The Journal
of
Theological Studies

JANUARY, 1902

EUCHARISTIC BELIEF IN THE SECOND AND THIRD CENTURIES[1].

THE purpose of this paper is to investigate the state of Christian opinion in reference to the Holy Eucharist during the interval between the end of the Apostolic age and the beginning of the last persecution.

The ground has often been worked, but usually as a part of the larger field of patristic teaching. There are reasons, as it appears to me, for handling the Ante-Nicene evidence separately, at least in the first instance. Each age offers its own interpretation of the common faith, and each may justly claim to be heard in turn, even if the law of continuity demands that judgement be reserved until the whole of the evidence is before us. To quote in the same sentence Justin and Cyril of Jerusalem, Irenaeus and Gregory of Nyssa, Tertullian and Hilary, Cyprian and Augustine, as if their combined testimony represented a constant tradition, is to ignore the great development of doctrine which accompanied the conversion of the Empire and within a century carried primitive conceptions many steps beyond the point reached before the Council of Nicaea. Even Ante-Nicene writers manifest a marked progress in opinion, and we shall have occasion to notice points of difference between the Eucharistic teaching of the second century and that of the third; but the belief of the second and third centuries is relatively homogeneous, so that it may properly form the subject of a single inquiry.

[1] The substance of the following pages was read at a meeting of the London Diocesan Society of Sacred Study, Oct. 8, 1901.

The evidence is fragmentary and incidental, yet upon the whole it is sufficient. No treatise upon the Eucharist, no synodical decree upon matters connected with it, no complete Eucharistic office or *anaphora*, has reached us from the first three centuries. On the other hand information comes in considerable abundance from many quarters, and in a variety of forms. It is contributed by the Churches of West Syria and Asia Minor, Gaul and Italy, Egypt and North Africa; it is conveyed through various channels—in episcopal letters, in apologies intended for the eye of the Pagan and the Jew, in treatises directed against heresy, in homilies and commentaries, in Church handbooks and orders, in sepulchral inscriptions and mural paintings. The manifoldness of the sources reveals the interest which the subject has already awakened, and seems to guarantee results fairly representative of the general belief of the Ante-Nicene Church.

1. It is evident that even at the outset of our period the Eucharist occupied an unique position in Christian worship. Indeed it may be said to have from the first absorbed all the elements of worship. Prayer, intercession, thanksgiving, the reading of the Scriptures, the homily, the collection of alms, are associated with it as with no other public office. At first there does not seem to have been any other public office. The Agape was either subsidiary to the Eucharist, or, if separated from it, was reduced to the character of a religious meal. Vigil services, where they existed, appear to have served as a preparation for the early Eucharist[1]. The *stationes* were simple fasts, during which some of the faithful abstained even from the Eucharist[2]; the daily hours were unknown, though the *Didache* prescribes the use of the Lord's Prayer three times a day in the private devotions of the faithful[3]. When the Church met for common worship, it came together to break the Eucharistic Bread.

[1] On the vigils see Batiffol, *Histoire du Bréviaire Romain*, p. 4 ff., and *Church Quarterly Review*, xli p. 398 f.; and cf. the Bishop of Salisbury's *Ministry of Grace*, p. 312 ff.

[2] Cf. Tert. *de orat.* 19.

[3] c. 8. It is significant that no other prayers are prescribed and no intervention of the bishops and deacons contemplated. The Hippolytean canons (Achelis, p. 122) contemplate a daily assembly at 'cockcrowing,' which is compulsory for the clergy.

The great Christian service was known as the Eucharist, the Oblations or Oblation, and the Sacrifice. Each name has a suggestive history. 'Eucharist' clearly had its origin in the thanksgivings or benedictions[1] pronounced over the Bread and Cup. These simple acts of worship, in which our Lord followed Jewish usage and possibly employed Jewish forms, were magnified by a fine Christian instinct into a great Eucharistic Prayer, which included thanksgiving for the fruits of the earth, and other gifts of creation[2], but above all for the Incarnation, the Redemption of the world, and the spiritual endowments of the Church. The benediction which in the Jewish rite had been incidental and secondary became central in the Christian service. The note of praise predominated in the primitive liturgy; it was the weekly expression of the new spirit of joy and thankfulness breathed into human life by the coming of the Son and the Spirit. Before the time of Ignatius the name which properly described the central prayer was transferred to the service as a whole[3], while within the next half-century Justin already applied it to the Food which had been eucharistically blessed[4].

For the use of the word 'Oblation' in connexion with the Eucharist there is yet earlier authority. When Clement of Rome speaks of the oblations and gifts which it belongs to the presbyter's office to present, he doubtless includes among them, as Lightfoot recognised[5], the Eucharistic prayer and elements[6].

[1] Εὐλογεῖν is used of the Bread in Mt. (ℵ B D), Mc., and εὐχαριστεῖν of the Cup in Mt., Mc., Lc. (xxii 17); on the other hand εὐχαριστεῖν is used of the Bread in 'Lc.' xxii 19, 1 Cor. xi 24, and εὐλογεῖν of the Cup in 1 Cor. x 16. In the narratives of the miracle of the Loaves εὐλογεῖν occurs in Mt. xiv, Mc. vi, Lc. ix, but εὐχαριστεῖν in Mt. xv, Mc. viii, Jo. vi *bis*; cf. also Lc. xxiv 30, Acts xxvii 35. How nearly synonymous the words are in this connexion appears from 1 Cor. xiv 16 ἐὰν εὐλογῇς πνεύματι . . . ἐπὶ τῇ σῇ εὐχαριστίᾳ. For instances of εὐλογία as applied to the Eucharist, a use of the word which appears to be specially frequent in Cyril of Alexandria, see *Dict. Chr. Ant.*, *s. v.*, and Brightman, pp. 508, 509.

[2] Cf. Iren. IV xviii 4, 6.

[3] *Philad.* 4, *Smyrn.* 6.

