprehension and the assurance of faith renders them present in one sense, to the soul of the believer. He has truly eaten the bread of Christ . . . who believes on Christ, very God and very man, crucified for us, on whom to believe is to eat, and to eat, to believe. . . . Believers have in the Lord's supper no other lifegiving food than that which they receive elsewhere than in that ordinance. The believer therefore receives both, in and out of, the Lord's supper in one and the same way, and by the same means of faith, one and the same food, Christ, except that in the supper the reception is connected with the actions and signs appointed by Christ, and accompanied with a testifying, thanksgiving and binding service. . . . Christ's flesh has done its work on earth hav-

ing been offered for our salvation; now it no longer benefits on earth and is no longer here."* This is a remarkably clear and precise statement, and should be remembered; for we shall find Calvin and others whose language is often so different, avowing their concurrence with these ministers of Zurich, or at least uniting with them in the statement of this doctrine.

Views of Calvin and of the Confessions formed under his influence.

Inst. iv. 17, 10. "We conclude that our souls are fed by the flesh and blood of Christ, just as our corporal life is preserved by bread and wine. For the analogy of the signs would not hold, if our souls did not find their aliment in Christ, which, however, cannot be the case, unless Christ truly coalesce into one with us, and support us through the use of his flesh and blood. It may seem incredible indeed that the flesh of Christ should reach us from such an immense local distance, so as to become our food. But we must remember how far the secret power of the Holy Spirit, transcends all our senses, and what folly it must be even to think of reducing his immensity to our measure. Let faith embrace then what the understanding cannot grasp, namely, that the Spirit unites things which are totally separated. Now this sacred communication of his flesh and blood, by which Christ transfuses his life into us, just as if he penetrated our bones and marrow, he testifies and seals in the holy supper; not by the exhibition of a vain and empty sign, but by putting forth such an energy of his Spirit as fulfils what he promises. What is thus attested he offers to all who approach the spiritual banquet. It is however fruitfully received by believers only, who accept such vast grace with inward gratitude and trust."

In 1561 Calvin wrote, in answer to the Lutheran Hesshuss, and with a view to unite the two parties, his Tract de vera participatione carnis et sanguinis Christi in sacra coena. In an appendix to that Tract, he says: "The same body then which the Son of God once offered in sacrifice to the Father, he daily offers to us in the supper, that it may be our spiritual aliment. Only that must be held which was intimated as to the mode, that it is not necessary that the essence of the flesh should

* Gueriche: Symbolik. s. 452.

descend from heaven, in order that we may feed upon it; but that the power of the Spirit is sufficient to penetrate through all impediments and to surmount all local distance. At the same time, we do not deny that the mode here is incomprehensible to human thought; for flesh naturally could neither be the life of the soul, nor exert its power upon us from heaven; and not without reason is the communication, which makes us flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones, denominated by Paul a great mystery. In the sacred supper we acknowledge it a miracle, transcending both nature and our own understanding, that Christ's life is made common to us with himself, and his flesh given us as aliment."

Again, "these things being disposed of, a doubt still appears with respect to the word *substance*; which is readily allayed, if we put away the gross imagination of a manducation of the flesh, as though it were like corporal food, that being put into the mouth, is received into the stomach. For if this absurdity be removed, there is no reason why we should deny that we are fed with Christ's flesh substantially, since we truly coalesce with him into one body by faith, and are thus made one with him. Whence it follows we are joined with him in substantial connexion, just as substantial vigour flows down from the head into the members. The definition must then stand that we are made to partake of Christ's flesh substantially; not in the way of carnal mixture, or as if the flesh of Christ drawn down from heaven entered into us, or were swallowed by the mouth; but because the flesh of Christ, as to its power and efficacy, vivifies our souls, not otherwise than the body is nourished by the substance of bread wine."

We prefer giving these extreme passages as selected by Dr. Nevin, instead of others of a different character, which could easily be gathered from Calvin's works. Those of the latter class, will turn up in their appropriate places. We proceed to quote some of the confessions, which most manifestly bear the impress of Calvin's hand or spirit.

The Gallican Confession was adopted by the Protestants of France, in 1559. In the 36th art. it is said: *Quamvis (Christus) nunc sit in coelis, ibidem etiam remansurus donec veniat mundum judicaturus, credimus tamen, eum arcana et incomprehensibili Spiritus sui virtute nos nutrire et vivificare sui corporis*

*et sanguinis substantia per fidem apprehensa.** Dicimur autem hoc spiritualiter fieri, non ut efficacæ et veritatis loco imaginationem aut cogitationem supponamus, sed potius, quoniam hoc mysterium nostræ cum Christo coalitionis tam sublime est, ut omnes nostros sensus totumque naturæ ordinem superet, denique quoniam sit divinum ac coeleste, non nisi fide percipi at apprehendi potest.

Art. 37. Credimus, sicut antea dictum est, tam in coena quam in baptismo, Deum nobis reipsa, id est vere et efficaciter donare quicquid ibi sacramentaliter figurat, ac proinde cum signis jungimus veram possessionem ac fruitionem ejus rei, quæ ita nobis offertur. Itaque affirmamus eos qui ad sacramentam Domini puram fidem tanquam vas quoddam afferunt, vere recipere quod ibi signa testificantur, nempe corpus et sanguinem Jesu Christi, non minus esse cibum ac potum animæ, quam panis et vinum sunt corporis cibis.

This is perhaps the proper place to state, though not in chronological order, that at a meeting of the National Synod of France, in 1571, Beza being president, an application was made by certain deputies to have the clause in Art. 37 altered, which asserts that we are nourished with the "substance of Christ's body and blood." The synod refused to make the alteration, and explained the expression by saying, they did not understand by it, "any confusion, commixture, or conjunction . . . but this only, that by his virtue, all that is in him that is needful for our salvation, is hereby most freely given and communicated to us. Nor do we consent with them who say we do communicate in his merits and gifts and spirit, without his being at all made ours; but with the apostle (Eph. v. 23), admiring this supernatural, and to our reason incomprehensible mystery, we do believe we are partakers of his body delivered to death for us, and of his blood shed for us, so that we are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones, and that we receive him together with his gifts, by faith wrought in us by the incomprehensible virtue and efficacy of the Holy Spirit."† This decision was considered by the ministers of Zurich as involving a condemnation of their doctrine, and

* Why Dr. Nevin, in his translation of this passage, should refer *apprehensa* to *virtute*, instead of *substantia*, we cannot tell.

† Quick's Synodicon, I. p. 92.

they complained of it accordingly. The following year, 1572, therefore the Synod decided, that though they chose to retain the word *substance* in the sense explained, they did so "without prejudicing those foreign churches, which for reasons best known to themselves do not use the word substance." And instead of saying as they had done the year before, "that we must truly participate in the second Adam, *that we may derive life from him*;" they substitute for the last clause the words: "that by mystical and spiritual communication with him, we may derive that true eternal life." "And the Lord's Supper," they add, "is principally instituted for the communication of it; though the same Lord Jesus be offered to us both in his substance and gifts, in the ministry of the word and baptism, and received by faith."*

In the articles adopted by the Synod of London, in 1552, and sanctioned by the authority of Edward VI., the article on the Lord's Supper, gives in the first clause the scriptural language, "To those who receive it worthily and with faith, the bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ," &c. The second clause rejects transubstantiation. The third denies the Lutheran doctrine, and asserts that as Christ is heaven, non debet quisquam fidelium carnis ejus et sanguinis realem et corporalem (ut loquantur) præsentiam in eucharistia vel credere vel profiteri.

In the Thirty-nine Articles of the church of England, adopted in 1562, the article on the Lord's Supper corresponds in purport exactly in the first three clauses, with the article of Edward VI. Then follows these words: *Corpus Christi datur, accipitur, et manducatur in coena, tantum coeleste et spirituali ratione. Medium autem quo corpus Christi accipitur et manducatur in coena fides est.* It is a remarkable fact that the Anglican confessions have decidedly a more Zuinglian tone than those of any other of the Reformed churches. This may in part be accounted for by the consideration that they were not irenical, drawn up to conciliate Lutherans.

In the Scotch Con. of 1560, the language of Calvin is in a great measure retained. The only sentence that need be quoted is the following: "We confess that believers in the right use of the Lord's supper thus eat the body and drink the blood of Jesus

* Quick's Synodicon, I. p. 104.

Christ, and we firmly believe that he dwells in them, and they in him, nay, that they thus become flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones. For as the eternal deity gives life and immortality to the flesh of Christ, so also his flesh and blood, when eaten and drunk by us, confer on us the same prerogatives."

In the Belgic Conf. adopted in 1563, the following words occur, Art. 35. *Christus testificatur, nos, quam vere hoc sacramentum manibus nostris accipimus et tenemus, illudque ore comedimus et bibimus, (unde et postmodum vita nostra sustentatur) tam vere etiam nos fide (quæ animæ et manus et os est) in animis nostris recipere verum corpus et verum sanguinem Christi, unici servatoris nostri ad vitam nostram spiritualem. Nequaquam erraverimus dicentes, id quod comeditur esse proprium et naturale corpus Christi, idque quod bibitur proprium esse sanguinem. At manducandi modus talis est, ut non fiat ore corporis, sed spiritu per fidem.* It is not necessary to quote from other Confessions language of the same import with that already quoted. All the symbols above cited contain more or less distinctly the impress of Calvin's views, if we except perhaps those of the church of England, which as before remarked, are more of a Zuinglian cast. We come now to

Those symbols in which both Zuinglians and Calvinists agreed.

Perhaps the most interesting and important document of this class is the Consensus Tigurinus. Switzerland had long been greatly distracted by the controversy on the sacraments. After much persuasion on the part of his friends, Calvin was induced to go to Zurich and hold a conference with Bullinger in 1549. The result of that conference was the adoption of the articles previously drawn up by Calvin himself, and afterwards published with the title: "*Consentio mutua in re sacramentaria Ministrorum Tigurinae Ecclesiae, et D. Joannis Calvini Ministri Genevensis Ecclesiae, jam nunc ab ipsis autoribus edita.*" We have, therefore, in this document the well considered and solemnly announced agreement of the Zuinglian and Calvinistic portions of the Reformed church. This Consensus was soon made the object of vehement attack by the Lutherans. Four years after its date, Calvin felt himself called upon to publish an explanation and defence of it. In his letter, prefixed to that defence, and addressed to the ministers of Zurich and other Swiss

churches, he says: The Lutherans now see that those whom they denounce as Sacramentarians agree, and then adds, *Nec vero si superstites bodie essent optimi et eximii Christi servi Zuinglius et Oecolampadius, verbulum in ea sententia mutarent.**

This Consensus embraces twenty-six articles, all relating to the sacraments, and especially to the Lord's supper. In these articles there is not a word, which any of the evangelical churches of the present day would desire to alter. We should like to print them all as the confession of our own faith on this whole subject. The first four are introductory. The fifth declares the necessity of our union with Christ, in order that we should partake of his life. The sixth declares that union to be spiritual, arising from the indwelling of the Spirit. The seventh sets forth the design of the sacraments. They are declared to be badges of profession and Christian communion, excitements to thanksgiving and to the exercise of faith, and to a holy life, and *syngraphae* binding us thereto. Their principal end, however, is said to be that God therein may testify his grace to us, represent and seal it. For though they signify nothing not announced in the word, still it is a great thing, that they present, as it were, living images before our eyes, and which affect our senses and serve to lead us to the thing signified, while they recall to mind the death of Christ and all his benefits, that our faith may be called into exercise; and besides this, what God had by his mouth declared, is here confirmed and sealed. The eighth declares that God inwardly works or communicates by his Spirit, the blessings signified by the sacraments. They are therefore, as stated in the ninth article, not naked signs, but as it is there expressed, "Though we distinguish, as is proper, between the sign and things signified, we do not disjoin the truth (or reality) from the signs; since all who by faith embrace the promises there presented, receive Christ with his spiritual gifts." In the tenth article, it is, therefore said, we should look at the promise rather than the signs. The signs without Christ, are declared in the eleventh article,

