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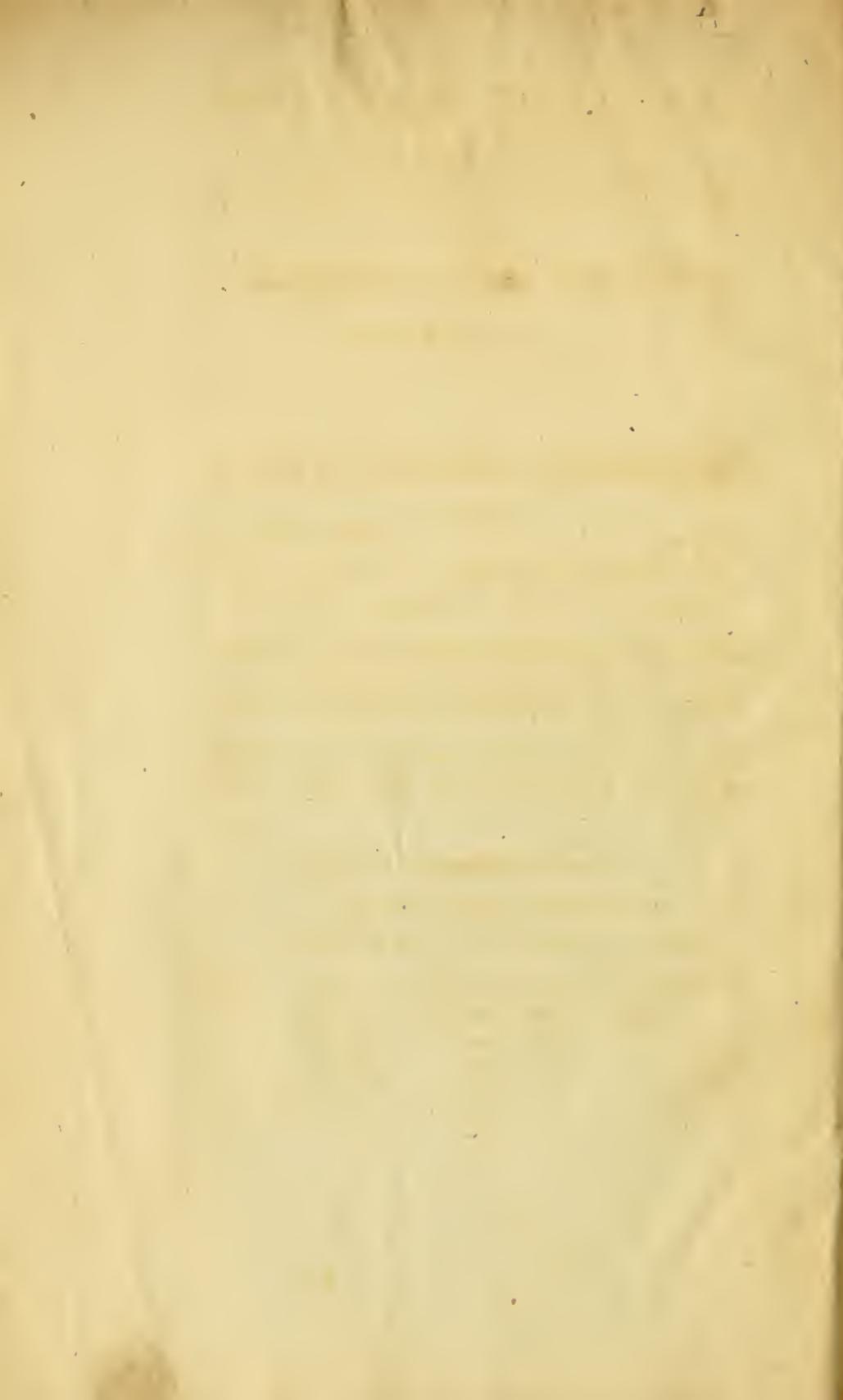
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CATHOLIC BAPTISM

E X A M I N E D :

O R,

THOUGHTS ON THE GROUND,

AND EXTENT,

O F

Baptismal Administration;

Wherein Mr. BOOTH'S Publications on
BAPTISM are noticed, so far as deemed ma-
terial to the Object of Inquiry in this Work,

BY WILLIAM MILLER.