[4] *Apol.* i 66 ἡ τροφὴ αὕτη καλεῖται παρ' ἡμῖν εὐχαριστία. Cf. Orig. *c. Cels.* viii 57 ἄρτος εὐχαριστία καλούμενος. The process of transition may be seen in Ign. *Smyrn.* 6 εὐχαριστίας καὶ προσευχῆς ἀπέχονται διὰ τὸ μὴ ὁμολογεῖν τὴν εὐχαριστίαν σάρκα εἶναι κτλ: cf. *Clem. hom.* xi 36 εὐχαριστίαν κλάσας with xiv 1 τὸν ἄρτον ἐπ' εὐχαριστίᾳ κλάσας.

[5] *S. Clement of Rome*, ii p. 134 f.

[6] *Cor.* 40 τάς τε προσφορὰς καὶ λειτουργίας ἐπιμελῶς ἐπιτελεῖσθαι . . . ποιοῦντες τὰς προσφορὰς αὐτῶν: *ib.* 44 τοὺς ἀμέμπτως καὶ ὁσίως προσενεγκόντας τὰ δῶρα τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς. In c. 36, for τὸν ἀρχιερέα τῶν προσφορῶν ἡμῶν τὸν προστάτην the Latin has *pontificem*

The terms are suggested by the Levitical ritual, as the context shows; the prayers and thanksgivings of the Church, and the material offerings which symbolised the thankful rendering to God of His own gifts, were the *προσφοραί* of the new Israel [1].

'Sacrifice' as applied to the Eucharist may be traced with some confidence to the Eucharistic interpretation of Malachi i 11. 'This [sacrifice],' says the *Didache*, 'is that which was spoken of by the Lord, "In every place and time offer Me a pure sacrifice [2]".' Here *θυσία καθαρά* comes from the LXX, and *θυσία* represents the meal offering, as it does in nearly half the instances where it occurs in the canonical books of the Greek Old Testament [3]. This passage from Malachi is quite a *locus classicus* in early Eucharistic teaching; it is cited also by Justin, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Cyprian [4]. By whom it was first applied to the Eucharist we do not know, but a use so early and widely distributed suggests that it had found its way into a primitive collection of *testimonia*; certainly it was accepted as a prophecy of the Eucharist by something like a consensus of Christian opinion in the second and third centuries. But in taking over *θυσία* into the Eucharistic language of the Church the earlier writers seem to have distinctly limited it to the Bread and Cup considered as an offering of the fruits of the earth. The word

et aduocatum precum nostrarum = (?) *τὸν ἀρχ. τῶν προσευχῶν ἡμ. κ. προστ.* The phrase *ἀρχ. τῶν προσφορῶν ἡμῶν* occurs however in Orig. *de orat.* 10.

[1] *Προσφορά* is a rare word in the Greek O. T., occurring within the canon only in 3 Regn. vii 48, Ps. xxxix (xl) 6, Dan. iii 38. But (1) *προσφέρειν* is frequent in Biblical Greek, and *προσφορά*, perhaps through the influence of Ps. xxxix, is fairly common in the N. T.; (2) *προσφορά* is freely used in Ecclesiasticus, a popular book in the early Church and known to Clement (*Cor.* 59, 60). In other sub-apostolic writers *προσφορά* occurs but seldom (Barn. 2. 6, Polyc. *mart.* 14). But Irenaeus doubtless used it, and in reference to the Eucharist, (IV xviii 1 *ecclesiae oblatio, quam Dominus docuit offerri*): cf. Tert. *ad uxor.* ii 8, Clem. Al. *Strom.* i 19 § 96; on its later use see Bright, *Canons*, p. 45.

[2] c. 14 *ἵνα μὴ κοινωθῇ ἡ θυσία ὑμῶν· αὕτη γάρ ἐστιν ἡ ῥηθεῖσα ὑπὸ Κυρίου Ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ καὶ χρόνῳ προσφέρειν μοι θυσίαν καθαράν.* Cf. LXX l.c. *ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ θυμίαμα προσάγεται τῷ ὀνόματί μου καὶ θυσία καθαρά* (מִנְחָה טְהוֹרָה).

[3] In the books of the Hebrew canon *θυσία* translates זבח 140 times, and מִנְחָה 133 times, out of the 300 instances, more or less, in which it represents a Hebrew word. In connexion with Clement's *δῶρα τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς* it is well to bear in mind that מִנְחָה is repeatedly rendered by *δῶρα*: see e. g. Gen. iv 3 ff., where the interchange of *θυσία* and *δῶρα* is instructive.

[4] Justin *dial.* 28, 41, 116 f. Iren. IV xvii 5 f. Tert. *adv. Marc.* iii 22; *adv. Iud.* 5 f. Cypr. *testim.* i 16.

does not appear to have suggested to them a parallel between the Eucharist and the animal sacrifices of the Law[1]; it is perhaps significant that while *θυσία* is adopted from Malachi, no disposition is shown to use *θύειν* as an equivalent for *προσφέρειν* in a Christian sense[2].

The relation between the Eucharistic sacrifice and the Sacrifice of the Cross was not indeed overlooked, even in the second century. More than once Justin, in the *Apology* as well as in the *Dialogue*, refers to the Pauline formula *τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν*[3], using *ποιεῖν* in one context after a manner which shows that he regarded the word as bearing in this connexion a sacrificial sense[4]. Justin, however, seems to stand alone among writers of his generation in referring to the Eucharistic *ἀνάμνησις*; the next mention[5] of it occurs perhaps in Origen's homilies on Leviticus, where he is commenting on the Shewbread. Reading in Lev. xxiv 7 with some good MSS[6] of the LXX, *ἔσονται οἱ ἄρτοι εἰς ἀνάμνησιν προκείμενοι τῷ κυρίῳ*, he proceeds to say that Christ is the true *ἄρτος τῆς προθέσεως*[7], since He it is *ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον* (Rom. iii 25); the Shewbread prefigured Him in this character, the Eucharist is His permanent memorial. Here the *ἀνάμνησις* is clearly understood in its Levitical sense, as a memorial before God; yet with characteristic versatility in the

[1] The Apologists strongly disclaim a material sacrifice; see Aristides, *apol.* 1, Justin *apol.* i 13, Athenag. *leg.* 13. For the attitude of the Church towards the Jewish sacrificial system cf. Justin *dial.* 22 ff., Tert. *adv. Marc.* ii 18, 22.