* Compare with this the language of Dr. Nevin, who endeavours to represent the doctrine of Calvin and Zuingli on this subject to be as wide apart as the poles. He even says: "If Calvinism, the system of Geneva, necessarily runs here into Zuinglianism, we may, indeed, well despair of the whole interest. For most assuredly no church can stand, that is found to be constitutionally *unsacramental*," p. 74.

to be *inanes larvae*. The articles from the twelfth to the seventeenth, both included, relate to the efficacy of the sacraments. It is denied that they have any virtue in themselves, all their efficacy is referred to the attending power of God, which is exercised only in the elect, and therefore, it is added, the doctrine that the sacraments confer grace on all who do not oppose the obstacle of mortal sin, falls to the ground. In the eighteenth it is stated that the reason why the sacraments fail to benefit unbelievers is to be referred to their want of faith, and neither to the sacraments which always retain their integrity, nor to God. The nineteenth teaches that the blessings received in the sacraments, are by believers received on other occasions. And moreover, as is said in the twentieth, the benefit received from the sacraments, is not to be restricted to the time of administration, but may follow long afterwards. Those baptized in infancy are often regenerated in youth or even old age. In the twenty-first art. all local presence of Christ in the Eucharist is denied. As a man he is in heaven, and is present only to the mind and faith. The twenty-second states that the words of institution, 'This is my body,' must be understood figuratively. In the twenty-third, it is taught that manducation of Christ's body implies no mixture or transfusion of substance, but the derivation of life from his body and blood as a sacrifice. The last three articles are directed against transubstantiation, the Lutheran doctrine of the local presence, and the adoration of the host.

The force of this document as an exhibition of the true doctrine of the Reformed church on this whole subject is greatly impaired in this meagre outline. We shall, however, have occasion to refer to its more explicit statements, in the progress of this investigation. The next witness to be cited is the *Heidelberg Catechism*. It was prepared at the command of Frederick III. elector of the Palatinate, by Caspar Olevian, a disciple of Calvin, and Ursinus, a friend of Melancthon, and adopted by a general synod held at Heidelberg in 1563. This catechism having symbolical authority, both in the German and Dutch Reformed churches, is entitled to peculiar respect as a witness to the faith of the Reformed church.

In answer to the 66th question the sacraments are declared to be "Sacred visible signs and seals, instituted by God, that through them he may more clearly present and seal the promise of the

gospel, viz. that he, for the sake of the one offering of Christ accomplished on the cross, grants to us the forgiveness of sin and eternal life.*

In answer to the following question, it is stated, that the design both of the word and sacraments is to direct our faith to the sacrifice of Christ on the cross as the only ground of our faith.

Question 75. "How art thou reminded and assured, in the holy supper, that thou art a partaker of the one offering of Christ on the cross, and of all his benefits? Ans. Thus, that Christ has commanded me to eat of this broken bread, and to drink of this cup and has promised first, that as surely as I see with my eyes the bread of the Lord broken for me, and the cup handed to me, so surely was his body broken and offered for me on the cross, and his blood shed for me. Second, that he himself as certainly feeds and nourishes my soul to eternal life with his crucified body, and shed blood, as I receive from the hand of the minister, and after a corporal manner partake of the bread and wine, which are given as the symbols of the body and blood of Christ."

Ques. 76. "What is it then to eat the crucified body and drink the shed blood of Christ?"

"Ans. It is not only to embrace with a believing heart all the sufferings and death of Christ, and thereby to obtain the pardon of sin and eternal life; but also, besides that, to become more and more united to his sacred body, by the Holy Ghost who dwells both in Christ and in us; so that we, though Christ is in heaven and we on earth, are notwithstanding, flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones; and that we live and are governed forever by one Spirit, as the members of the same body are by one soul."

In the answer to the 78th, it is said that as in baptism the water is not changed into the blood of Christ, nor is itself the ablution of sin, but the symbol and pledge of those things, so in the Lord's supper the bread is not the body of Christ, though from the nature of a sacrament and usage of scripture, it is so called.

* There is some slight variation as to phraseology, between the German and Latin copies of this catechism. We unfortunately have not the authorized English version at hand, and therefore are obliged to translate, except where Dr. Nevins has given the English version, from the originals.

In answer to Ques. 79th, it is said the bread is called Christ's body, &c., "Not only thereby to teach us that as bread and wine support this temporal life, so his crucified body and shed blood are the true meat and drink whereby our souls are fed unto eternal life; but more especially, by these visible signs and pledges, to assure us, that we are as really partakers of his true body and blood (by the operation of the Holy Ghost), as we receive by the mouths of our bodies these holy signs in remembrance of him; and that all his sufferings and obedience are as certainly ours as if we had in our own persons suffered and made satisfaction for our sins to God."

In the following question, What is the difference between the Lord's supper, and the Popish mass? the first clause of the answer is: "The supper of the Lord testifies to us that we have perfect remission of all our sins, on account of the one sacrifice of Christ which he himself made once for all upon the cross; and also that we, by the Holy Spirit, are united to Christ, who according to his human nature is only in heaven at the right hand of the Father, and is there to be adored by us."

There is nothing in this account of the Lord's supper to which exception would even now be taken. There is something in the answer to the 75th question, which seems evidently intended to cover Calvin's peculiar opinion of a miraculous influence from the body of Christ in heaven, but it is also as evidently intended to cover Bullinger's view on that subject. It is language to which Zuingli and Ecolampadius, as Calvin says on another occasion, would not object. This is the more remarkable when we consider the historical circumstances under which this catechism was drawn up, and its decidedly irenic object. No part of Germany was more distracted by the sacramentarian controversy than the Palatinate. Nowhere was greater exertion made to conciliate the Lutherans by framing expressions which they could adopt. Yet this catechism, framed under these circumstances, teaches nothing to which the ministers of Zurich would be unwilling to subscribe.

The only other public symbol which it is necessary to cite, is the Second Helvetic Confession. This on some accounts is the most authoritative of all the confessions of the Reformed church. It was drawn up by Bullinger in 1562. In 1565, the Elector Frederick, above mentioned, alarmed by the furious contentions

in his dominions, and annoyed by the misrepresentations of the Lutherans, wrote to Bullinger to send him a confession which would if possible unite the parties, or at least silence the clamours of the Lutherans, and which the Elector might present at the approaching diet of the empire to refute the calumnies directed against the Reformed. Bullinger sent this confession which he had prepared some years before. The Elector was perfectly well satisfied. To give it weight it was then sanctioned by the Helvetic churches, and soon became one of the most generally recognised standards of the Reformed in all parts of Europe. What it teaches on the Lord's supper is entitled to be regarded as a fair exhibition of the real doctrine of the church. The fact that it was written by Bullinger, the successor of Zuingli at Zurich, the great opponent of what was considered peculiar in Calvin's views of this subject, would lead us to expect to find in it nothing but what the Zurich ministers could cordially adopt.

In the 19th ch. it is taught concerning the sacraments in general, 1. That they are mystic symbols, or holy rites, or sacred actions, including the word, signs, and the things signified. 2. That there were sacraments under the old as well as under the new economy. 3. That God is their author, and still operates through them. 4. That Christ is the great object presented in them, the substance and matter of them, the lamb slain from the foundation of the world, the rock of which all our fathers drank, &c. 5. Therefore as far as the substance is concerned, the sacraments of the two dispensations are equal; they have the same author, the same significancy and effect. 6. The old have been abolished, and baptism and the Lord's supper introduced in their place. 7. Then follows an exposition of the constituent parts of a sacrament. First, the word, by which the elements are constituted sacred signs. Water, bread and wine, are, in themselves, apart from divine appointment, no sacred symbols. It is the word of God added to them, consecrating or setting them apart, which gives them their sacramental character. Secondly, the signs, being thus consecrated, receive the names of the things signified. Water is called regeneration, the bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ, i. e. the symbols or sacraments of his body and blood. They are not changed in their own nature. They are called by the names of the things signified, because the two are sacramentally united, that is,

united by mystical significance and divine appointment. 8. In the next paragraph the confession rejects, on the one hand, the Romish doctrine of consecration; and, on the other, the opinion of those who either make the sacraments mere common signs, or entirely useless. 9. The benefits signified are not so included or bound to the sacraments, that all who receive the signs receive the things signified; nor does the efficacy depend on the administrator; nor their integrity, upon the receiver. As the word of God, continues his word, whether men believe or not, so it is with the sacraments.

The 21st chapter is devoted to the Lord's supper. The following passages, which we prefer giving in the original, will suffice to exhibit the doctrine here taught:

Ut autem rectius et perspicacius intelligatur, quomodo caro et sanguis Christi sint cibus et potus fidelium, percipianturque a fidelibus ad vitam aeternam, pauca haec adjiciemus. Manducatio non est unius generis. Est enim manducatio corporalis, qua cibus in os percipitur ab homine, dentibus atteritur, et in ventrem deglutitur. . . . Nothing of this kind, of course is admitted with regard to the Lord's supper.

Est et spiritualis manducatio corporis Christi, non ea quidem, qua existimemus cibum ipsum mutari in spiritum, sed qua, manente in sua essentia et proprietate corpore et sanguine Domini, ea nobis communicantur spiritualiter, utique non corporali modo, sed spirituali, per spiritum sanctum, qui videlicet ea, quae per carnem et sanguinem Domini pro nobis in mortem tradita, parata sunt, ipsam inquam remissionem peccatorum, liberationem, et vitam aeternam, applicat et confert nobis, ita ut Christus in nobis vivat, et nos in ipso vivamus, efficitque ut ipsum, quo talis sit, cibus et potus spiritualis noster, id est, vita nostra, vera fide percipiamus. . . . Et sicut oportet cibum in nosmetipsos edendo recipere, ut operatur in nobis, suamque efficaciam exerat, cum extra nos positus, nihil nobis prosit; ita necesse est nos fide Christum recipere, ut noster fiat, vivatque in nobis, et nos in ipso. . . . Ex quibus omnibus claret nos, per spiritualem cibum, minime intelligere imaginarium, nescio quem, cibum, sed ipsum Domini corpus pro nobis traditum, quod tamen percipiat a fidelibus, non corporaliter, sed spiritualiter per fidem. . . . Fit autem hic esus et potus spiritualis, etiam extra Domini coenam, et quoties, aut ubicunque homo in Christum crediderit.

Quo fortassis illud Augustini pertinet, Quid paras dentem et ventrem? crede, et manducasti.

Praeter superiorem manducationem spiritualem, est et sacramentalis manducatio corporis Domini, qua fidelis non tantum spiritualiter et interne participat vero corpore et sanguine Domini, sed foris etiam accedendo ad mensam Domini, accipit visibile corporis et sanguinis Domini sacramentum.

