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Fine $15.00 Carriage Harness at.....$11.95
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Yours for low prices,
B. S. SUTTON,
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WE
are now right in the midst of our Semi-Annual Reduction Sales of Men's, Boys' and Children's Suits and Overcoats.
Come early while we have fair assortments.
Respectfully,
MOODY & LUSBY,
Directly Opposite Court House, Chestertown, Md.

"Why I Am a Christian."

THIRD SERIES.—No. XI.

MY DEAR FRIEND:—In my last letter I promised to tell you something about the second great monument of the Christian Religion—the Holy Communion—the Eucharist, the Lord's Supper—then I will be compelled to suspend these letters for a while, but hope to resume them before long, when I will have another great monument of the Christian Faith and Religion to tell you about—

From the very beginning of history we read in the Bible, that God began to promise something to men. He promised indistinctly indeed, but still he made the promise. He would give to men something very wonderful. What was it? Was it the beautiful flowers and rich fruits of the earth? No; it was something far better than fruits and flowers. Was it Heaven that God said He would give? No; it was something millions of times better than Heaven itself. Hear, then, what it was. God said that He would give away to men Himself. But how could this be? How could God, of whose greatness there is no end, be given to man who is so little, even to a little child? God kept this secret to Himself. He did not reveal it to man. Thousands of years passed, and still God had not given Himself to man. Millions of people had lived and died, and yet God had not given Himself to them. Do you ask, why did God wait so long before He gave Himself to men? The answer is, that it was to let men have plenty of time to pray and make themselves holy, and get ready to receive the Creator of Heaven and Earth.

When the world was many thousands years old, God the Son, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, came down from Heaven. He came to unite Himself to man, to take man's nature, man's blood, and flesh, and bones, and unite them with His Divinity and become God and Man, in one Person. We call this the Incarnation. He was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary, but He had no earthly father—God was His father.

His Holy name was Jesus. He was a little Babe. He grew up. When He was about thirty years old He began to do the most wonderful things. He cured the sick, gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and even raised the dead to life. The people came round Him in crowds to hear His blessed words, and to see Him do works which no one but God could do.

One day He did an extrardinary thing, with only five loaves of bread and two fishes. He fed five thousand men, and they all ate as much as they liked, and there was a quantity left over.

After the people had eaten the bread which Jesus, by His Divine power had increased in quantity and given them so wonderfully, they followed Him. Then Jesus said to them, "You follow me because you ate of the loaves and were filled. But I will give you other bread, much better than the bread you have just eaten. It is better even than the beautiful manna, which Moses gave to your fathers in the desert. Your fathers ate that bread, and yet your fathers are dead. But if any man eat of the bread that I shall give you, he shall not die. And now I will tell you what that bread is that I am going to give you. It is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." So now, at last God told men the great secret which He had kept to Himself so long. He told the way in which He would give Himself away to them—that He would give His own flesh to be their food.

As soon as they heard these words, and knew what a wonderful thing He was going to do for them, what would you expect them to do? Surely they all knelt down before the Son of God and said, "O Jesus, we beleive the words Thou hast spoken, because Thou hast the words of eternal life, we believe that Thou wilt given us Thy flesh to eat, and Thy blood to drink. We praise Thee and thank Thee for this blood given."

But did they? No; many of the people acted quite otherwise. Instead of thanking the good Lord, they began to talk and dispute about it. Like many people in these days, they said, "How is it possible for Him to give us His flesh to eat? We do not believe it." But in order that there should be no mistake about it, and that every one might understand, Jesus says as plainly as words can speak, "Verily I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood ye have no life in you." After this many of the disciples of Jesus left Him, for they would not believe Him. Poor creatures! They left the greatest of all blessings, because they would not believe in it. But the apostles believed Jesus and said, "O Jesus, Thou hast the words of eternal life; we believe what Thou sayest, we believe that Thou wilt give us Thy flesh to eat and Thy blood to drink."

The apostles always remembered the promise which Jesus had made, to give them His most holy flesh and blood. But still He did not give it to them for a long time.

In Jerusalem there is a hill called Mount Zion. On the hill, near the tomb where King David was burried, there was a house with a large dining-room in it. If you had gone into that room on the evening before Jesus died on the cross, you would have seen Him at the table with His apostles. What a sight was this! to see the Creater in the midst of His creatures, going to do the greatest that ever was or will be done. He was going to give away Himself, to give His own most sacred body and blood to be the food of His creatures. It is wonderfully good of Jesus to give to us Heaven and earth, and to give to us His angels to take care of us. But it seems almost too good and too kind of Him to give Himself to us to be our food, just as the bread we eat at breakfast is our food. Let us try to picture to ourselves the scene in that room.