[2] Hippolytus, ed. Lagarde, p. 199, would be an exception, if the passage were genuine. *Θύειν* is frequent in the LXX, but was probably avoided because of its constant use in reference to the pagan sacrifices; cf. e. g. Polyc. *mart.* 12 *ὁ πολλοὺς διδάσκων μὴ θύειν*, and the contrast in the first canon of Ancyra: *πρεσβυτέρους τοὺς ἐπιθύσαντας . . . προσφέρειν . . . μὴ ἐξεῖναι.* For a later Eucharistic use of *θύειν* cf. Brightman, p. 357. On *θυσιαστήριον* in Ignatius see Lightfoot ii p. 43 ff. Irenaeus, notwithstanding his language about the Christian oblation and sacrifice, places the Christian altar in heaven (IV xviii 6).

[3] *Apol.* i 66; *dial.* 41, 117.

[4] *Dial.* 41 *ἡ τῆς σεμιδάλεως δὲ προσφορὰ . . . ἡ ὑπὲρ τῶν καθαριζομένων ἀπὸ τῆς λέπρας προσφέρεσθαι παραδοθεῖσα* [Lev. xiv 10], *τύπος ἦν τοῦ ἄρτου τῆς εὐχαριστίας ὃν . . . Ἰ. Χ. ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν παρέδωκε ποιεῖν* (where *ποιεῖν* is clearly parallel to *προσφέρειν*).

[5] On Hippolytus see above (n. 2).

[6] *Hom. in Lev.* xiii 3 'erunt panes in commemorationem apositi Domino': cf. xiii 5 'erunt panes in comm. propositi ante Dominum.' The reading is found in codd. F M and about twenty cursives mentioned by Holmes and Parsons, and in Compl., Ald.; codd. B A have *ἔσονται εἰς ἄρτους εἰς ἀνάμνησιν προκείμενα τῷ κυρίῳ.*

[7] Cf. the Mozarabic *missa* 'in quarto dominico Pasche' (Migne *P. L.* lxxxv, col. 281) 'offeramus . . . panes propositionis.'

next chapter but one of the same homily, Origen interprets the word in the sense of a memorial which recalls the past to the recollection of men[1]. In like manner he is not careful to limit himself to one interpretation of the Levitical sin offering and the Aaronic priesthood. Christ is the only offering for sin, yet a certain propitiatory value belongs to the Eucharistic commemoration of His Death[2]. Christ is the true Priest, and the true Altar, as well as the Victim[3]; yet there are official 'priests of the Church' who encircle visible altars at which the Eucharist is offered[4].

These statements, which belong to Origen's popular teaching at Caesarea[5], seem to mark a distinct advance upon the teaching of Justin and Irenaeus. Yet all the writers hitherto mentioned speak of the Eucharist as a sacrifice only when they are interpreting Old Testament types or prophecies. There has been as yet no direct evidence to show that it was ordinarily known under that name. In the Latin Church of Carthage, however, this had certainly come to pass before the middle of the third century, if not some decades earlier. *Sacrificium* is Cyprian's ordinary designation for the Eucharistic service; to make the Eucharistic offering is *celebrare sacrificium*, and once *sacrificare*[6]. Other sacrificial terms are freely borrowed; the Bishops are *sacerdotes*, and their office is *sacerdotium*; the table or slab on

[1] *ib. c.* 5 'quid est enim quod nobis commemorationem Dei faciat? quid est quod nos ad memoriam iustitiae et totius boni reuocet, nisi uerbum Dei!'

[2] *Hom. in Lev.* v 3 'quae est hostia quae pro peccatis offertur, nisi unigenitus Filius Dei!' Cf. xiii 3 'ista est commemoratio sola quae propitium facit hominibus Deum.'

[3] *Hom. in Lev.* v 3 'saepe ostendimus ex diuinis scripturis Christum esse et hostiam ... et sacerdotem.' ix 10 'ad Christum uenisti pontificem uerum.' *Hom. in Ios.* viii 6 'ipse esse ostenditur et sacerdos et hostia et altare.'

[4] *Hom. in Lev.* v 3 'ministri et sacerdotes ecclesiae ... ipsi sacerdotes ecclesiae ... sacerdos ecclesiae.' *Hom. in Iud.* iii 2 'inuenies interdum etiam in nobis aliquos qui ... in altaris circulo uelut specula quaedam intuentibus collocati [sumus],' &c. Cf. *hom. in Ios.* ii 1 'cum uero uideris ... ecclesias exstrui, altaria ... pretioso Christi sanguine consecrari, cum uideris sacerdotes et leuitas ... uerbum Dei per Spiritus sancti gratiam ministrantes.'

[5] Cf. Eus. *H. E.* vi 36.