We have thus furnished, as it appears to us, adequate materials for a clear and decided judgment as to what was the real doctrine of the Reformed church as to the Lord's Supper. We propose now to review these materials and apply them to the decision of the various questions agitated on this subject.

In what sense is Christ present in the Lord's Supper?

The authorities above cited, and the private writings of the Reformed theologians, are abundant in teaching that Christ is present in the Lord's supper. They represent it as a calumny, when the Lutherans asserted that the Reformed regarded the bread and wine as representing the body and blood of Christ in no other sense than a statute represents Hercules or Mercury. Zuingle says, we have never denied that the body of Christ is sacramentally and mystically present in the Lord's supper. They admitted not only that he is present as God and by his Spirit, but in an important sense as to his body and blood. The whole controversy relates to this latter point, viz., to the mode in which the body and blood of Christ are present in the Lord's supper. In deciding this point, the Reformed theologians are very accurate in determining the different senses in which a thing may be said to be present. The word *presence*, they say, is a relative term, and cannot be understood without reference to the object said to be present, and the subject to which it is present. For presence is nothing but the application of an object to the faculty suited to the perception of it. Hence, there is a two-fold presence, viz., of things sensible and of things spiritual. The former are present, as the word imports, when they are *prae sensibus*, so as to be perceived by the senses; the latter, when they are presented to the intelligence so as to be apprehended and enjoyed. Again, presence even as to sensible objects is not to be confounded with nearness. It stands opposed not to distance, but to absence. The sun is as near to us when

absent at night, as when present by day. A thing therefore may be present as to efficacy and virtue, which is at a great distance locally. In which of these senses are the body and blood of Christ present in the Lord's supper? All the Reformed, in answer to this question, say that it is not in the sense of local nearness. The bread is neither transmuted into the body of Christ, as Romanists say, nor is his body locally present in, with and under the bread, according to the Lutheran doctrine. The presence is to the mind, the object is not presented to the senses, but apprehended by faith. It is a presence of virtue and efficacy not of propinquity. All these statements, both negative and positive, are found in the authorities referred to in the preceding pages. The Helv. Conf. chap. 21, says: "The body of Christ is in heaven at the right hand of God. . . . Yet the Lord is not absent from his church when celebrating his supper. The sun is absent from us in heaven, nevertheless it is efficaciously present with us; how much more is Christ, the Sun of righteousness, though absent as to the body, present with us, not corporally indeed, but spiritually, by his vivifying influence." Calvin, in the Consensus Tigurinus, art. xxi. says: "Every imagination of local presence is to be entirely removed. For while the signs are here on earth seen by the eyes and handled by the hands, Christ, so far as he is a man, is no where else than in heaven; and is to be sought only by the mind and by faith. It is therefore an irrational and impious superstition to include him in the earthly elements." In the 10th art. it is taught that he is present in the promise, not in the signs.

Ursinus, the principal author of the Heidelberg Catechism, in his exposition of that formulary, says: "These two, the sign and the thing signified, are united together in this sacrament, not by any copulation, or corporal and local existence of one in the other, much less by transubstantiation, or changing the one into the other; but by signifying, sealing and exhibiting the one by the other. That is, by a sacramental union, whose bond is the promise added to the bread, requiring the faith of the receivers. Whence it is clear, that these things in their lawful use, are always jointly exhibited and received, but not without faith of the promise, viewing and apprehending the thing promised, now present in the sacrament; yet not present or included in the sign as in a vessel containing it; but present in the

promise, which is the better part, the life and soul of the sacrament. For they want judgment who affirm that Christ's body cannot be present in the sacrament, except it be in or under the bread; as if forsooth, the bread alone, without the promise, were either the sacrament, or the principal part of the sacrament.*

There is, therefore, a presence of Christ's body in the Lord's supper; not local, but spiritual; not for the senses but for the mind and to faith; not of nearness but of efficacy. This presence (as Zuingle said, "if they want words"), the Reformed were willing to call *real*; if by real was understood not essential or corporal, but true and efficacious, as opposed to imaginary or ineffective. So far as this point is concerned there is no doubt as to the doctrine of the Reformed church.

What is meant by feeding on the body and blood of Christ?

This question does not relate to the thing received, but simply to the mode of receiving. What is intended by sacramental manducation? In reference to this point, all the Reformed agreed as to the following particulars: 1. This eating was not with the mouth, either after the manner of ordinary food, which the Lutherans themselves denied, or in any other manner. The mouth was not, in this case, the organ of reception. 2. It is only by the soul that the body and blood of Christ are received. 3. It is by faith, which is declared to be the hand and the mouth of the soul. 4. It is by or through the power of the Holy Ghost. As to all these points there is a perfect agreement among the symbols of the Reformed church. Con. Tig. art. 23. "That Christ feeds our souls with his body and blood, here set forth, by the power of the Holy Ghost, is not to be understood as involving any mixture or transfusion of substance, but that we derive life from his body once offered as a sacrifice, and from his blood shed as an expiation." Belgic Con. art. 35. God, it is said, sent Christ, as the true bread from heaven, "which nourishes and sustains the spiritual life of believers, if it be eaten; that is, if it be applied and received by the Spirit through faith." Ursinus: "There is then in the Lord's supper a double meat and drink, one external, visible and terrene, namely, bread and wine; and another internal. There is also a double eating and receiving: an external and signifying, which is the corporal receiving of the

* Quoted by Dr. Nevin, p. 91.

bread and wine; that is, that which is performed by the hands, mouth and senses of the body; and an internal, invisible, and signified, which is the fruition of Christ's death, and a spiritual ingrafting into Christ's body; that is, which is not performed by the hands and mouth, but by the spirit and faith."

As to the question whether there is any difference between eating and believing, the authorities differ. The Zurich confession, and the Helv., quoted above distinctly say there is not. The former says: "Eating is believing, and believing is eating." The latter says: "This eating takes place as often and whenever a man believes in Christ." So the Belgic confession, just quoted. Calvin, however, makes a distinction between the two, eating, he says, is not faith, but the effect of faith. "There are some," he says, "who define in a word, that to eat the flesh of Christ and to drink his blood, is no other than to believe on Christ himself. But I conceive that in that remarkable discourse, in which Christ recommends us to feed upon his body, he intended to teach us something more striking and sublime; namely, that we are quickened by a real participation of him, which he designates by the terms *eating* and *drinking*, that no person might suppose the life which we receive from him to consist in simple knowledge. . . . At the same, we confess there is no eating but by faith, and it is impossible to imagine any other; but the difference between me and those whose opinion I now oppose, is this . . . they consider eating to be faith itself, but I apprehend it to be rather a consequence of faith." We do not see the force of this distinction. It all depends upon the latitude given to the idea of faith. If you restrict it to knowledge and assent, there is room for the distinction between eating and believing. But if faith includes the real appropriation of Christ, it includes all Calvin seems to mean by both terms, eating and believing. This question is of no historical importance. It created no diversity of opinion, in the church.

The question, whether eating the flesh of Christ, and drinking his blood is confined to the Lord's supper; in other words, whether there is any special benefit or communion with Christ to be had there, and which cannot elsewhere be obtained, the Romanists and Lutherans answer in the affirmative; the Reformed unanimously in the negative. They make indeed a distinction between spiritual and sacramental manducation. What

is elsewhere received by faith, without the signs and significant actions, is in the sacraments received in connexion with them. This is clearly taught in the confession of Zurich, 1545, quoted above; also in the second Helv. confession as has already been shown. That confession vindicates this doctrine from the charge of rendering the sacrament useless. For, as it says, though we receive Christ once, we need to receive him continually and to have our faith strengthened from day to day. Calvin teaches the same doctrine in the Con. Tig. art. 19, "The verity which is figured in the sacraments, believers receive *extra eorum usum*. Thus in baptism, Paul's sins were washed away, which had already been blotted out. Baptism was to Cornelius the laver of regeneration, though he had before received the Spirit. And so in the Lord's supper, Christ communicates himself to us, though he had already imparted himself to us and dwells within us." The office of the sacraments he teaches is to confirm and increase our faith. In his defence of this Consensus, he expresses surprise that a doctrine so plainly proved by experience and scripture, should be called into question. (Niemeyer's Col. p. 212). In the decree of the French National Synod of 1572, already quoted, it is said, "The same Lord Jesus both as to his substance and gifts, is offered to us in baptism and the ministry of the word, and received by believers."

We find the same doctrine in the Book of Common Prayer of the church of England. In the office for the communion of the sick, the minister is directed to instruct a parishioner who is prevented receiving the sacrament, "that if he do truly repent him of his sins, and steadfastly believe that Jesus Christ hath suffered death for him on the cross, and shed his blood for his redemption, earnestly remembering the benefits he hath thereby, and giving him hearty thanks therefor, he doth eat and drink the body and blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul's health, though he do not receive the sacrament with his mouth." On this point there was no diversity of opinion in any part of the Reformed church. There was no communion of Christ, no participation of his body and blood, not offered to believers and received by them, elsewhere than at the Lord's table and by other means. This is exalting the grace of God without depreciating the value of the sacraments.

What is meant by the body and blood of Christ as received in the sacrament?

The language employed in answer to this question is very various. It is said, we received Christ and his benefits, his flesh and blood, his true body, his natural body, his substance, the substance of his flesh and blood. All these forms of expression occur. Calvin says, we receive the substance of Christ. The Gallican Confession says, "We are fed with the substance of his body and blood." The Belgic Confession, That we received "his natural body." The question is, What does this mean? There is one thing in which all parties agreed, viz., that our union with Christ was a real union, that we receive him and not his benefits merely; that he dwells in his people by his Spirit, whose presence is the presence of Christ. Though all meant this, this is not all that is intended by the expressions above cited. What is meant by saying we receive his flesh and blood, or the substance of them? The negative answer to this question given by the Reformers uniformly is, they do not mean that we partake of the material particles of Christ's body, nor do they express any mixture or transfusion of substance. The affirmative statement is, in general terms, just as uniform, that these expressions indicate the virtue, efficacy, life-giving power of his body. But there are two ways in which this was understood. Some intended by it, not the virtue of Christ's body and blood as flesh and blood, but their virtue as a body broken and of blood as shed, that is, their sacrificial, atoning efficacy. Others, however, insisted that besides this there was a vivifying efficacy imparted to the body of Christ by its union with the divine nature, and that by the power of the Holy Ghost, the believer in the Lord's supper and elsewhere, received into his soul and by faith this mysterious and supernatural influence. This was clearly Calvin's idea, though he often contented himself with the expression of the former of these views. His doctrine is fully expressed in the following passages. "We acknowledge, without any circumlocution that the flesh of Christ, is life-giving, not only because once in it our salvation was obtained; but because now, we being united to him in sacred union, it breathes life into us. Or, to use fewer words, because being by the power of the Spirit engrafted into the body of Christ, we have a common life with him; for from the hidden

fountain of divinity life is, in a wonderfully way, infused into the flesh of Christ, and thence flows out to us." Again: "Christ is absent from us as to the body, by his Spirit, however, dwelling in us, he so lifts us to himself in heaven, that he transfuses the life-giving vigour of his flesh into us, as we grow by the vital heat of the sun." From these and many similar passages, it is plain, Calvin meant by receiving the substance of Christ's body, receiving its virtue or vigour, not merely as a sacrifice, but also the power inherent in it from its union with the divine nature, and flowing from it as heat from the sun.