*Let every Man be fully perswaded in his own Mind.
Prove all Things, hold fast that which is good.*

PAUL,

HIGH-WYCOMBE:

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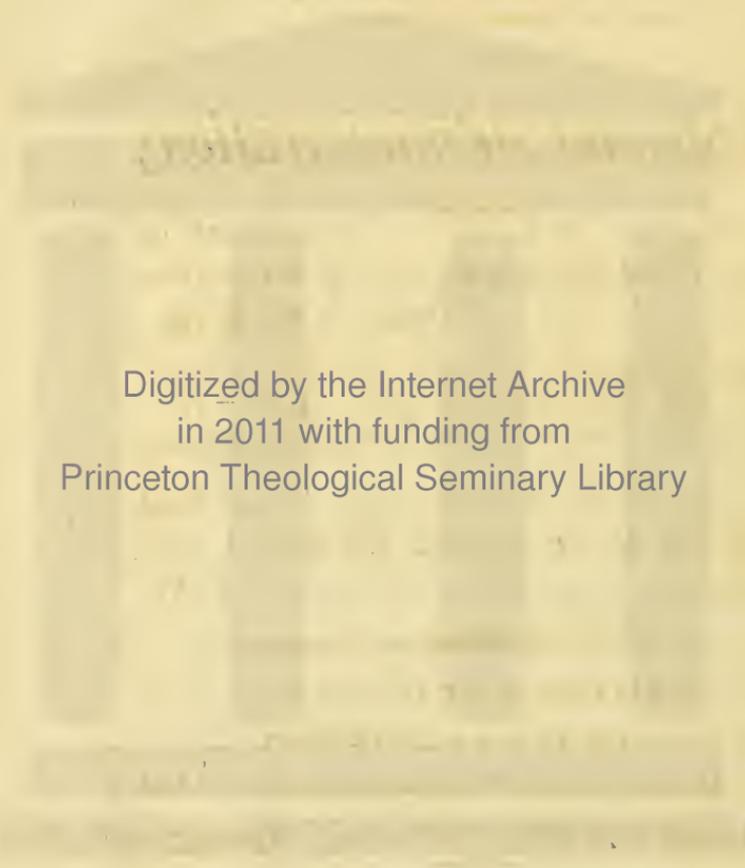
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INTRODUCTORY PREFACE.

BAPTISM is an Ordinance of the New Testament, which has occasioned considerable Controversy. Numerous publications of Pædobaptists and Antipædobaptists, have made their appearance in behalf of their respective opinions. After all that has been advanced, Unanimity is far from being the Boast of Professors on the Subject. Some, every now and then, feel themselves obligated, or induced, for one reason or another, to come forward as Writers thereon. It is owing to this, that hitherto there has been, and yet is likely to be, a succession of Books on this controverted article of the Christian Faith. Well, be it so : there can be no doubt, but Benefit will accrue to the Truth, and the World, eventually, thereby. Controversial Writings, however much to be regreted on some accounts, will, it may be expected, prove effectual,

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accompanied with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to bring about that unity of the Faith which is desirable. Nor can it be justly questioned, I conceive, on a Subject of this kind, nor perhaps on any other, but an alteration, at least in some degree, in the Statement and mode of Argument, hitherto used in its support, may introduce Uniformity of sentiment and practice.

Until I had seen the works of Mr. Booth, and Dr. Williams, I entertained no thoughts of becoming a public Advocate for Catholic Baptism. However, after a careful perusal of both, various considerations which are here submitted to the Reader, occurred in favor of this enlarged Baptifmal plan. They are published, to borrow the language of Dr. Jortin on another occasion, "for the service of TRUTH
 " by One, who would be glad to attend,
 " and grace her Triumphs ; *as a Soldier* ;
 " If he has had the honour to serve
 " successfully under her banner : or, *as her*
 " *Captive*, tied to her Chariot Wheels, if
 " he has, *though undesignedly*, committed
 " any offence against her."

Every

Every Reader of Mr. Booth's Work, entitled, Pædobaptism examined, on the principles, concessions, and reasonings of the most learned Pædobaptists, will discover and commend the Author for considerable pains and labor. On the UTILITY of it, in various points of view, I venture with equal confidence to pronounce, though it is professedly, and in some parts of it violently, written against the cause of Pædobaptism. The Index to his quotations naturally leads us to view him surrounded with numerous volumes: and among them he resembles the industrious BEE in a garden, collecting from every flower; yet for PÆDOBAPTISTS, he is not without a *Sting*. The design of his employ is, to shew the inconsistency of the pious, and most learned of the denomination just mentioned, in practising Infant-Baptism on their principles and concessions. And indeed Mr. B.—'s reasoning and representation run to such an extent, that if others are like-minded with myself, they will join me in the opinion, that such palpable inconsistency as this Author would load
their