[6] See *Studia Biblica* iv p. 265 ff. Tertullian had so far anticipated Cyprian as to use *sacrificium*, *sacerdos*, and *ara* in a Christian sense (*ad Scap.* 2, *de orat.* 18 f., *de bapt.* 17, *de cult. fem.* 11). It would be interesting to inquire how far this terminology had its origin in the O. L. Bible; as regards Cyprian see Mr. E. W. Watson's remarks in *Studia Biblica*, iv p. 194 ff.

which the Eucharist was offered is *altare*; the whole service is *sacrificium dominicum*, and the consecrated Bread *hostia dominica*[1]. With this advance in terminology there is a corresponding advance in doctrine. Cyprian probably knew the traditional interpretation of Malachi i 11[2], but his view of the Eucharistic Sacrifice is not based on that famous passage. He finds it in the words of institution, which he quotes in their Pauline form. Christ had called the Bread and Cup His Body and Blood; He had made them commemorative of His Passion. Cyprian contends that the Christian Priest 'offers in the Church a true and full Sacrifice to God the Father,' if he adheres strictly to the words and actions of Christ at the Institution[3]; and this Sacrifice is identical with the Sacrifice of the Cross[4], which the Eucharist by Christ's ordinance commemorates. It is in keeping with this deepened sense of the reality of the Eucharistic commemoration that the Church of North Africa was the first Christian community, so far as we know, which offered the Eucharist for the benefit of the departed; *oblationes pro defunctis* are already mentioned by Tertullian, while Cyprian speaks of *sacrificia pro dormitione defunctorum*[5]. It would be an anachronism to read into such words the meaning which they would naturally have borne if used by a mediaeval ecclesiastic, but the advance which they mark upon the teaching of the second century should be frankly recognised.

2. There was a second aspect of the Holy Eucharist with

[1] *De cath. eccl. unit.* 17. Mr. Watson writes (*op. cit.* p. 266): '*hostia dominica* is opposed to *falsa sacrificia*, 226. 9, and must be equivalent to *sacrificium*,' i. e. as he explains just before 'The Eucharistic Service.' But *hostia* is elsewhere in Cyprian the victim offered (*ep.* xxxi 5, lxxvi 3), and *h. dominica* is not an unnatural phrase in a writer to whom the Eucharistic Bread was *Domini corpus* or *sanctum Domini*, and the Sacrifice *dominicum*. Could the service be called 'dominicae hostiae ueritas'?

[2] The heading to *testim.* i 16, 'quod sacrificium uetus euacuaretur et nouum celebraretur,' leaves little doubt upon the point.

[3] See *Ep.* lxiii 9 ff., esp. § 14 'si Christus Iesus . . . ipse est summus sacerdos Dei patris et sacrificium patri se ipsum optulit et hoc fieri in sui commemorationem praecepit, utique ille sacerdos uice Christi uere fungitur qui id quod Christus fecit imitatur; et sacrificium uerum et plenum tunc offert in ecclesia Deo patri, si sic incipiat offerre secundum quod ipsum Christum uideat optulisse.' The principle is not affected by the circumstance that Cyprian's argument relates to a matter of discipline which is not relevant to our subject.

[4] *ib.* 17 'passionis eius mentionem in sacrificiis omnibus facimus, passio est enim Domini sacrificium quod offerimus.'

[5] Tert. *de coron.* 3: Cypr. *ep.* i 2.

which the Ante-Nicene Church was still more deeply concerned. The Eucharist was not merely the Christian oblation or sacrifice; it supplied food and sustenance to the Christian life. We shall endeavour to ascertain the exact meaning attached in the second and third centuries to the words of Christ which declare the Bread and the Cup to be His Body and Blood.

Three interpretations of these words find a place in Ante-Nicene literature. In some quarters a disposition is shown to spiritualise the words of Institution so far as to obscure their reference to His actual Flesh and Blood. It is remarkable that this tendency manifests itself in two of our earliest authorities. The Eucharistic forms of the *Didache*[1] speak only of the 'life and knowledge,' or 'knowledge, faith, and immortality,' revealed through our Lord, and the 'spiritual drink and eternal life' which are His gifts to the Church[2]. It is scarcely permissible to set these expressions aside on the ground that they 'emanate from some only half-Christian community[3],' for whatever may be the history of the *Didache*, the words in themselves embody a thoroughly Christian though too exclusively mystical a view, and might well have proceeded from some disciple of the school of St. John. Moreover, the same tendency appears in certain passages of the Ignatian letters, notwithstanding the evident desire of Ignatius to employ the Eucharist as a witness for the reality of the Lord's manhood. He blames the Docetic party for not admitting that 'the Eucharist is the Flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ which suffered for our sins'; he exhorts the members of the Church to 'use one Eucharist,' on the ground that 'there is One Flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ and one Cup for union in His Blood[4].' Yet in other contexts, where the Docetae are not in view, he allows himself to use language scarcely less ambiguous than that of the *Didache*: 'faith is the Flesh of Christ, and love His Blood'; or again, 'His Blood is love incorruptible[5].' At the end of the century this mysticism found a home in the Christian School of Alexandria. Clement revels in it, as when he writes: 'The Blood of Christ is twofold:—in part it is fleshly, that by

[1] I am content to assume Harnack's limits of time (A. D. 131–160); a later date appears to me to be inconceivable.

[2] c. 9 f.

[3] Gore, *Body of Christ*, p. 97.

[4] *Smyrn.* 6; *Philad.* 4.

[5] *Trall.* 8; *Rom.* 7.

which we have been ransomed from corruption, and in part spiritual, that is, the Blood wherewith we have been anointed. To drink the Blood of Jesus is to partake of the Lord's incorruptibility [1].' Or again: 'The Flesh and Blood of the Word are the apprehension of the Divine power and essence [2].' Clement's successor, the greater Origen, distinguishes between the popular conception of the Eucharist, and the profounder view held by better instructed Christians; the latter had learnt to connect the Eucharistic Food with the nutritive properties of the word. 'What else can the Body and Blood of God the Word be but the word in its twofold character as that which sustains and delights the heart?' 'We are said to drink the Blood of Christ not only in the way of sacramental communion, but also when we receive His words in which, as He Himself says, our life consists [3].'