The other explanation of this matter is that by receiving the substance of Christ's body, or by receiving his flesh and blood, was intended receiving their life-giving efficacy as a sacrifice once offered on the cross for us. This view is clearly expressed in the Zurich Confession of 1545. "To eat the bread of Christ is to believe on him as crucified. . . His flesh once benefited us on earth, now it benefits here no longer, and is no longer here." The same view is expressed by Calvin himself in the Con. Tig. 1549. In the 19th article we are said to eat the flesh of Christ, "because we derive our life from that flesh once offered in sacrifice for us, and from his blood shed as an expiation." With equal clearness the same idea is presented in the Heidelberg Catechism, 1560. In question 79, it is his crucified body and shed blood which are declared to be the food of the soul. The same thing is still more plainly asserted in the Helv. Confession 1566, c. 21. In the first paragraph, it is said, "Christ as delivered unto death for us and as a Saviour is the sum of this sacrament." In the third paragraph this eating is explained as the application, by the Spirit, of the benefits of Christ's death. And lower down, the food of the soul is declared to be *caro Christi tradita pro nobis, et sanguis ejus effusus pro nobis*. Indeed as this confession was written by Bullinger, minister of Zurich, the great opponent of Calvin's peculiar view, it could not be expected to teach any other doctrine. In what is called the Anglican Confession, drawn up by Bishop Jewell 1562, the same view is presented. It is there said: "We maintain that Christ exhibits himself truly present. . . that in the supper we feed upon him by faith and in the spirit (*fide et spiritu*) and that we have eternal life from his cross and blood." To draw life

from the cross is here the same as to draw it from his blood, and of course must refer to the sacrificial efficacy of his death.

The question now arises which of the two views above stated is entitled to be regarded as the real doctrine of the Reformed? The whole church united in saying believers receive the body and blood of Christ. They agreed in explaining this to mean that they received the virtue, efficacy or vigour of his body and blood. But some understood, thereby, the virtue of his body as broken and of his blood as shed, that is, their sacrificial efficacy. Others said that besides this, there was a mysterious virtue in the body of Christ due to its union with the divine nature, which virtue was by the Holy Spirit conveyed to the believer. Which of these views is truly symbolical? The fairest answer to this question probably is, neither to the exclusion of the other. Those who held to the one, expressed their fellowship with those who held the other. Calvin and Bullinger united in the Consensus Tigurinus from which the latter view is excluded. Both views are expressed in the public confessions. Some have the one, some the other.

But if a decision must be made between them, the higher authority is certainly due to the doctrine of sacrificial efficacy first mentioned. 1. It has high symbolical authority in its favour. Its being clearly expressed in the Con. Tig. the common platform of the church, on this whole subject, and in the Second Helv. Con. the most authoritative of all the symbols of the Reformed church, and even in the Heidelberg Catechism, outweighs the private authority of Calvin or the dubious expression of the Gallican, Belgic, and some minor Confessions. 2. What is perhaps of more real consequence, the sacrificial view, is the only one that harmonizes with the other doctrines of the church. The other is an uncongenial foreign element derived partly from the influence of previous modes of thought, partly from the dominant influence of the Lutherans and the desire of getting as near to them as possible, and partly, no doubt, from a too literal interpretation of certain passages of scripture, especially John vi. 54—58, and Eph. v: 30. It is difficult to reconcile the idea that a life-giving influence emanates from the glorified body of Christ, with the universally received doctrine of the Reformed Church, that we receive Christ as fully through the ministry of the word as in the Lord's supper. However strongly some of the Reformed

asserted that we partake of the true or natural body of Christ, and are fed by the substance of his flesh and blood, they all maintained that this was done whenever faith in him was exercised. Not to urge this point however. All the Reformed taught, Calvin perhaps more earnestly than most others, that our union with Christ since the incarnation is the same in nature as that enjoyed by the saints under the old dispensation. This is perfectly intelligible if the virtue of his flesh and blood, which we receive in the Lord's supper, is its virtue as a sacrifice, because he was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. His sacrifice was as effectual for the salvation of Abraham as of Paul, and could be appropriated as fully by the faith of the one as by that of the other. But if the virtue in question is a mysterious power due to the hypostatical union, flowing from Christ's body in heaven, it must be a benefit peculiar to believers living since the incarnation. It is impossible that those living before the advent could partake of Christ's body, in this sense, because it did not then exist; it had not as yet been assumed into union with the divine nature. We find therefore that Romanists and nominal Protestants, make the greatest distinction as to the relation of the ancient saints to God and that of believers since the advent, between the sacraments of the one dispensation and those of the other. All this is consistent and necessary on their theory of the incarnation, of the church and of the sacraments, but it is all in the plainest contradiction to the doctrine of the Reformed Church.* Here then is an element which does not accord with the other doctrines of that church; and this incongruity is one good reason for not regarding it as a genuine portion of its faith.

Another good reason for this conclusion is, that the doctrine almost immediately died out of the church. It had no root in the system and could not live. We hear nothing from the immediate successors of Calvin and Beza, of this mysterious, or as it was sometimes called, miraculous influence of Christ's heavenly body. Turretin, Beza's contemporary, expressly discards it. So does Pictet, who followed Turretin, and so do the Reformed theologians as a body.† As a single indication of this fact we refer to

* If any one doubts this assertion, let him read Calvin's Institutes B. iv. c. 14. § 20—25. This subject however will come up in another place.

† We had transcribed various authorities as to this point, but are obliged to exclude them for the want of space. We refer the reader only to Turretin's statement

Craig's catechism, written under an order of the General Assembly of the church of Scotland, of 1590, and sanctioned by that body in 1592. It will be remembered that the Scotch confession of 1560, before quoted, follows the very language of Calvin on this particular point. In Craig's catechism however, we have the following exhibition of the subject. "Ques. What signifieth the action of the supper? Ans. That our souls are fed spiritually by the body and blood of Jesus Christ. John vi. 54. Ques. 71. When is this done? A. When we feel the efficacy of his death in our conscience by the spirit of faith. John vi. 33. . . . Ques. 75. Is Christ's body in the elements? A. No, but it is in heaven. Acts i. 11. Ques. 76. Why then is the element called his body? A. Because it is a sure seal of his body given to our souls?" In the "Confession of Faith used in the English congregation of Geneva," the very first in date of the symbols of the Scotch church, it is said: "So the supper declareth that God, a provident Father, doth not only feed our bodies, but also nourishes our souls with the graces and benefits of Jesus Christ, which the scriptures calleth eating of his flesh and drinking of his blood."

It is of course admitted that a particular doctrine's dying out of the faith of a church, is, of itself, no sufficient evidence that it was not a genuine part of its original belief. This is too obvious to need remark. There is, however, a great difference between a doctrine's being lost by a process of decay and by the process of growth. It is very possible that a particular opinion may be engrafted into a system, without having any logical or vital union with it, and is the more certain to be ejected, the more vigorous the growth and healthful the life of that system. The fundamental principles of Protestantism are the exclusive normal authority of scripture, and justification by faith alone. If that system lives and grows it must throw off every thing incompatible with those principles. It is the fact of this peculiar view of a mysterious influence of the glorified body of Christ, having ceased to live, taken in connection with its obvious incompatibility with other articles of the Reformed faith, that we urge as a collateral argument against its being a genuine portion of

of the question as between the Reformed and Lutherans, where he will see this whole matter ventilated with that masterly discrimination for which Turretin is unrivalled. Theol. Elenet. III. p. 567.

that system of doctrine. According to the most authoritative standards of the Reformed church, we receive the body and blood of Christ, as a sacrifice, just as Abraham and David received them, who ate of the same spiritual meat and drank of the same spiritual drink. The church is one, its life is one, its food is one, from Adam to the last of the redeemed.

What is the effect of receiving the body and blood of Christ?

This question is nearly allied to the preceding. In general terms it is answered by saying, that union with Christ, and the consequent reception of his benefits, is the effect of the believing reception of the Lord's supper. In the Basel confession, it is said, "So that we, as members of his body, as our true head, live in him and he in us." The Geneva catechism says the effect is "That we coalesce with him in the same life." The Scotch Confession says, "We surely believe that he abides in them (believers) and they in him, so that they become flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones." The Heidelberg catechism has much the same words, adding, "and ever live and are governed by one Spirit, as the members of our body by one soul." The Second Helv. Confession says, the effect of the Lord's supper is, such an application of the purchase of Christ's death, by the Holy Spirit, "that he lives in us and we in him." So the Ang. Confession and others.

In explaining the nature of this union between Christ and his people, the Reformed standards reject entirely, as we have already seen, every thing like corporeal contact, or the mixture or transfusion of substance. The proof of this point has already been sufficiently presented. We add only the language of Calvin. He says in opposition to the Lutherans: "If they insist that the substance of Christ's flesh is mingled with the soul of man, in how many absurdities do they involve themselves?"* See also his Inst. iv. 17, 32. In this negative statement, as to the nature of this union, all the Reformed agreed. They agreed also in the affirmative statement that we receive Christ himself and not merely his benefits. The union with Christ is a real, and not an imaginary or merely moral one. This is often expressed by saying we receive the substance of Christ, i. e. as

* See his Defence of the Consensus Tigurinus.

they explain it, Christ himself, or the Holy Spirit, by whom he dwells in his people.* Their common mode of representation is that contained in the Con. Tig. *Haec spiritualis est communicatio quam habemus cum filio Dei, dum Spiritu suo in nobis habitans faciat credentes omnes, omnium, quae in se resident, bonorum compotes.* The mode in which this subject is represented in scripture and in the Reformed standards, is, that when the Holy Spirit comes to one of God's chosen with saving power, the soul is regenerated; the first exercise of its new life is faith; Christ is thereby received; the union with him is thus consummated; and on this follows the imputation of righteousness and all saving benefits.

The only question is whether besides this union effected by the Holy Spirit, there is on our part any participation of Christ's human body or of his human nature as such. This takes us back to the question already considered, relating to the mode of reception and the thing received, when it is said in scripture, that we eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man. As to these questions, it will be remembered the Reformed agreed as to the following points: 1. That this reception is by the soul. 2. Through faith, not through the mouth. 3. By the power of the Holy Ghost. 4. That this receiving Christ's body is not confined to the Lord's supper, but takes place whenever faith in him is exercised. 5. That it was common to believers before and after the coming of the Son of God in the flesh. We have here a complete estoppel of the claim of the authority of the Reformed church in behalf of the doctrine that our union with Christ involves a participation of his human body, nature, or life. If it be asked, however, in what sense that church teaches that we are flesh of Christ's flesh, and bone of his bones? the answer is, in the same sense in which Paul says the same thing. And

* All these forms of expressions, illustrated and interchanged as they are in the Confessions, occur also in the early Reformed theologians. Thus Turretin says: "The union between Christ and us is never in scripture spoken of as bodily, but spiritual and mystical, which can only be by the Spirit and faith." Tom. III. p. 576. "The bond of our union . . . is on the part of Christ the efficacious operation of his Spirit, on our part, faith, and thence love." p. 578. This union he adds, is called substantial and essential in reference to its verity. He asserts that we receive "the substance of Christ." "Because Christ is inseparable from his benefits. The believers under the Old Testament are, correctly said to have been made partakers of Christ himself, and so of his body and blood, which were present to their faith; hence they are said to have drunk of that rock, which was Christ." p. 580.

his meaning is very plain. He tells us that a husband should love his wife as his own body. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. His wife is himself, for the Scriptures say, they are one flesh. All this he adds, is true of Christ and his people. He loves the church as himself. She is his bride; flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones. If the intimate relationship, the identification of feelings, affections and interests, between a man and his wife, if their spiritual union, justifies the assertion that that they are one flesh, far more may the same thing be said of the spiritual relation between Christ and his people, which is much more intimate, sublime and mysterious, arising, as it does from the inhabitation of one and the same Spirit, and producing not only a union of feeling and affection, but of life. The same apostle tells us that believers are one body and members one of another, not in virtue of their common human nature, nor because they all partake of the humanity of Christ, but because they all have one Spirit. Such as we understand it is the doctrine of the Reformed church and of the Bible as to the mystical union.