their memory and writings with, is with difficulty indeed reconciled to their being men of eminence in literature, or even integrity. A work similar to Mr. B—'s, as to its general design was, I think, very much to be wished for : but whether we consider a Pædo, or Anti-pædobaptist thus engaged, it has a delicacy peculiar to it, arising from the nature of the Subject, and the number and character of those who hold different opinions upon it, that requires impartiality and moderation, liberality and judgement in executing it. Truth demands the acknowledgment, in a general way, that Mr. B. has had too much reason to avail himself, in many instances, of the Works he has ransacked. Notwithstanding, if I may offer my opinion, the Cause he opposes, will receive benefit by his publication, as it gives us a collection of what are considered as Inconsistencies in Pædobaptists : while there can be no doubt of the Author's taking every advantage he can, to sink the reputation of their cause. If the Reader has *Pædobaptism Examined, &c.* at hand, he may at once see Quotations gathered

gathered from east, west, north and south. The prudent and consistent Peruser will not fail to make a difference between a GREAT DEAL that will apply as *Common Property* to one side as well as the other, and that which strictly belongs to his own. He will not forget the *arrangement* (not to speak of the *Quotations themselves*) was optional and lay with the Author and may give too strong a colouring. He will distinguish between the Quotations serving as a Text, and the *Remarks and Enlargement thereon*. When this is done, a small Part of Mr. B—'s Work, *compared with the bulk of the Whole*, can be considered as immediately to the purpose, and adapted to the cause he would defend, or against the cause he would oppose. Therefore, while I cannot but think, TRUTH will stand indebted to Pædobaptism examined, I am equally apprehensive, its Author will be disappointed.

One effect of his work appears in Anti-pædobaptism examined ; or a strict and impartial inquiry into the nature and design, subjects and mode of Baptism, &c. by Dr. Williams. Acknowledged, as this work has

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been

been, to possess considerable merit, Mr. B. in a late performance of his, affects to treat it with the greatest indignity. He tells us by the pen of another, that "he would not have
 " thought it worth while to have answered
 " the performance of his opponent, but for
 " the clamorous confidence of some people,
 " who reckon a book *unanswerable* when no
 " reply is made to it." What provocation should we think a person has received, who in his preface expresses himself thus: "Yes,
 " I have made some exertions in order to
 " prove, that I am not enamoured with *Anti-*
 " *pædobaptism examined*—that I am no more
 " convinced by the force of my Opponent's
 " arguments, than I am charmed with the
 " *modesty* of his pretensions, the *consistency*
 " of his sentiments, *perspicuity* of his mean-
 " ing, the *accuracy* of his language, or the
 " *elegance* of his composition." Will not the Reader feel surprize at such language as this, when he learns the cause in the succeeding sentence? "On all which, I have
 " made some animadversions that would
 " certainly have been spared, even though
 " I had thought proper to write a defence,
 " if

“ if he had not considered me as CAPTIVATED with his performance.” What unpleasent intelligence did this Author’s correspondent in the country convey to him ! Surely, that gentleman did not foresee the effects of it, or he would not have contributed to so unfavorable an impression on the temper of Mr. B. by communicating what he obtained “from a friendly interview that he had with Mr. (now Dr.) Edward Williams.” Hereafter, let Pædobaptists relinquish every idea of *captivating* Mr. B. with a production in favor of their distinguishing sentiments. Let them take warning for the future and desist from the attempt, on pain of having every oversight in language marked by his Italics—a collection made of the first person pronoun and other expressions, from different parts of the book, to stamp and fix the character of the Egotist upon the Author—the charge of *apparent* inconsistency, when, if one part is taken with another, passages are reconcilable. Is it credible, that it is the same Author who writes in his preface to his former work, every one

must confess, that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God, and that the cause he pleads requires not such means of defence? How unhappy the exchange of
 “ a few strokes of pleasantry in the course
 “ of his reflections on the language and ar-
 “ guments of some Pædobaptists,” in that work, for notorious strokes of illiberality and unkindness in his Animadversions on this of Dr. Williams’s.—Much room is there for enlargement, but even these hints would have been spared, was not injustice done to the character of a respectable Writer and much-valued friend.