At the creation God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. Because when God speaks the word, the thing is done, and done at once. Now, let us attend very carefully. Jesus is going to speak the word that will make bread and wine become His Body and His Blood. On that table at which they were sitting, three was bread and there was wine. First of all Jesus took the bread into His holy, divine hands. He lifted His eyes to Heaven, blessed that bread, and as He broke it into fragments He said these solemn words, "This is My body." Quicker than a flash of lightning that bread received into it something from Him, that made it His body; Then all the Apostles ate of it. In like manner then He took the cup containing wine mixed with a little water, into His hands, blessed it, "This is my blood." He whose word the wind and the sea obey, was obeyed by the wine. In that moment the wine became His blood. Then all the Apostles drank of it. An eternity had passed and the most holy Flesh and Blood of God had never yet been given to any creature. The Apostles were the first to whom this greatest of all blessing was given.

Now, many will ask how can this be? We can not tell—God does not make known to His creatures the reason, the how, the wherefore, of all His mysteries—He does not tell us how He could be present, alive, sitting at the table with His Apostles and at the same time, making that bread and that wine His Body and His Blood—We will understand and know some day, but not now. Only we must believe that every word of God is true and to be believed by us. We must not doubt, nor question, but believe and accept. And we may, I think, reverently think and talk about this great mystery, and this wonderful gift and blessing. We find that from that day to this, Christians everywhere have celebrated and continue to celebrate the Holy Communion — Communion means Common—union, Holy Communion means the Holy Common—union of the Lord with His people—A uniting of God with man, an entering of God into man, for when man receives the Blessed Bread and Wine in this Holy Communion he receives God into himself—The Holy Communion is much more than a simple memorial, a reminder of Christ's death for us. Any church can appoint and observe a memorial, and arrange it with such accessories as may seem appropriate—and while that would undoubtedly be a pious and holy act, it would not and could not convey to man any special gift, help, or strength more than such as he would receive from any service of prayer and praise. There must be something more in the Holy Communion than that. We do not believe that at the Holy Communion the Bread and Wine are changed into the very true and real Body and Blood of Christ—we believe that they remain bread and wine; but we do believe that when God's minister blesses, consecrates that bread and wine, using our Lord's own words. "This is my body" and "This is my Blood," there enters into that bread and that wine a special gift from Christ Himself, that gives to them a power, influence and effect, which they did not possess before—that Christ by His spirit comes to them and makes them the means, the vehicle, the channe through and by which, the prepared receivers have Christ Himself conveyed to them. As leven or yeast enters into the dough and gives lite to the dead, so does the leven or yeast of Christ's real, spiritual presence enter into and possess those elements of bread and wine, and makes them, to those who come and partake in the proper spirit, the recipients of Christ's own body and blood—And such have received just exactly the same blessing and benefit that they would receive if, Christ was actually present there in His Divine Human Body, and gave Himself to each. The bread and wine are now holy, blessed and consecrated—every single crumb or atom of the bread, every minutest drop of the wine are holy. They are the Body and Blood of Christ, by His appointment, and because He says that they are—let us not doubt, but believe and reverently receive. And this wonderful, incomprehensible monument to the truth of the Christian religion has been observed and celebrated by Christians everywhere from its first institutionin the night in which Christ was betrayed until this day, and it will continue to be a great mysterious memorial feast, and body and blood of Christ until His coming again. His promise that by this means He will be the food of His people's souls, to give them strength and life will never pass away. It was the will of Jesus, that from that first celebration of this Blessed Feast, in the upper room in Jerusalem, his poor creatures everywhere should freely eat His flesh and drink His blood, to make them holy before God. This Holy Feast gives us food for our souls—we have souls, you know, as well as bodies—we feed and nourish our bodies regularly and faithfully every day. We would die if we did not eat. We would soon starve without food and drink, but bread and meat aud drink are material things and nourish only our bodies—our souls must have different food, our souls are spiritual, they require spiritual food—and where can such food be found but in that food which our Lord has Himself provided—and that food is He Himself, conveyed to us veiled in, hidden by the bread and wine, blessed in the Holy Feast of His love.

For the good of His creatures He wished His Body and Blood to be scattered over the earth almost like the flowers of the fields. But Jesus knew that in about forty days, He would be in Heaven, and He would not be on earth to give away His Flesh and Blood. Therefore He wished to leave others on earth to do it for Him, so He said to His Apostles and Ministers, "I give you the power to do what I have been doing, to make bread and wine become My Body and Blood, and to give it to My people." The word of Jesus will never pass away. The sun will shine on the earth until the last day of the world, so the Body and Blood of Christ will be given in His Church to His people to be the light, the life, the food of their souls to the end of the world.

Oh, the poor and the weary, and the sad and the sorrowful, and the fatherless—why will they not understand? They want a cure, they want some one to do them good, why, then, do they stay away? Why do they keep at a distance? Is the living Body of Jesus Christ on earth for them to touch, or is it not? They know it is. Does virtue come out of it to cure all who touch it, or does it not? They know it does; and still they will not come to be cured by it. The weak man will not come to Jesus to get strength. The sorrowful man will not come to Him to get rest. The fatherless child will not come to get a protecting Father. Come, all whose hearts are sad and sorrowful—for hear what He says, "Come unto me all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Faithfully yours,
HENRY B. MARTIN.

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