What efficacy belongs to the Lord's Supper as a Sacrament?

On this point the Reformed, in the first place, reject the Romish doctrine that the sacraments contain the grace they signify, and that they convey that grace, by the mere administration, to all who do not oppose an obstacle. Secondly, the Lutheran doctrine, which attributes to the sacraments an inherent supernatural power, due indeed not to the signs, but the word of God connected with them, but which is nevertheless always operative, provided there be faith in the receiver. Thirdly, the doctrine of the Socinians and others, that the sacraments are mere badges of profession, or empty signs of Christ and his benefits. They are declared to be efficacious means of grace; but their efficacy, as such, is referred neither to any virtue in them nor in him that administers them, but solely to the attending operation or influence of the Holy Spirit, precisely as in the case of the word. It is the *virtus Spiritus Sancti extrinsecus accedens*, to which all their supernatural or saving efficacy is referred. They have, indeed, the moral objective power of significant emblems and seals of divine appointment, just as the word has its inherent moral power; but their efficacy as means of grace, their power, in other words, to convey grace depends

entirely, as in the case of the word, on the co-operation of the Holy Ghost. Hence the power is in no way tied to the sacraments. It may be exerted without them. It does not always attend them, nor is it confined to the time, place or service. The favourite illustration of the Lutheran doctrine is drawn from the history of the woman who touched the hem of our Saviour's garment. As there was always supernatural virtue in him, which flowed out to all who applied to him in faith, so there is in the sacraments. The Reformed doctrine is illustrated by a reference to our Saviour's anointing the eyes of the blind man with the clay. There was no virtue in the clay to make the man see, the effect was due to the attending power of Christ. The modern rationalists smile at all these distinctions and say it all amounts to the same thing. These three views however are radically different in themselves, and have produced radically different effects, where they have severally prevailed.

All the points, both negative and positive, included in the statement of the Reformed doctrine, above given, are clearly presented with perfect unanimity in their symbolical books. In the Gall. Conf., art. 34, it is said, "We acknowledge, that these external signs are such, that through them God operates by the power of his Holy Spirit." Helv. Conf. ii. c. 19, "We do not sanction the doctrine that grace and the things signified are so bound to the signs or included in them, that those who" receive the signs receive also the blessings they represent. When this fails, the fault is indeed in the receiver, just as in the case of the word, God in both offers his grace. His word does not cease to be true and divine, nor do the sacraments lose their integrity, because men do not receive them in faith and to their salvation. See ch. 21, at the end. The Consensus Tigurinus teaches, as we have already seen, that the sacraments have no virtue in themselves, as means of grace: *Si quid boni nobis per sacramenta confertur, id non fit propria eorum virtute. . . Deus enim solus est, qui Spiritu suo agit.* Art. 12. In the following articles it is taught that they benefit only believers, that grace is not tied to them, that believers receive elsewhere the same grace, and that the blessing often follows long after the administration. The Scotch Conf. ch. 21, teaches that the whole benefit flows "from faith apprehending Christ, who alone renders the sacraments efficacious." In the Geneva Cat. the question is asked:

"Do you believe that the power and efficacy of the sacrament, instead of being included in the element, flow entirely from the Spirit of God? Ans. So I believe, that is, should it please the Lord to exercise his power through his own instruments to the end to which he has appointed them." It is not worth while to multiply quotations, for, as to this point, there was no diversity of opinion. We would only refer the reader to Calvin's Inst. iv. 14, a passage, which though directed against the Romanists, has a much wider scope. He there declares it to be a purely diabolical error to teach men to expect justification from the sacraments, instead of from faith; and insists principally on two things, first, that nothing is conferred through the sacraments beyond what is offered in the word; and, secondly, that they are not necessary to salvation, the blessings may be had without them. He confirms his own doctrine by the saying of Augustin: *Invisibilem sanctificationem sine visibili signo esse posse, et visibile rursum signum sine vera sanctificatione.*

Such then, as we understand it, is the true doctrine of the Reformed church on the Lord's supper. By the Reformed church, we mean the Protestant churches of Switzerland, the Palatinate, France, Belgium, England, Scotland and elsewhere. According to the public standards of these churches: The Lord's supper is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, as a memorial of his death, wherein, under the symbols of bread and wine, his body as broken for us and his blood as shed for the remission of sins, are signified, and, by the power of the Holy Ghost, sealed and applied to believers; whereby their union with Christ and their mutual fellowship are set forth and confirmed, their faith strengthened, and their souls nourished unto eternal life.

Christ is really present to his people, in this ordinance, not bodily, but by his Spirit; not in the sense of local nearness, but of efficacious operation. They receive him, not with the mouth, but by faith; they receive his flesh, not as flesh, not as material particles, nor its human life, but his body as broken and his blood as shed. The union thus signified and effected, between him and them is not a corporeal union, nor a mixture of substances, but spiritual and mystical, arising from the indwelling of the Spirit. The efficacy of this sacrament, as a means of grace, is not in the signs, nor in the service, nor in the minister, nor in the word, but solely in the attending influence of the Holy Ghost.

This we believe to be a fair statement of the doctrine of the Reformed church.

Dr. Nevin's Theory.*

Having already exceeded the readable limits of a review, we cannot pretend to do more in our notice of Dr. Nevin's book, than as briefly as possible state his doctrine and assign our reasons for considering it a radical rejection of the doctrine and theology of the Reformed church. It is no easy thing to give a just and clear exhibition of a theory confessedly mystical, and which involves some of the most abstruse points both of anthropology and theology. We have nothing to do however with any thing beyond this book. We do not assume to know how all these things lie in Dr. Nevin's mind; how he reduces them to unity, or reconciles them with other doctrines of the Bible. Our concern is only with that part of the system which has here cropped out. How the strata lie underneath, we cannot tell. Dr. Nevin, in the full consciousness of the true nature of his own system, says the difficulties under which Calvin's theory of the Lord's supper, labours, are "all connected with psychology, applied either to the person of Christ or the persons of his people." p. 156. The difference then lies in the region of psychology. That science has assumed a new form. It has made great progress since the Reformation. "Its determinations," he says, "have a right to be respected in any inquiry which has this subject for its object. No such inquiry can deserve to be called scientific, if it fails to take them into view," p. 162. There may be truth in that remark. It is, however, none the less significant as indicating the nature of the system here taught. It is a peculiar psychology applied to the illustration and determination of Christian doctrine. It is founded on certain views of "organic law," of personality, and of generic and individual life. If these scientific determinations are incorrect, the doctrine of this book, is gone. It has no existence apart from those determinations, or at least independent of them. Our first object is to state, as clearly as we can, what the theory is.

* In calling the theory in question by Dr. Nevin's name, we do not mean to charge him with having originated it. This he does not claim, and we do not assert. It is, as we understand it, the theory of Schleiermacher, so far as Dr. Nevin goes.

There is an organic law of life which gives unity wherever it exists, and to all the individuals through which it manifests itself. The identity of the human body resides not in the matter of which it is composed, but in its organic law. The same is true of any animal or plant. The same law may comprehend or reveal itself in many individuals, and continually propagate and extend itself. Hence there is a generic as well as an individual life. An acorn developed into an oak, in one view is a single existence; but it includes a life which may produce a thousand oaks. The life of the forest is still the life of the original acorn, as truly one, inwardly and organically, as in any single oak. Thus in the case of Adam; as to his individual life, he was *a* man, as to his generic life, he was the whole race. The life of all men is at last one and the same. Adam lives in his posterity as truly as he ever lived in his own person. They participate in his whole nature, soul and body, and are truly bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Not a particle of his body indeed has come down to us, the identity resolves itself into an invisible law. But this is an identity far more real than mere sameness of particles. So also in the case of Christ. He was not only *a* man, but *the* man. He had not only an individual but a generic life. The Word in becoming flesh, did not receive into personal union with himself the nature of an individual man, but he took upon himself our common nature. The divinity was joined in personal union with humanity. But wherever there is personality there is unity. A person has but one life. Adam had not one life of the soul and another of the body. There is no such dualism in our nature. Soul and body are but one life, the self-same organic law. The soul to be complete to develop itself as a soul, must externalize itself, and this externalization is the body.* It is all one process, the action of one and the same living organic principle. The same is true as regards Christ. If he is one person, he has one life. He has not one life of the body, another of the soul, and another of his divinity. It is one undivided life. We cannot partake of the one without partaking of the others. We cannot be united to him as to his body, without being united also with his soul and divinity. His life is one and

* To be sure the separate existence of the soul after death, and absent from the body, is an ugly fact. But we know so little of the intermediate state, it would be a pity to give up a theory, for so obscure a fact.

undivided, and is also a true human life. This is communicated to his people. The humanity of Adam is raised to a higher character by its union with the divine nature, but remains, in all respects, a true human life.

The application of these psychological principles to the whole scheme of Christian doctrine is obvious and controlling. In the first place, the fall of Adam was the fall of the race. Not simply because he represented the race, but because the race was comprehended in his person. Sin in him was sin in humanity and became an insurmountable law in the progress of its development. It was an organic ruin; the ruin of our nature; not simply because all men are sinners, but as making all men sinners. Men do not make their nature, their nature makes them. The human race is not a sand heap; it is the power of a single life. Adam's sin is therefore our sin. It is imputed to us, indeed, but only because it is ours. We are born with his nature, and for this reason only are born also into his guilt. "A fallen *life* in the first place, and on the ground of this only, imputed guilt and condemnation." p. 164, 191, &c., &c.

In the second place, in order to our salvation it was requisite that the work of restoration should not so much be wrought for us and as in us. Our nature, humanity, must be healed, the power of sin incorporated in that nature must be destroyed. For this purpose the Logos, the divine Word, took our humanity into personal union with himself. It was our *fallen* humanity he assumed. Hence the necessity of suffering. He triumphed over the evil. His passion was the passion of humanity. This was the atonement. The principle of health came to its last struggle with the principle of disease, and gained the victory. Our nature was thus restored and elevated, and it is by our receiving this renovated nature, that we are saved. Christ's merits are inseparable from his nature, they cannot be imputed to us, except so far as they are immanent in us. As in the case of Adam, we have his nature, and therefore his sin; so we have the nature of Christ and therefore his righteousness. The nature we receive from Christ is a theanthropic nature. For, as before remarked, being one person, his life is one. "His divine nature is at the same time *human*, in the fullest sense." p. 174. All that is included in him as a person, divinity, soul and body, are embraced in his life. It is not the life the Logos separately

taken, but the life of the Word made flesh, the divinity joined in personal union with our humanity; which is thus exalted to an imperishable divine life. It is a divine human life. In the person of Christ, thus constituted, the true ideal of humanity is brought to view. Christ is the archetypal, ideal man. The incarnation is the proper completion of humanity. "Our nature reaches after a true and real union with the nature of God, as the necessary complement and consummation of its own life. The *idea* which it embodies can never be fully actualized under any other form." p. 201.

