Old Testament. (2) It was primarily an offering of the fruits of the earth to the Creator; this is clear from both Justin Martyr and Irenseus, the latter of whom not only explicitly states that such oblations are continued among Christians but also meets the current objection to them by arguing that they are offered to God not as though He needed anything but to show the gratitude of the offerer (Iren., iv. 17, 18). (3) It was offered as a thanksgiving

partly for creation and preservation and partly for re­demption : the latter is the special purpose mentioned (*e.g.*) in the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles ;* the former is that upon which Irenseus chiefly dwells; both are men­tioned together in Justin Martyr *(Trypho,* c. 41). (4)

Those who offered it were required to be not only baptized Christians but also “in love and charity one with another there is an indication of this latter requirement in the Ser­mon on the Mount (Matt. v. 23, 24, where the word trans­lated “ gift ” is the usual LXX. word for a sacrificial offer­ing, and is so used elsewhere in the same Gospel, viz., Matt. viii. 4, xxiii. 19), and still more explicitly in the *Teaching,* c. 14, “Let not any one who has a dispute with his fellow come together with you *(i.e.,* on the Lord’s day) until they have been reconciled, that your sacrifice be not defiled.” This brotherly unity was symbolized by the kiss of peace. (5) It was offered in the assembly by the hands of the president; this is stated by Justin Martyr *(Apol.,* i. 65, 67), and implied by Clement of Rome *(Ep.,* i. 44, 4).

Combined with this sacrifice of the fruits of the earth to the Creator in memory of creation and redemption, and probably always immediately following it, was the sacred meal at which part of the offerings was eaten. Such a sacred meal had always, or almost always, formed part of the rites of sacrifice. There was the idea that what had been solemnly offered to God was especially hallowed by Him, and that the partaking of it united the partakers in a special bond both to Him and to one another. In the case of the bread and wine of the Christian sacrifice, it was believed that, after having been offered and blessed, they became to those who partook of them the body and blood of Christ. This “ communion of the body and blood of Christ,” which in early writings is clearly distinguished from the thank-offering which preceded it, and which fur­nished the materials for it, gradually came to supersede the thank-offering in importance, and to exercise a reflex influence upon it. In the time of Cyprian, though not before, we begin to find the idea that the body and blood of Christ were not merely partaken of by the worshippers but also offered in sacrifice, and that the Eucharist was not so much a thank-offering for creation and redemption as a repetition or a showing forth anew of the self-sacrifice of Christ. This idea is repeated in Ambrose and Augus­tine, and has since been a dominant idea of both Eastern and Western Christendom. But, though dominant, it has not been universal; nor did it become dominant until several centuries after its first promulgation. The history of it has yet to be written. For, in spite of the important controversies to which it has given birth, no one has been at the pains to distinguish between (i.) the theories which have been from time to time put forth by eminent writers, and which, though they have in some cases ultimately won a general acceptance, have for a long period remained as merely individual opinions, and (ii.) the current beliefs of the great body of Christians which are expressed in recog­nized formularies. A catena of opinions may be produced in favour of almost any theory; but formularies express the collective or average belief of any given period, and changes in them are a sure indication that there has been a general change in ideas.

It is clear from the evidence of the early Western litur­gies that, for at least six centuries, the primitive conception

of the nature of the Christian sacrifice remained. There is a clear distinction between the sacrifice and the com­munion which followed it, and that which is offered con­sists of the fruits of the earth and not of the body and blood of Christ. Other ideas no doubt attached themselves to the primitive conception, of which there is no certain evidence in primitive times, *e.g.,* the idea of the propitiatory character of the offering, but these ideas rather confirm than disprove the persistence of those primitive conceptions themselves.

All Eastern liturgies, in their present form, are of later date than the surviving fragments of the earlier Western liturgies, and cannot form the basis of so sure an induction; but they entirely confirm the conclusions to which the Western liturgies lead. The main points in which the pre-mediaeval formularies of both the Eastern and the Western Churches agree in relation to the Christian sacri­fice are the following. (1) It was an offering of the fruits of the earth to the Creator, in the belief that a special blessing would descend upon the offerers, and sometimes also in the belief that God would be propitiated by the offerings. The bread and wine are designated by all the names by which sacrifices are designated *(sacrificia, hostiae, libamina,* and at least once *sacrificium placationis*)*,* and the act of offering them by the ordinary term for offering a sacrifice *(immolatio}.* (2) The offering of bread and wine was originally brought to the altar by the person who offered it, and placed by him in the hands of the presiding officer. In course of time there were two im­portant changes in this respect: *(a)* the offerings of bread and wine were commuted for money, with which bread and wine were purchased by the church-officers*; (b)* the offerings were sometimes handed to the deacons and by them taken to the bishop at the altar, and sometimes, as at Rome, the bishop and deacons went round the church to collect them. @@1 (3) In offering the bread and wine the offerer offered, as in the ancient sacrifices, primarily for himself, but inasmuch as the offering was regarded as having a general propitiatory value he mentioned also the names of others in whom he was interested, and especially the departed, that they might rest in peace. Hence, after all the offerings had been collected, and before they were solemnly offered to God, it became a custom to recite the names both of the offerers and of those for whom they offered, the names being arranged in two lists, which were known as diptychs. Almost all the old rituals have prayers to be said “ before the names,” “ after the names.” It was a further and perhaps much later development of the same idea that the good works of those who had pre­viously enjoyed the favour of God were invoked to give additional weight to the prayer of the offerer. In the later series of Western rituals, beginning with that which is known as the *Leonine Sacramentary,* this practice is almost universal. (4) The placing of the bread and wine upon the altar was followed by the kiss of peace. (5) Then followed the actual offering of the gifts to God *(immolatio missae).* It was an act of adoration or thanks­giving, much longer in Eastern than in Western rituals, but in both classes of rituals beginning with the form “Lift up your hearts,” and ending with the Ter Sanctus or Trisagion. @@2 The early MSS. of Western rituals indi­cate the importance which was attached to this part of the liturgy by the fact of its being written in a much more ornate way than the other parts, *e.g.,* in gold uncial letters

@@@1 Of this proceeding an elaborate account exists in the very inter­esting document printed by Mabillon in his Museum *Italicum,* as “ Ordo Romanus I.”; the small phials of wine which were brought were emptied into a large bowl, and the loaves of bread were collected in a bag.

@@@2 The elements of the form are preserved exactly in the liturgy of the Church of England.