A second group of early Christian teachers, including the two most representative writers of the second century, cling to a more literal interpretation of our Lord's words, and endeavour to explain them by an operation of the Divine Word or Spirit upon the Bread and Cup. The words of Justin [4] are well known, but it may be convenient to print them here for the purpose of our examination: *ὃν τρόπον διὰ λόγου θεοῦ σαρκοποιηθεὶς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ὁ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν καὶ σάρκα καὶ αἷμα ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας ἡμῶν ἔσχεν, οὕτως καὶ τὴν δι' εὐχῆς λόγου τοῦ παρ' αὐτοῦ εὐχαριστηθεῖσαν τροφήν, ἐξ ἧς αἷμα καὶ σάρκες κατὰ μεταβολὴν τρέφονται ἡμῶν, ἐκείνου τοῦ σαρκοποιη-*

[1] *Paed.* ii 2 § 19 *διττὸν δὲ τὸ αἷμα τοῦ κυρίου· τὸ μὲν γάρ ἐστιν αὐτοῦ σαρκικόν, ᾧ τῆς φθορᾶς λελυτρώμεθα· τὸ δὲ πνευματικόν, τουτέστιν ᾧ κεχρίσμεθα* [cf. Cypr. *ep.* lxx 27]. *καὶ τοῦτ' ἔστι πιεῖν τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, τῆς κυριακῆς μεταλαβεῖν ἀφθαρσίας.* Cf. *paed.* i 6 § 38 *φάγετέ μου τὰς σάρκας, εἰπών, καὶ πίετέ μου τὸ αἷμα· ἐναργὲς τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τὸ πότιμον ἀλληγορῶν.* § 43 *ἄκουε καὶ ταύτῃ· σάρκα ἡμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἀλληγορεῖ . . . αἷμα ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον αἰνίττεται. ἡ τροφή, τουτέστι κύριος Ἰησοῦς, τουτέστιν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ, πνεῦμα σαρκούμενον.*

[2] *Strom.* v 10 § 67 *σάρκες αὗται καὶ αἷμα τοῦ λόγου, τουτέστι, κατάληψις τῆς θείας δυνάμεως καὶ οὐσίας.*

[3] *in Ioann.* tom. xxxii 24 (16) *νοείσθω δὲ ὁ ἄρτος καὶ τὸ ποτήριον τοῖς μὲν ἁπλουστέροις κατὰ τὴν κοινοτέραν περὶ τῆς εὐχαριστίας ἐκδοχήν, τοῖς δὲ βαθύτερον ἀκούειν μεμαθηκόσι κατὰ τὴν θειοτέραν καὶ περὶ τοῦ τροφίμου τῆς ἀληθείας λόγου ἐπαγγελίαν. In Matt.* § 85 'panis iste quem Deus Verbum corpus suum esse fatetur uerbum est nutritorium animarum . . . et potus iste quem Deus Verbum sanguinem suum fatetur uerbum est potans et inebrians praeclare corda bibentium . . . nam corpus Dei Verbi aut sanguis, quid aliud esse potest nisi uerbum quod nutrit et uerbum quod laetificat cor?' *Hom. in Num.* xvi 9 'bibere autem dicimur sanguinem Christi non solum sacramentorum ritu, sed et cum sermones eius recipimus, in quibus uita consistit sicut ipse dicit.'

[4] *Apol.* i 66.

θέντος Ἰησοῦ καὶ σάρκα καὶ αἷμα ἐδιδάχθημεν[1] εἶναι. The sentence is overweighted and obscure, partly because Justin had not thoroughly explored the thought which lay at the back of his mind. But it seems to be clear that he proceeds upon the hypothesis of an analogy between the Incarnation and the consecration of the Eucharist; as our Lord was made Flesh by the Divine Word, so the word which issues from Him, when invoked by the prayer of the Church, makes the Bread and Cup to be His Flesh and Blood[2]. Thus Justin is able to maintain that the Eucharist is what the Gospels teach us to believe. And being this, it is not to be regarded as ordinary bread and wine[3], though it retains the nutritive properties of ordinary food, but as possessing a sacred and mysterious character.

Irenaeus approaches the subject with another motive. Like Ignatius, he finds in the Eucharist a weapon to slay heresy. The false *gnosis* sought to divorce the spiritual from the material, and the Divine from the created. Against this disruption the Eucharist is a standing witness[4]. 'Either let the Gnostics change their view, or let them refuse to offer the oblation of which we have spoken. Our view on the other hand is in harmony with the Eucharist, and the Eucharist establishes our view.' The words that follow must be quoted in the Greek: ὡς γὰρ ἀπὸ γῆς ἄρτος προσλαμβανόμενος τὴν ἐπίκλησιν τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκέτι κοινὸς ἄρτος ἐστὶν ἀλλ' εὐχαριστία, ἐκ δύο πραγμάτων συνεστηκυῖα, ἐπιγείου τε καὶ οὐρανίου· οὕτως καὶ τὰ σώματα ἡμῶν μεταλαμβάνοντα τῆς εὐχαριστίας μηκέτι εἶναι φθαρτά, κτλ. Christ, he writes further on[5], confessed the Cup to be His own Blood, and affirmed the Bread to be His

[1] i. e. in the Gospels, as the context shows (οἱ γὰρ ἀπόστολοι . . . οὕτως παρέδωκαν κτλ.).

[2] So I venture to paraphrase the difficult words τὴν δι' εὐχῆς λόγου τοῦ παρ' αὐτοῦ κτλ. I find myself unable to accept Canon (soon, as I rejoice to know, to become Bishop) Gore's 'word of prayer' (*Body of Christ*, pp. 7, 289 f.); for (1) apart from the Lord's Prayer, which he excludes, there is nothing which really answers to the description; and (2) notwithstanding Heb. vi 2 (on which see Westcott), the order is almost prohibitory of this rendering (cf. Blass, ed. Thackeray, p. 99). Nor does c. 13 λόγῳ εὐχῆς καὶ εὐχαριστίας (*J. T. S.*, i p. 112) reconcile me to it. Whether the λόγος is the δύναμις ἡ παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ of c. 33, or the word spoken at the institution, is a question which cannot be discussed here.