In the third place, Divine human nature as it exists in the person of Christ, passes over into the church. He is the source and organic principle of a new life introduced into the centre of humanity itself. A new starting point is found in Christ. Our nature as it existed in Adam unfolded itself organically, in his posterity; in like manner, as it exists in Christ, united with the divine nature, it passes over to his people, constituting the church. This process is not mechanical but organic. It takes place in the way of history, growth, regular living development.* By uniting our nature with the divine, he became the root of a new life for the race. "The word became flesh; not a single man only, as one among many; but flesh, or humanity in its universal conception. How else could he be the principle of a general life, the origin of a new order of existence for the human world as such?" p. 210. "The supernatural as thus made permanent and historical in the church, must, in the nature of the case, correspond with the form of the supernatural, as it appeared in Christ himself. For it is all one and the same life or constitution. The church must have a true theanthropic character throughout. The union of the divine and human in her constitution, must be inward and real, a continuous revelation of God in the flesh, exalting this last continuously into the sphere of the Spirit." p. 247. The incarnation is, therefore,

* Schleiermacher says, in his second Sendschreiben to Lücke "Wo Uebernatürliches bei mir vorkommt, da ist es immer ein Erstes; es wird aber hernach ein Natürliches als Zweites. So ist die Schöpfung übernatürlich; aber sie wird hernach Naturzusammenhang; so ist Christus übernatürlich seinem Anfang nach, aber er wird natürlich als rein menschliche Person, und ebenso ist es mit dem heiligen Geiste und der christlichen Kirche. Somewhat to the same effect, Dr. Nevin somewhere says, The supernatural has become natural.

still present and progressive, in the way of actual, human development, in the church.

There are two remarks, however, to be here made. First, according to this system, the mystical union implies a participation of the entire humanity of Christ, for if we are joined in *real* life-unity with the Logos, we should be exalted to the level of the Son of God. Still it is not with his soul alone, or his body alone, but with his whole person, for the life of Christ is one. Second, This union of Christ and his people, implies no ubiquity of his body, and no fusion of his proper personality with theirs. We must distinguish between the simple man and the universal man here joined in the same person, much as in the case of Adam. He was at once an individual and the whole race. So we distinguish between Christ's universal humanity in the church, and his humanity as a particular man, whom the heavens must receive unto the restitution of all things. p. 173.

The incarnation being thus progressive, the church is in very deed, the depository and continuation of the Saviour's theanthropic life itself, in which powers and resources are continually at hand, involving a real intercommunion and interpenetration of the human and divine. p. 248. It follows also from this view of the case that the sacraments of the church, have a real objective force. "The force of the sacrament is in the sacrament itself. Our faith is needed only to make room for it in our souls;" p. 183. "The things signified are bound to the signs by the force of a divine appointment; so that the grace goes inseparably along with the signs, and is truly present for all who are prepared to make it their own." p. 62.

In the fourth place, as to the mode of union with Christ, it is by regeneration. But this regeneration is by the church. If the church is the depository of the theanthropic life of Christ, if the progress of the church takes place in the way of history, growth, living development, it would seem as unreasonable that a man should be united to Christ and made partaker of his nature, otherwise than by union with this external, historical church, as that he should possess the nature of Adam by immediate creation, instead of regular descent. It is by the ministrations of this living church, in which the incarnation of God is progressive, and by her grace-bearing sacraments, that the church life, which is the same as that of Christ, is continually carried over to new in-

dividuals. The life of the single Christian can be real only as born and sustained to the end by the life of the church, which is the living and life-giving body of Christ. The effect of the sacraments, therefore, is thus to convey and sustain the life of Christ, his whole divine-human life. We partake not of his divinity only, but also of his true and proper humanity; not of his humanity in a separate form, nor of his flesh and blood alone, but of his whole life, as a single undivided form of existence. In the Lord's supper consequently Christ is present in a peculiar and mysterious way; present as to his body, soul and divinity, not locally as included under the elements, but really; the sign and thing signified, the inward and outward, the visible and invisible, constitute one inseparable presence. Unbelievers indeed receive only the outward, because they lack the organ of reception for the inward grace. Still the latter is there, and the believer receives both, the outward sign and the one undivided theanthropic life of Christ, his body, soul and divinity. The Eucharist has therefore "a peculiar and altogether extraordinary power." It is, as Maurice is quoted as asserting, the bond of an universal life and the means whereby men become partakers of it. Such, as we understand it, is the theory unfolded in this book. It is in all its essential features Schleiermacher's theory. We almost venture to hope that Dr. Nevin will consider it a fair exhibition, not so satisfactory of course, as he himself could make, but as good as could well be expected from the uninitiated. It is at least honestly done, and to the best of our ability.

It is not the truth of this system that we propose to examine, but simply its relation to the theology of the Reformed church. Dr. Nevin is loud, frequent, often, apparently at least, contemptuous, in his reproaches of his brethren for their apostacy from the doctrines of the Reformation. We propose very briefly to assign our reasons for regarding his system, as unfolded in this book, as an entire rejection not only of the peculiar doctrines of the Reformed church, on the points concerned, but of some of the leading principles of Protestant, and even Catholic, theology in general.

First, in reference to the person of Christ. Dr. Nevin denies any dualism in the constitution of man. Soul and body, in their ground, are but one life. So in the case of Christ, in virtue of the hypostatical union, his life is one. The divine and human are so united in him as to constitute one indivisible life. "It is

in all respects a true human life." p. 167. "His divine nature is at the same time *human*, in the fullest sense." p. 174.

That this is a departure not only from the doctrine of the Reformed church, but of the church universal, seems to us very plain. In one view it is the Eutychian doctrine, and in another something worse. Eutyches and afterwards the Monothelites taught, that after the hypostatical union, there was in Christ but one nature and operation. Substitute the word life, for its equivalent, nature, and we have the precise statement of Dr. Nevin's. He warns us against the error of Nestorius, just as the Eutychians called all who held to the existence of two natures in Christ, Nestorians. Eutyches admitted that this one nature or life in our Lord, was theanthropic. He was constituted of two natures, but after their union, had but one. 'Ομολογῶ, he says, ἐκ ὧν φύσεων γεγεννησθαι τὸν κυρίον ἡμῶν, πρὸ τῆς ἐνωσεως· μετὰ δὲ τὴν ἐνωσιν, μίαν φύσιν ὁμολογῶ. And, therefore, there was in Christ, as the Monothelites say, but *μία θεανθρῶπις ἐνέργεια*. What is the difference between one theanthropic life, and one theanthropic operation? We are confirmed in the correctness of this view of the matter, from the fact, that Schleiermacher, the father of this system, strenuously objects to the use of the word *nature* in this whole connection, especially in its application to the divinity, and opposes also the adoption of the terms which the council of Chalcedon employed in the condemnation of Eutychianism.* This, however, is a small matter. Dr. Nevin has a right to speak for himself. It is his own language, which, as it seems to us, distinctly conveys the Eutychian doctrine, that after the hypostatical union there was but one φύσις, or as he expresses it, one life, in Christ. He attributes to Calvin a wrong psychology in reference to Christ's person. What is that but to attribute to him wrong views of that person? And what is that but saying his own views differ from those of Calvin on the person of Christ? No one, however, has ever pretended that Calvin had any peculiar views on that subject. He says himself that he held all the decisions, as to such points, of the first six oecumenical councils. In differing from Calvin, on this point, therefore, Dr. Nevin differs from the whole church.

But in the other view of this matter. What was this one

* Schleiermacher's Glaubenslehre, §97.

life (or nature) of Christ? Dr. Nevin says: "It was in all respects a true human life." p. 167. "Christ is the archetypal man, in whom the true idea of humanity is brought to view." He "is the true ideal man." Our nature is complete only in him. p. 201. But is a perfect, or ideal man, any thing more than a mere man after all? If all that was in Christ pertains to the perfection of our nature, he was at best, but a perfect man. The only way to escape Socinianism, on this theory, is by deifying man, identifying the divine and human, and making all the glory, wisdom and power, which belong to Christ the proper attributes of humanity. Christ is a perfect man? But what is a perfect man? We may give a pantheistic, or a Socinian answer to that question, and not really help the matter—for the real and infinite hiatus between us and Christ, is in either case closed. Thus it is that mysticism falls back on rationalism. They are but different phases of the same spirit. In Germany, it has long been a matter of dispute, to which class Schleiermacher belongs. He was accustomed to smile at the controversy as a mere logomachy. Steudel objects to Schleiermacher's christology, that according to him "Christ is a finished man." Albert Knapp says: "He deifies the human and renders human the divine." We, therefore, do not stand alone in thinking that to represent Christ's life as in all respects human, to say he was the ideal man, that human nature found its completion in him, admits naturally only of a pantheistic or a Socinian interpretation. We of course do not attribute to Dr. Nevin either of these forms of doctrine. We do not believe that he adopts either. But we object both to his language and doctrine that one or the other of those heresies, is their legitimate consequence.

In the second place, we think the system under consideration, is justly chargeable with a departure from the doctrine of the Reformed church and the church universal as to the nature of our union with Christ. According to the Reformed church that union is not merely moral, nor is it merely legal or federal, nor does it arise simply from Christ having assumed our nature, it is at the same time real and vital. But the bond of that union, however intimate or extensive, is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, in Christ and in his

* F. W. Gess: Uebersicht über Schleier. System. p. 225.

people. We receive Christ himself, when we receive the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ; we receive the life of Christ when we receive his Spirit, who is the Spirit of life. Such we believe to be the true doctrine of the Reformed church on this subject. But if to this be added, as some of the Reformed taught, there was a mysterious power emanating from the glorified body of Christ, in heaven, it falls very far short, or rather is something entirely different from the doctrine of this book. Dr. Nevin's theory of the mystical union is of course determined by his view of the constitution of Christ's person. If divinity and humanity are united in him as one life; if that life is in all respects human, then it is this divine human life, humanity raised to the power of deity, that is communicated to his people. It is communicated too, in the form of a new organic principle, working in the way of history and growth. "The supernatural has become natural." p. 246. A new divine element has been introduced into our nature by the incarnation. "Humanity itself has been quickened into full correspondence with the vivific principle it has been made to enshrine." Believers, therefore, receive, or take part in the entire humanity of Christ. From Adam they receive humanity as he had it, after the fall; from Christ, they receive the theanthropic life, humanity with deity enshrined in it, or rather made one with it, one undivided life.

