an occasion, should be a sin of so deep a dye as to be pro­perly compared with the guilt of those who murdered the Lord of life. Other divines, therefore, feeling the force of this and similar objections, steer a middle course between the mere memorialist and the advocate for a real sacrifice in the holy Eucharist, and insist that this rite, though no sacrifice itself, is yet a feast upon the one sacrifice offered by Christ and slain upon the cross. The most eminent pa­trons of this opinion have been Dr Cudworth and Bishop Warburton ; and they support it by such arguments as the following. In those ages of the world when victims made so great a part of the religion both of Jews and Gentiles, the sacrifice was always followed by a religious feasting on the thing offered ; which was called the feast upon or after the sacrifice, and was supposed to convey to the partakers of it the benefits of the sacrifice. Now Jesus, say they, about to offer himself a sacrifice on the cross for our re­demption, did, in conformity to general practice, institute the last supper, under the idea of a feast after the sacrifice ; and the circumstances attending its institution were such, they think, that the apostles could not possibly mistake his meaning. It was just before his passion, and while he was eating the paschal supper, which was a Jewish feast upon the sacrifice, that our blessed Lord instituted this rite ; and as it was his general custom to allude, in his actions and expressions, to what passed before his eyes, or presented itself to his ob­servation, who can doubt, when, in the very form of celebra­tion, we see all the marks of a sacrificial supper, but that the divine institutor intended it should bear the same relation to his sacrifice on the cross which the paschal supper then celebrating bore to the oblation of the paschal lamb ? If this was not his purpose, and if nothing more was intended than a general memorial of a dead benefactor, why was this instant of lime preferred for the institution to all others throughout the course of his ministry, any one of which would have been equally commodious? Indeed any other time would have been more commodious for the institution of a mere memorial ; for the paschal lamb and unleavened bread were certainly a sacrifice ; and the words used by our Saviour, when he gave the bread and wine to the apostles, were such as must necessarily have led them to consider that bread and wine as bearing the same relation to his sacrifice which the paschal supper bore to the paschal sacri­fice. At that Jewish feast, it was the custom of every fa­ther of a family to break the unleavened bread, and to give to every guest a portion, saying, “ This is the bread of af­fliction, which our fathers did eat in the land of Egypt ;” a custom which we may be sure that Christ, as a father of his family, would religiously observe. The apostles knew well that they were not eating the identical bread which their fathers did eat in Egypt, but the feast upon the sac­rifice then offered in commemoration of their redemption from Egyptian bondage ; and therefore, when they saw their Master alter supper break the bread again, and give it to each of them, with these remarkable words. “ This is my body which is given for you, do this in remembrance of me,” they must have concluded, that his meaning was to institute a rite which should to the end of the world bear the same relation to his sacrifice that the paschal supper bore to the sacrifice of the passover.

This inference, from the circumstances attending the in­stitution, Bishop Warburton thinks confirmed by St Paul’s mode of arguing with the Corinthians on their impiety and absurdity in partaking both of the Lord's table and the table of devils ; for “ what,” says he, “ had the eaters of the sacrifices to do with the partakers of the bread and wine in the Lord’s Supper, if the Lord’s Supper was not a feast of the same kind with their feasts ? If the three feasts,

Jewish, Pagan, and Christian, had not one common nature, how could the apostle have inferred that this intercom­munity was inconsistent? ‘Ye *cannot,'* says he, ‘drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils ; ye *cannot* **be** partakers of the Lord’s table and the table of devils.’ **For** though there might be impiety in the promiscuous use of Pagan and Christian rites of any kind, yet the incon­sistency arises from their having a common nature, and consequently, as they had opposite originals, from their de­stroying one another’s effects in the very celebration. Sac­rifices, and feasts upon sacrifices were universally consi­dered as federal rites; and therefore the Lord’s table and the table of devils being both federal rites, the same man could no more be partaker of both, than he could at once engage to serve both God and the devil. This is the apos­tle’s argument to the wise men to whom he appeals ; and we see that it turns altogether upon this postulatum, that the Christian and Pagan feasts had the same specific na­ture, or were both feasts upon sacrifices. If this be admit­ted, it is easy to see why St Paul deemed those who ate and drank unworthily guilty of the body and blood of the Lord ; for if the Lord’s Supper be a feast upon his sacri­fice, it must have been considered as the means of convey­ing to the communicants all the benefits of his death and passion ; and the profanation of such a rite, by rendering his death ineffectual, might be fitly compared and justly equalled to the enormous guilt of those by whom his blood was shed.” In reply to Bishop Hoadley’s remarks upon the word *χοιvωvία* his brother bishop observes, that “ had the apostle meant what the learned writer makes him to mean, he would doubtless have said *χοιvωvίχ υμωv* *είς* *τὸ* *σωμα*, ‘ your communion in the body—your eating it jointly.’ St Paul,” continues he, “ knew how to express himself pro­perly, as appears from a passage in his epistle to the Phi- lippians, where, professedly speaking of the joint participa­tion of a blessing, he uses these words, *χοιvωvίχ υμωv* *είς* *τὸ ευαγγελιov,* ‘ your communion in the gospel.’ ” To the other remark, that no spiritual part could be thought of in the table of idols, because an idol is said by the apostle to be *nothing,* Bishop Warburton replies, “ that by St Paul the Gentiles are said to have sacrificed to devils, and those who ate of such sacrifices to have had communion with devils ; now the *devil,”* continues his lordship, “ was in St Paul's opinion *something.”* But the inference which the apostle draws from the acknowledged truth, that the cup of bless­ing which we bless is the communion of the blood of Christ, and the bread which we break the communion of the body of Christ, puts his meaning, our author thinks, beyond all doubt. He says,@@1 that the partaking of one bread makes the receivers of *many* to become *one body.* A just infer­ence, if this rite be of the nature of a feast upon the sacri­fice ; for then the communion of the body and blood of Christ unites the receivers into one bodv, by an equal dis­tribution of one common benefit. But if it be only a ge­neral commemoration of a deceased benefactor, it leaves the receivers as it found them, not one bcdy, but many se­parate professors of one common faith.

Thus have we given such a view as our limits would permit us to give, of the principal opinions that have been held respecting the nature and end of the Lord's Supper. It is an ordinance which seems not to be generally under­stood ; though, being intended to show forth the Lord’s death till he come, it is surely of sufficient importance to engage the attention of every serious Christian. The most considerable English divines who have expressly written upon it are, Johnson in his Unbl∞dy Sacrifice; Cudworth in his Discourse concerning the true Nature of the Lord’s Supper; Hoadley in his Plain Account; and Warburton

@@@11 Cor. x. 27.