[3] Justin, *l. c.*: οὐ γὰρ ὡς κοινὸν ἄρτον οὐδὲ κοινὸν πόμα ταῦτα λαμβάνομεν.

[4] Iren. IV xviii 5. I have substituted ἐπίκλησιν for ἔκκλησιν of the printed texts, which has been shown to be an error by Harnack (*Texte u. Unters.*, N. F., v 3 p. 56).

[5] Iren. V ii 2 f.

own Body. The Cup is mixed, and the Bread made, but when they receive the Word of God, there results the Eucharist of Christ's Body and Blood[1], and yet these elements serve for the nutrition and formation of the substance of our flesh. How can our opponents in the face of these facts maintain that the flesh is incapable of receiving the Divine gift which is life eternal, seeing that it is fed by the Body and Blood of the Lord? As the earthly elements receiving the Word of God become the Eucharist, which is the Body and Blood of Christ, so our bodies, fed by the Eucharist, will after they are laid in the earth and dissolved therein, rise again in due season, the Word of God bestowing upon them the gift of resurrection. Irenaeus, it will be seen, reasons, not, as Justin had done, from the Incarnation to the reality of the Eucharistic Gift, but from the reality of the Eucharistic Gift to the Resurrection of the body. He begins where Justin ends, assuming that the Eucharist is what it is in virtue of the Divine word invoked upon it by the prayer of the Church, and inferring from these premises the resurrection of those who receive it into their souls and bodies[2]. But in taking over Justin's idea, he enlarges it by pointing out the composite character of the Eucharist which follows from it. If the Eucharist is the Body and Blood of the Lord, while retaining the nutritious properties of ordinary food, it must consist of two factors, an earthly and a heavenly, both real and substantial (*ἐκ δύο πραγμάτων συνεστηκυῖα*).

Although this theory receives its full exposition only in the writings of Justin and Irenaeus, it probably found wide acceptance in Greek-speaking Churches during the second and third centuries. It is enshrined in the Invocation of the Word or Spirit[3] which is

[1] The Latin, which I here translate, is probably nearer to the original than the Greek as given by Halloix (ii p. 501, ed. 1636). Ante-Nicene practice, following the letter of our Lord's words, seems to prefer *εἶναι* to *γίνεσθαι* in reference to the relation between the sign and the thing signified in the Eucharist; thus a few lines further on Irenaeus says that the elements *προσλαμβανόμενα τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ εὐχαριστία γίνεται ὅπερ ἐστὶ σῶμα καὶ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ*.

[2] Cf. Ign. *Eph.* 20, and the words in which the people are communicated according to the Anglican order.

[3] It need not be assumed that any form of invocation existed in the time of Irenaeus; the *εὐχή* was itself the *ἐπίκλησις τοῦ θεοῦ*. It is significant, however, that the earliest known Greek form invokes the Logos, and not the Holy Spirit as distinct from the Logos; see *J. T. S.*, i pp. 106, 112, and cf. Justin, *Apol.* i 33 *τὸ πνεῦμα οὖν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τὴν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐδὲν ἄλλο νοῆσαι θέμις ἢ τὸν λόγον*.

a characteristic feature in Eastern forms of the *anaphora*. The belief is echoed even by Origen when he speaks of the Bread as becoming, because of the prayer offered over it, 'a holy body that sanctifies those who use it with a sound intention[1].'

It is in the writings of the first Latin theologian, Tertullian of Carthage, that we meet with the third method of interpreting the words of institution. Tertullian differs from Justin and Irenaeus in two material points. In the first place he does not seem to regard the consecration as effected by the Divine Word or Spirit in answer to the prayer of the Church; to say the least, the power of the *epiclesis* is not in the foreground of his thought. To Tertullian the Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Christ because our Lord distinctly called it so. 'The Bread which Christ took and distributed to His disciples He made His Body, saying (*dicendo*) "This is My Body[2]".' Thus the words of Institution are in themselves, apart from any subsequent operation upon the elements, a sufficient warrant for speaking of the Bread and the Cup as the Lord's Body and Blood. This designation for the Eucharist is used by Tertullian frequently and without restraint; while he employs occasionally such terms as *eucharistia*, *eucharistiae sacramentum*, or *sanctum*[3], with Latin downrightness he more commonly writes *corpus, sanguis Domini*. The phrase is used even in contexts where it is open to misconception; the communicant is said to 'handle' the Lord's Body, the unworthy communicant to 'offer violence' to it[4]; Christians who, according to a Carthaginian practice, reserved the Sacrament at home, are said to take the Lord's Body from the Church, and keep it in their houses[5]. It is clear that in the judgement of Tertullian the Bread and the Cup are not Christ's Body and Blood only in the act of communion, or to the faith of the communicant; they are such in themselves by virtue of Christ's ordinance and

On the other hand the Verona fragment (Hauler, p. 107) asks for the presence of the Holy Spirit: 'petimus mittas spm tuum scm in oblationem sanctae ecclesiae.'

[1] *c. Cels.* viii 33 ἡμεῖς δὲ τῷ τοῦ παντὸς δημιουργῷ εὐχαριστοῦντες καὶ τοὺς μετ' εὐχαριστίας καὶ εὐχῆς τῆς ἐπὶ τοῖς δοθεῖσι προσαγομένους ἄρτους ἐσθίομεν, σῶμα γενομένους διὰ τὴν εὐχὴν ἁγιόν τι καὶ ἁγιάζον τοὺς μετὰ ὑγιοῦς προθέσεως αὐτῷ χρωμένους. Perhaps in arguing with a pagan Origen associates himself with the κοινοτέρα ἐκδοχή which his antagonist would have encountered and which Origen himself did not reject, though he deemed it inadequate.

[2] *adv. Marc.* iv 40.

[3] *de praescr.* 36; *de corona* 3; *de spect.* 25.

[4] *de idolatr.* 7.