That this is not the old view of the mystical union between Christ and his people, can hardly be a matter of dispute. Dr. Nevin says Calvin was wrong not only in the psychology of Christ, but of his people. Ullmann, in the essay prefixed to this volume, tells us Schleiermacher introduced an epoch by teaching this doctrine. This is declared to be the doctrine of the Church of the Future. It is denied to be that of the Church of the Past. There is one consideration, if there were no other, which determines this question beyond appeal. It follows of necessity from Dr. Nevin's doctrine that the relation of believers to God and Christ, is essentially different, since the incarnation, from that of believers before that event. The union between the divine and human began with Christ, and from him this theanthropic life passes over to the church. There neither was nor could be any such thing before. This he admits. He therefore teaches that the saints of old were, as to the mystical union, in a very different condition, from that of the saints now. Hear what he

says on that subject. In arguing against the doctrine that the indwelling of Christ, is by the Spirit, he says: "Let the church know that she is no nearer God now in fact in the way of actual life, than she was under the Old Testament; that the indwelling of Christ in believers, is only parallel with the divine presence enjoyed by the Jewish saints, who all died in the faith 'not having received the promises'; that the mystical union in the case of Paul and John was nothing more intimate and vital and real than the relation sustained to God by Abraham, or Daniel, or Isaiah." p. 195. "In the religion of the Old Testament, God descends towards man, and holds out to his view in this way the promise of a real union of the divine nature with the human, as the end of the gracious economy thus introduced. To such a real union it is true, the dispensation itself never came. . . . The wall of partition that separated the divine from the human, was never fully broken down." p. 203. It was, he says, "a revelation of God to man, and not a revelation of God in man." Again, "That which forms the full *reality* of religion, the union of the divine nature with the human, the revelation of God in man, and not simply to him, was wanting in the Old Testament altogether." Let us now hear what Calvin, who is quoted by Dr. Nevin as the great representative of the Reformed church, says on this subject. He devotes the whole of chapters 10 and 11 of the Second Book of his Institutes, to the refutation of the doctrine that the Old Testament economy in its promises, blessings and effects, differed essentially from that of the New. The difference he declares to be merely circumstantial, relating to the mode, the clearness, and extent of its instructions, and the number embraced under its influence. He tells us he was led to the discussion of this subject by what that "prodigious nebulo Servetus, et furiosi nonnulli ex Anabaptistarum secta," (rather bad company), taught on this point; who thought of the Jews no better, quam de aliquo porcorum grege. In opposition to them, and all like them, Calvin undertakes to prove, that the old covenant "differed in substance and reality nothing from ours, but was entirely one and the same; the administration alone being different." 10: 2. "What more absurd," he asks §10, "than that Abraham should be the father of all the faithful, and yet not have a corner among them? But he can be cast down neither from the number, nor from his high rank among believers, with-

out destroying the whole church." He reminds Christians that Christ has promised them no higher heaven than to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Dr. Nevin ought surely to stop quoting Calvin as in any way abetting the monstrous doctrine, that under the old dispensation, God was only revealed to his people, while under the new, the divine nature is united in them with the human nature, as in Christ, ("the same life or constitution,") in the way of a progressive incarnation.

What however still more clearly shows the radical difference between Dr. Nevin's theory and that of the Reformed church, as to this point, is what he says in reference to the sacraments of the two dispensations. Romanists teach that the sacraments of the Old Testament merely prefigure grace, those of the New actually confer it. This doctrine Calvin, as we have already seen, strenuously denies, and calls its advocates miserable sophists. He asserts that "whatever is exhibited in our sacraments, the Jews formerly received in theirs, to wit, Christ and his benefits;" that baptism has no higher efficacy than circumcision. He quotes the authority of Augustin for saying, Sacramenta Judæorum in signis fuisse diversa; in re quæ significatur, paria; diversa specie visibili, paria virtute spirituali.* Dr. Nevin, however, is constrained by his view of the nature of the union between Christ and his people, since the incarnation, to make the greatest possible difference between the sacraments of the two dispensations. He even goes further than the Romanists, teaching that the passover, e. g. was properly no sacrament at all. "Not a sacrament at all indeed," is his language, "in the full New Testament sense, but a sacrament simply in prefiguration and type." p. 251. In the same connexion, he says: "The sacraments of the Old Testament are no proper measure, by which to graduate directly the force that belongs to the sacraments of the New. . . . To make baptism no more than circumcision, or the Lord's supper no more than the passover, is to wrong the new dispensation as really," as by making Christ nothing more than a levitical priest. Systems which lead to such opposite conclusions must be radically different. The lowest Puritan, ultra Protestant, or sectary in the land, who truly believes in Christ, is nearer Calvin than Dr. Nevin;

and has more of the true spirit and theology of the Reformed church, than is to be found in this book.

In the third place, Dr. Nevin's theory, differing so seriously from that of the Reformed church, as to the person of Christ and his union with his people, may be expected to differ from it as to the nature of Christ's work, and method of salvation. According to him, human nature, the generic life of humanity, being corrupted by the fall, was healed by being taken into a life-union with the Logos. This union so elevated it, raised it to such a higher character, and filled it with such new meaning and power, that it was more than restored to its original state. This however could not be done without a struggle. Being the bearer of a fallen humanity, there was a necessity for suffering in order that life should triumph over the law of sin and death. This was the atonement. See p. 166.

The first remark that suggests itself here, is the query, what is meant by a "fallen humanity"? Can it mean any thing else than a corrupted nature; i. e. our nature in the state to which it was reduced by the fall? How else could its assumption involve the necessity of suffering? It is however hard to see how the assumption of a corrupt nature, is consistent with the perfect sinlessness of the Redeemer. Dr. Nevin, as far as we see, does not touch this point. With Schleiermacher, according to whom, absolute freedom from sin was the distinguishing prerogative of the Saviour, this was secured, though clothed with our nature, by all the acts or determinations of that nature, being governed in his case, by "the God-consciousness" in him, or the divine principle. This is far from being satisfactory; but we pass that point. What however are we to say to this view of the atonement? It was vicarious suffering indeed, for the Logos assumed, and by the painful process of his life and death, healed our nature, not for himself but for our sakes. But there is here no atonement, that is, no satisfaction; no propitiation of God; no reference to divine justice. All this is necessarily excluded. All these ideas are passed over in silence by Dr. Nevin; by Schleiermacher they are openly rejected. The atonement is the painfully accomplished triumph of the new divine principle introduced into our nature, over the law of sin introduced into it by Adam. Is this the doctrine of the Reformed church?

Again, the whole method of salvation is necessarily changed

by this system. We become partakers of the sin of Adam, by partaking of his nature; we become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, by partaking of his nature. There can be no imputation of either sin or righteousness to us, except they belong to us, are inherently our own. "Our participation in the actual unrighteousness of his (Adam's) life, forms the ground of our participation in his guilt and liability to punishment. And in no other way, we affirm, can the idea of imputation be satisfactorily sustained in the case of the second Adam." "Righteousness, like guilt, is an attribute which supposes a subject in which it inheres, and from which it cannot be abstracted without ceasing to exist altogether. In the case before us, that subject is the mediatorial nature or life of the Saviour himself. Whatever there may be of merit, virtue, efficacy, or moral value in any way, in the mediatorial work of Christ, it is all lodged in the *life*, by the power of which alone this work has been accomplished, and in the presence of which only it can have either reality or stability." p. 191. This is very plain, we receive the theanthropic nature or life of Christ; that nature is of a high character, righteous, holy, conformed to God; in receiving that life we receive its merit, its virtues and efficacy. On p. 189, he is still more explicit: "How can that be imputed or reckoned to any man on the part of God, which does not belong to him in reality?" "This objection," he says, "is insurmountable, according to the form in which the doctrine of imputation is too generally held." "The judgment of God must ever be according to truth. He cannot reckon to any one an attribute or quality, which does not belong to him in fact. He cannot declare him to be in a relation or state, which is not actually his own, but the position merely of another. A simple external imputation here, the pleasure or purpose of God to place to the account of one what has been done by another, will not answer." "The Bible knows nothing of a simple outward imputation, by which something is reckoned to a man that does not belong to him in fact." p. 190. "The ground of our justification is a righteousness that *was* foreign to us before, but is *now* made to lodge itself in the inmost constitution of our being." p. 180. God's act in justification "is necessarily more than a mere declaration or form of thought. It makes us to be in fact, what it declares us to be, in Christ." *Id.* Here we reach the very life-

spot of the Reformation. Is justification a declaring just, or a making just, inherently? This was the real battle-ground on which the blood of so many martyrs was spilt. Are we justified for something done for us, or something wrought in us, actually our own? It is a mere playing with words, to make a distinction, as Mr. Newman did, between what it is that thus makes us inherently righteous. Whether it is infused grace, a new heart, the indwelling Spirit, the humanity of Christ, his life, his theanthropic nature; it is all one. It is subjective justification after all, and nothing more. We consider Dr. Nevin's theory as impugning here, the vital doctrine of Protestantism. His doctrine is not, of course, the Romish, *terres atque rotundus*; he may distinguish here, and discriminate there. But as to the main point, it is a denial of the Protestant doctrine of justification. He knows as well as any man that all the churches of the 15th century, held the imputation not only of what was our own, but of what though not ours inherently, was on some adequate ground set to our account; that the sin of Adam is imputed to us, not because of our having his corrupted nature, but because of the imputation of his sin, we are involved in his corruption. He knows that when the doctrine of mediate imputation, as he teaches it, was introduced by Placaeus, it was universally rejected. He knows moreover, that, with regard to justification, the main question was, whether it was a declaratory or an effective act, whether it was a declaring just on the ground of a righteousness not in us, or a making just by communicating righteousness to us. Romanists were as ready as Protestants to admit that the act by which men are rendered just actually, was a gracious act, and for Christ's sake, but they denied that justification is a forensic or declaratory act founded on the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, which is neither in us, nor by that imputation communicated as a quality to our souls. It was what Romanists thus denied, Protestants asserted, and made a matter of so much importance. And it is in fact the real keystone of the arch which sustains our peace and hope towards God for if we are no further righteous than we are actually and inherent so, what have we to expect in the presence of a righteous God, but indignation and wrath?

In the fourth place, the obvious departure of Dr. Nevin's system from that of the Reformed church, is seen in what he teach-

es concerning the church and the sacraments. The evidence here is not easy to present. As he very correctly remarks with regard to certain doctrines of the Bible, they rest far less on distinct passages which admit of quotation, than on the spirit, tenor, implications and assumptions which pervade the sacred volume. It is so with this book. Its whole spirit is churchy. It makes religion to be a church life, its manifestations a liturgical service, its support sacramental grace. It is the form, the spirit, the predominance of these things, which give his book a character as different as can be from the healthful, evangelical free spirit of Luther or Calvin. (The main question whether we come to Christ, and then to the church; whether we by a personal act of faith receive him, and by union with him become a member of his mystical body; or whether all our access to Christ is through a mediating church, Dr. Nevin decides against the evangelical system.)

It follows of necessity, as he himself says, from his doctrine of a progressive incarnation, "that the church is the depository and continuation of the Saviour's theanthropic life itself, and as such, a truly supernatural constitution, in which powers and resources are constantly at hand, involving a real intercommunion and interpenetration of the human and divine." p. 248. The church with him, being "historical must be visible." "An outward church is the necessary form of the new creation in Christ Jesus, in its very nature." p. 5. With Protestants the true church is "the communion of saints," the "*congregatio sanctorum*," "the company of faithful men;" not the company or organization of professing men. It would be difficult to frame a proposition more subversive of the very foundations of all protestantism, than the assertion that the description above given, or any thing like it belongs to the church visible as such. It is the fundamental error of Romanism, the source of her power and of her corruption, to ascribe to the outward church, the attributes and prerogatives of the mystical body of Christ.

We must however pass to Dr. Nevin's doctrine of the sacraments, and specify at least some of the points in which he departs from the doctrine of the Reformed church. And in the first place, he ascribes to them a specific and "altogether extraordinary power." p. 118. There is a presence and of course a receiving of the body and blood of Christ, in the Lord's supper,

"to be had nowhere else." p. 75. This idea is presented in various forms. It is, however, in direct contravention of the confessions of the Reformed churches, as we have already seen. They make a circumstantial distinction between spiritual and sacramental manducation, but as to any specific difference, any difference as to what is there received from what is received elsewhere, they expressly deny it. In the Helv. Conf. already quoted, it is said, that the eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood takes place, even elsewhere than in the Lord's supper, whenever and wherever a man believes in Christ. Calvin, in the Consensus Tigurinus, Art. xix. says: What is figured in the sacraments is granted to believers *extra eorum usum*. This he applies and proves, first in reference to baptism, and then in reference to the Lord's supper. In the explanation of that Consensus he vindicates this doctrine against the objections of the Lutherans. "*Quod deinde prosequimur*," he begins, "*fidelibus spiritualium bonorum effectum quae figurant sacramenta, extra eorum usum constare, quando et quotidie verum esse experimur et probatur scripturae testimoniis, mirum est si cui displiceat*." The same thing is expressly taught in his Institutes iv. 14. 14.

The second point on which Dr. Nevin differs from the Reformed church relates to their efficacy. All agree that they have an objective force; that they no more owe their power to the faith of the recipient than the word of God does. But the question is what is the source to which the influence of the sacraments as means of grace, is to be referred? We have already stated that Romanists, say it is to be referred to the sacraments themselves as containing the grace they convey; Lutherans, to the supernatural power of the word, inseparably joined with the signs; the Reformed, to the attending power of the Spirit which is in no manner inseparable from the signs or the service. Dr. Nevin's doctrine seems to lie somewhere between the Romish and the Lutheran view. He agrees with the Romanists in referring the efficacy to the service itself, and with the Lutherans in making faith necessary in order to the sacrament taking effect. Some of his expressions on the subject are the following: Faith "is the condition of its (the sacrament's) efficacy for the communicant, but not the principle of the power itself. This belongs to the institution in its own nature. The signs are bound to

what they represent, not subjectively simply in the thought of the worshipper, but objectively, by the force of a divine appointment. . . . The grace goes inseparably along with the sign, and is truly present for all who are prepared to make it their own." p. 61. "The invisible grace enters as a necessary constituent element into the idea of the sacrament; and must be of course objectively present with it wherever it is administered under a true form. . . . It belongs to the ordinance in its own nature. . . . The sign and thing signified are by Christ's institution, mysteriously tied together. . . . The two form one presence." p. 178. In the case of the Lord's supper, the grace, or thing signified, is, according to this book, the divine-human nature of Christ, "his whole person," his body, soul and divinity, constituting one life. This, or these are objectively present and inseparably joined with the signs, constituting with them one presence. The power inseparable from the theanthropic life of Christ, is inseparable from these signs, and is conveyed with them. "Where the way is open for it to take effect it (the sacrament) *serves in itself* to convey the life of Christ into our persons." p. 182. We know nothing in Bellarmine that goes beyond that. Dr. Nevin refers for illustration, as Lutherans do, to the case of the woman who touched Christ's garment. As there was mysterious supernatural power ever present in Christ, so there is in the sacraments. "The virtue of Christ's mystical presence," he says "is comprehended in the sacrament itself." According to the Reformed church, Christ is present in the sacraments in no other sense than he is present in the word. Both serve to hold him up for our acceptance. Neither has any virtue in itself. Both are used by the Spirit, as means of communicating Christ and his benefits to believers. "Spiritualiter," says Calvin, "*per sacramenta fidem alit (Deus), quorum unicuique officium est, ejus promissiones oculis nostris spectandas subicere, imo nobis earum esse pignora*." Inst. iv. 14. 12.

We here leave Dr. Nevin's book; we have only one or two remarks to add not concerning him, nor his own personal belief, but concerning his system. He must excuse our saying that, in our view, it is only a specious form of Rationalism. It is in its essential element a psychology. Ullman admits that it is nearly allied to pantheistic mysticism, and to the modern speculative philosophy. In all three the main idea is, "the union of God and

man through the incarnation of the first and deification of the second.* It has however quite as strong an affinity for a much lower form of Rationalism. We are said to have the life of Adam. He lives in us as truly as he ever lived in his own person; we partake of his substance, are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones. No particle of his soul or body, indeed, has come down to us. It all resolves itself into an invisible law. This and little more than this, is said of our union with Christ. What then have we to do with Christ, more than we have to do with Adam? or than the present forests of oak have to do with the first acorn? A law is, after all, nothing but a force, a power, and the only Christ we have or need, is an inward principle. And with regard to spirits, such a law is something very ideal indeed. Christ by his excellence makes a certain impression on his disciples, which produced a new life in them. They associate to preserve and transmit that influence. A principle, belonging to the original constitution of our nature, was, by his influence, brought into governing activity, and is perpetuated in and by the church. As it owes its power to Christ, it is always referred back to him, so that it is a Christian consciousness, a consciousness of this union with Christ. We know that Schleiermacher endeavoured to save the importance of an historical personal Christ; but we know also that he failed to prevent his system taking the low rationalist form just indicated. With some it takes the purely pantheistic form; with others a lower form, while others strive hard to give it a Christian form. But its tendency to lapse into one or the other of the two heresies just mentioned, is undeniable.

We feel constrained to make another remark. It is obvious that this system has a strong affinity for Sabellianism. According to the Bible and the creed of the church universal, the Holy Spirit, has a real objective personal existence. There are three distinct persons in the Godhead, the same in substance and equal in power and glory. Being one God, where the Spirit is or dwells, there the Father and the Son, are and dwell. And hence, throughout the New Testament, the current mode of representation is, that the church is the temple of God and body of Christ, because of the presence and indwelling of the Holy Ghost, who

* Preliminary Essay, p. 45.

is the source of knowledge, holiness and life. What the scriptures refer to the Holy Spirit, this system refers to the theanthropic nature of Christ, to a nature or life "in all respects human." This supercedes the Holy Spirit. Every reader, therefore, must be struck with the difficulty Dr. Nevin finds from this source. He does not seem to know what to do with the Spirit. His language is constrained, awkward and often unintelligible. He seems indeed sometimes to identify the Spirit with the theanthropic nature of Christ. "The Spirit of Christ," he says, "is not his representative or surrogate simply, as some would seem to think; but *Christ himself under a certain mode of subsistence*; Christ triumphant over all the limitations of his moral (mortal?) state (*ζωοποιήσεις πνεύματι*), received up into glory, and thus invested fully and forever with his own proper order of being in the sphere of the Holy Ghost," p. 225. The Spirit of Christ, is then Christ as exalted. On the following page, he says: "The glorification of Christ then, was the full advancement of our human nature itself to the power of a divine life; and the Spirit for whose presence it [the glorification of Christ] made room in the world, was not the Spirit as extraanthropological simply, under such forms of sporadic and transient afflatus as had been known previously; but the Spirit as immanent now, through Jesus Christ, in the human nature itself—the form and power, in one word, of the new supernatural creation he had introduced into the world." Again, "Christ is not sundered from the church by the intervention of the Spirit. . . . No conception can be more unbiblical, than that by which the idea of Spirit (*πνεῦμα*) in this case, is restrained to the form of mere mind, whether as divine or human, in distinction from body. The *whole* glorified Christ subsists and acts *in the Spirit*. Under this form his nature communicates itself to his people." p. 229. But according to this book, the form in which his nature is communicated to his people, is that of "a true human life;" it is a human nature advanced to a divine power, which they receive. The Spirit is, therefore, not the third person of the Trinity, but the theanthropic nature of Christ as it dwells in the church. This seems to us the natural and unavoidable interpretation of these passages and of the general tenor of the book. We do not suppose that Dr. Nevin has consciously discarded the doctrine of the trinity; but we fear that he has adopted a theory which de-

stroys that doctrine. The influence of his early convictions and experience, and of his present circumstances, may constrain him to hold fast that article of the faith, in some form to satisfy his conscience. But his system must banish it, just so far as it prevails. Schleiermacher, formed under different circumstances, and less inwardly trammelled, openly rejected the doctrine. He wrote a system of theology, without saying a word about the Trinity. It has no place in his system; he brings it in only at the conclusion of his work, and explains it as God manifested in nature, God as manifested in Christ, and God as manifested in the church. With him the Holy Spirit, is the Spirit which animates the church. It had no existence before the church and has no existence beyond it. His usual expression for it, "the common spirit" (*Gemeingeist*) of the church, which may mean either something very mystical, or nothing more than we mean by the spirit of the age, or spirit of a party, just as the reader pleases. It is in point of fact understood both ways. Burke once said, he never knew what the London beggars did with their cast-off clothes, until he went to Ireland. We hope we Americans are not to be arrayed in the cast-off clothes of the German mystics, and then marshalled in bands as the "Church of the Future."

We said at the commencement of this article, that we had never read Dr. Nevin's book on the Mystical Presence, until now. We have from time to time read other of his publications, and looked here and there into the work before us; and have thus been led to fear that he was allowing the German modes of thinking to get the mastery over him, but we had no idea that he had so far given himself up to their influence. If he has any faith in friendship and long continued regard, he must believe that we could not find ourselves separated from him by such serious differences, without deep regret, and will therefore give us credit for sincerity of conviction and purpose.

ART. V.—1. *Das Leben Johann Calvin's. Ein Zeugniß für die Wahrheit*, von Paul Henry, Dr. der Theologie, Prediger und Seminar-Inspector zu Berlin. Hamburg and Gotha. 1846. 8vo. pp. 498.

2. *Das Leben Johann Calvin's des grossen Reformators; u. s. w.* von Paul Henry, u. s. w. Dritter Band. Hamburg. 1844. pp. 872.

ELEVEN years ago we called attention to the life of Calvin, by Dr. Henry of Berlin, whose labours had not then attracted much notice in America.* In the two articles which were called forth by the first two volumes, we fully expressed our judgment of the biographer, and moreover presented a copious abstract of his narrative. When at length the third and closing volume made its appearance, there was less reason for reviewing it with so much detail as the others because the public had begun to be familiar with Dr. Henry's labours. An additional reason is now given in the appearance of an abridgment by the author, in a single volume, of which we have given the title above.

A likeness of Calvin serves as the frontispiece to this volume which we should like to see reproduced in America; for it is new, and varies in important respects from those cadaverous cuts of the great reformer, which in successive copies of copies have come to be about as authentic as John Rodgers in the New England Primer. In this one we behold a younger comelier visage, with the characteristic whisker and pointed beard, and cap, but with an upward gaze of pensive devotion. Dr. Henry regards this as the only accurate likeness. The original is one of two ancient paintings, preserved in a church on the Rhine; the other is the only extant portrait of Calvin's wife, Idelette de Bures. The well-known symbol is below; a heart in a hand; the legend, *Cor meum velut mactatum Domino in sacrificium offero*. The motto on the title is in the reformer's own words: "Shall a dog bark when his master is attacked, and shall I be silent when God's truth is impugned?"

Mr. Henry tells us in the Preface, that after having completed his large Memoir with documents, he was led to make this shorter one for the use of intelligent private Christians. A strong reason for this was also the zeal of ultramontane papists to stab the reformation in its principal defender, by such false and defamatory books as the lives of Luther and Calvin, by Au-

* Princeton Review, Jan. 1837. See also a subsequent notice of the second volume, July, 1839. p. 339.