[5] *ad uxor.* ii 5; *de orat.* 19.

promise. But if it be asked in what sense He called them so, Tertullian with equal frankness of speech replies that He designed the Bread to be 'the figure of His Body[1]'; that He included His Body 'in the category of bread' (*in pane censetur*)[2]; that He 'makes it present to us by means of bread' (*quo ipsum corpus suum repraesentat*)[3]. It has indeed been argued from Tertullian's use of *repraesentare*[4] that in the last-mentioned passage he intends to assert the actual presence of the Lord's Body in or by means of the Eucharistic Bread. The verb is capable of yielding this meaning, but it is equally susceptible of another[5], and in view of Tertullian's general attitude towards the question of the Eucharistic Gift, it is more natural to understand it here in the weaker sense. Tertullian in fact seems to have been satisfied with a virtual identification of the Eucharist with the Body and Blood of Christ: in his judgement, if we understand him rightly, the Bread and the Cup are figures, although not bare figures, since by Christ's ordinance they are authorised and effective representations of the realities which they symbolise. Such a view of the Eucharist well accords with the legal bent of the great

[1] *adv. Marc.* iii 19 'panem corpus suum appellans, ut et hinc iam eum intellegas corpori sui figuram panis dedisse,' iv 40 'acceptum panem et distributum discipulis corpus suum illum fecit "Hoc est corpus meum" dicendo, id est, "figura corporis mei": figura autem non fuisset nisi ueritatis esset corpus.' Cf. the old form of the Western canon in Ps. Ambr. *De sacr.* iv 5 'fac nobis hanc oblationem . . . acceptabilem, quod figura est corporis et sanguinis D. N. I. Christi.' On *figura* in Tertullian see *de monog.* 6 'aliud sunt figurae, aliud formae.'

[2] *de orat.* 6 'Christus enim panis noster est, quia uita Christus et uita panis . . . tum quod et corpus eius in pane censetur—"hoc est corpus meum."' I.e. the words of institution identify the Body of Christ with bread, place It under the head of 'bread.' On Tertullian's use of *censeri in* see Roensch, *Das N. T. Tertullians*, p. 625 ff.

[3] *adv. Marc.* i 14.

[4] Gore, *Dissertations*, p. 310.

[5] *Repraesentare* is to make present to mind or eye what has been hitherto unseen or has passed out of sight: whether the presence is actual or not must be determined in each case by the context. The verb and its derivatives are favourites with Tertullian. In rather more than half the instances where he employs them actual restoration is intended (*de coron.* 15, *de orat.* 5, *de patient.* 3, *de pudic.* 14, *adv. Marc.* iii 10, iv 9, 16, 22 f., v 12, *de resurr. carn.* 14, 17, 23, 63). But this is not by any means his invariable use; cf. *apol.* 15 'Herculem repraesentat,' 16 'aliqua effigie repraesentat,' 23 'contemplatione et repraesentatione ignis illius correpta' (where the previous context shows that the *repraesentatio* is anticipatory), *de spect.* 17 'mimus repraesentat,' *de ieiun.* 13 'repraesentatio totius nominis Christiani' (a synod), *de monog.* 10, *de poenit.* 3, *adv. Prax.* 14 'Psalmi Christum ad Deum uerba facientem repraesentant,' 24 'ex personae repraesentatione . . . ut filius repraesentator patris haberetur.'

African's mind. Frigid and jejune as it may seem, it does not appear to have interfered with his sense of the reality of the Gift. 'The flesh,' he writes, 'is fed with the Body and Blood of Christ, that the soul may be sated with God[1].' The returning penitent is fed with the best food in the Father's House, even 'with the fatness of the Lord's Body, that is the Eucharist[2].' His theory of the Eucharist may have differed from that of his Greek predecessors, but he is one with them and with the whole Church in his estimation of the Eucharistic Food. It was Christ's Body and Blood which were received, in whatever way.

Whether Cyprian inherited Tertullian's view is not easy to determine. Probably his more practical mind did not seek a solution of the mystery in a theory of any kind. With Tertullian he held the Eucharist to be the 'Holy Body of the Lord[3],' but he does not add with Tertullian, *id est, figura corporis*. His comment on the story of the lapsed Christian in whose hands the Bread turned to a cinder—'so it was made to appear that the Lord withdraws when He is denied[4]'—suggests that he was not without some vague feeling that the Eucharistic Bread is interpenetrated by a consuming Presence which can, however, withdraw itself at pleasure. Yet he distinguishes between the Sacramental Gift and the Person of Christ, when in another interesting passage he represents the embrace of the Lord Himself by the victorious confessor as something more than the receiving of His Body in the Eucharist[5].

When we turn from the great teachers of the period to the rank and file of the Christian army, the laity and the majority of the clergy, it is less easy to arrive at an estimate of the prevalent belief. It is evident indeed that the κοινοτέρα ἐκδοχή, as Origen calls it, did not err on the side of a depreciatory view of Christ's great ordinance. The Bread and the Cup were given to the people with the words 'The Body of Christ,' 'the Blood of Christ,' and as such they were received, each communicant

[1] *de resurr. carn.* 8 'caro corpore et sanguine Christi uescitur, ut et anima de Deo saginetur.'

[2] *de pudic.* 9 'opimitate dominici corporis uescitur, eucharistia scilicet.'

[3] *Ep.* xv 1 'eucharistiam, id est sanctum Domini corpus.'

[4] *De laps.* 26 'documento unius ostensum est Dominum recedere cum negatur, nec inmerenti ad salutem prodesse quod sumitur.'

[5] *Ep.* lviii 9 'armemus et dexteram gladio spiritali . . . ut eucharistiae memor quae Domini corpus accipit ipsum complectatur.'

adding his 'Amen[1].' Due reverence was shown to the consecrated gifts; at Carthage, in the time of Tertullian, and at Caesarea, in the time of Origen, the greatest care was taken not to let a drop or even a crumb fall to the ground[2]. Here and there we notice signs of a tendency to superstition, as in the singular reason assigned for this praiseworthy vigilance in the Hippolytean canons[3]. The Carthaginian practice of reserving the Eucharistic Bread at home in an *arca* for daily communion may have encouraged a somewhat materialistic conception of the Gift, of which there are traces in the stories told by Cyprian[4]. Among Gnostic Christians we hear of an attempt in one quarter to import into the mysteries a false realism, sleight of hand being used with the view of changing the colour of the wine at the moment of consecration[5]; and a fragment apparently due to the Valentinian Theodotus speaks significantly of a change in the elements which transcends appearances[6]. But the general belief of the Catholic Church at this period seems to have gone little beyond a simple identification of the consecrated Bread and Cup with the Body and Blood of Christ. Avircius had felt the pulse of the Church both in East and West: from his Phrygian home he had travelled to Rome and to Nisibis. But on the Tiber and on the Tigris he had found the same belief and practice with regard to the Eucharist; everywhere there had been set before him 'fish from the spring, large and choice, caught in the grasp of a pure maiden's hand, and with it good wine and bread[7].' The words recognise the

[1] Tert. *de spect.* 25; Eus. *H. E.* vi 43, vii 9; cf. Achelis, *die canones Hippolyti*, p. 100 f.

[2] Tert. *de coron.* 3 'calicis aut panis etiam nostri aliquid decuti in terram anxie patimur.' Orig. *hom. in Exod.* xiii 3 'nostis qui diuinis mysteriis interesse consuestis quomodo cum suscipitis corpus Domini, cum omni cautela et ueneratione seruatis, ne ex eo parum quid decidat, ne consecrati muneris aliquid dilabatur, reos enim uos creditis (et recte creditis) si quid inde per neglegentiam decidat.'

[3] Achelis, *op. cit.* p. 120 'ne potiatur eo spiritus malignus.'

[4] *De lapsis* 26.

[5] Iren. I xiii 2 ποτήρια οἴνῳ κεκραμένα προσποιούμενος εὐχαριστεῖν, καὶ ἐπὶ πλέον ἐκτείνων τὸν λόγον τῆς ἐπικλήσεως, πορφύρεα καὶ ἐρυθρὰ ἀναφαίνεσθαι ποιεῖ.

[6] Clem. Al. *exc. Theod.* § 82 καὶ ὁ ἄρτος καὶ τὸ ἔλαιον ἁγιάζεται τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ ὀνόματος, οὐ τὰ αὐτὰ ὄντα κατὰ τὸ φαινόμενον οἷα ἐλήφθη, ἀλλὰ δυνάμει εἰς δύναμιν πνευματικὴν μεταβέβληται. οὕτως καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ κτλ. The μεταβολή, it will be observed, is not limited to the Eucharist: cf. Cyr. Hier. *cat. myst.* iii 3.

[7] Ramsay, *Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*, ii p. 723 Πίστις πάντη δὲ προῆγε | καὶ παρέθηκε τροφὴν πάντη, ἰχθὺν ἀπὸ πηγῆς | παναγίου, καθαρόν, ὃν ἐδράξατο παρθένος

reality alike of the earthly elements and of the heavenly gift, the δύο πράγματα which Irenaeus had already seen in the Eucharist; but they cannot fairly be taken to support any particular theory of the Eucharistic Presence. The same may be said of the scenes painted on the walls and roofs of the Roman catacombs, so far as they may be claimed for this period[1]: the banquet of fish and bread which so often appears indicates the assured belief that our Lord gives Himself in the Eucharist, but does not necessarily imply more. There is a significant absence in Ante-Nicene monuments of any reference to the adoration of Christ in the Eucharist; indeed, it is scarcely possible that Eucharistic adoration can have been practised by an age which sent the Eucharist from Church to Church, kept it in private houses for daily use, and in emergencies was prepared to convey and administer it to the dying by the hand of a child[2]. The Ante-Nicene Church took Christ's words as true, and revered the Bread and Cup which He called His Body and Blood; but so far as our evidence extends, it does not lead us to conclude that she based on this belief and reverent attitude a system of practical devotions such as that which was afterwards built upon them. She was satisfied with the knowledge that in the Holy Eucharist she had an unfailing provision of the Bread of Life.

Whatever view may be taken of this attitude, it certainly made for peace. As we have seen, some of the greatest teachers of the period differed among themselves in their interpretation of the Eucharistic offering and the manner of the Eucharistic Gift. But there is no indication that they were conscious of differences under either head. Still less could the 'simpler' members of the Church have realised that their leaders were divided in opinion. No sides were taken; there was no Eucharistic controversy; no charge was laid against a brother because he understood the words of Christ in this particular sense or in that. The times

ἀγνή· | καὶ τοῦτον ἐπέδωκε φίλοις ἔσθειν διὰ παντός, | οἶνον χρηστὸν ἔχουσα, πείρασμα διδοῦσα μετ' ἄρτου. Zahn's text (*Forschungen*, v 70 f.) is identical with Ramsay's, and the conjectures made by other editors do not affect the witness of the passage so far as it concerns our subject. Can καθαρόν be an allusion to θυσία καθαρά! With ἰχθὺν . . . ἑδράξατο may be compared the Autun inscription: ἔσθιε, πῖνε . . . ἰχθὺν ἔχων παλάμαις.

[1] De Rossi, *Roma Sotterranea*, ii p. 338 ff.: plates xv, xvi, xviii.

[2] Iren. *ap.* Eus. *H. E.* v 24: Dionys. Al. *ap.* Eus. vi 44.

were not free from serious controversies on other questions connected with the interpretation of Scripture and the discipline of the Church; but on the subject of the Eucharist no dispute arose. It was as if men felt that no discordant note must be struck when they spoke or wrote of the One Bread which is the symbol and bond of the One Body of Christ.

H. B. SWETE.