Notice is taken of the three pieces already mentioned, quotations from them acknowledged, and references given at the end of this Work. I lie under a great mistake, if the cause here pleaded, does not gain advantage from them all, objections to, and difficulties attending on a more confined plan being avoided herein. Circumstanced as the state of the controversy between our Authors is, it occurred that the *time* and *purpose* well agree, for offering these Thoughts, &c. after Mr. B—’s Defence,

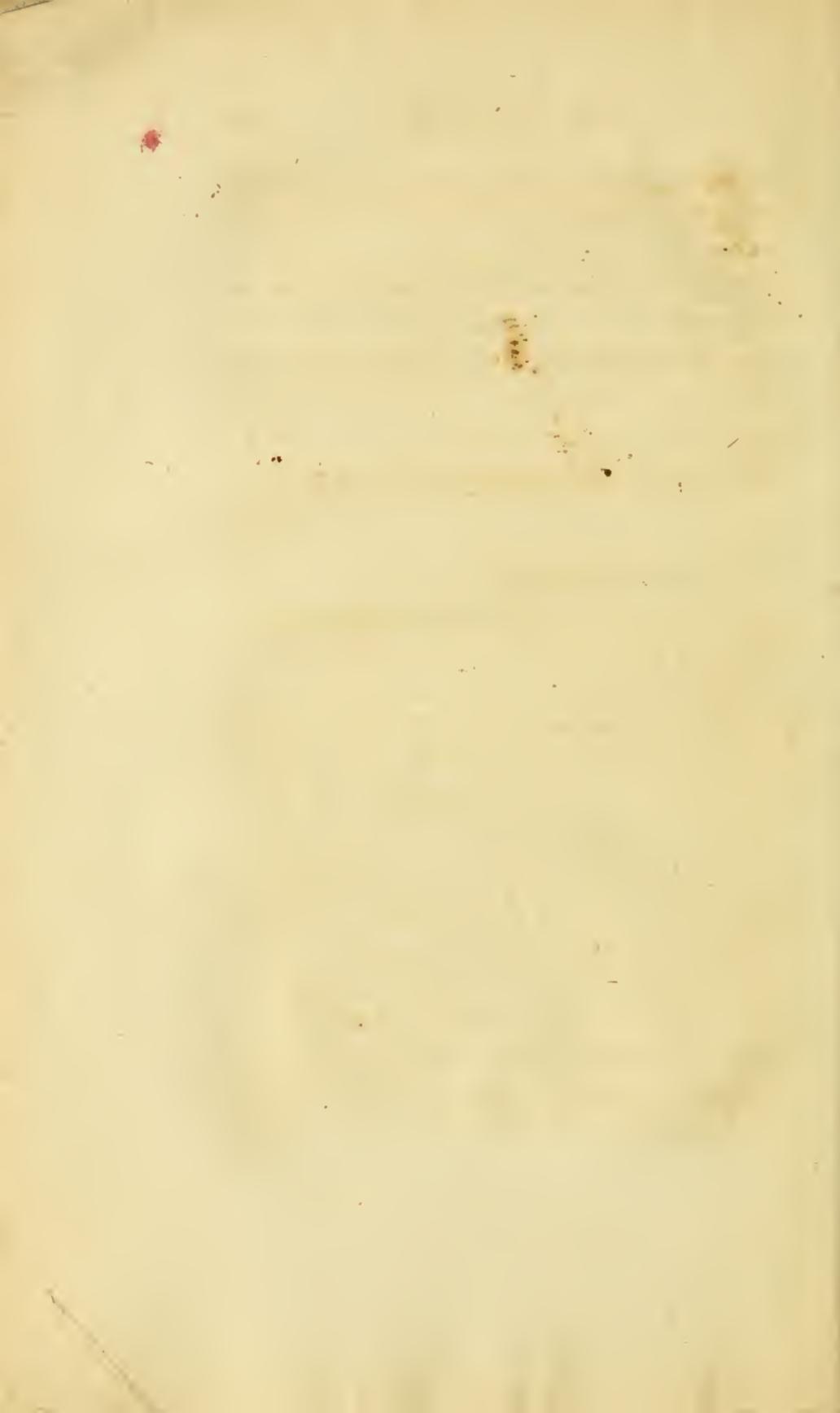
fence, and before the reply, which Time may, perhaps, produce, on the part of his Antagonist.

The first chapter might have been enlarged, but only so much is inserted as was deemed sufficient to lay a foundation for the succeeding ones. Particular attention is paid in the second chapter to our Lord's Commission, and the historical accounts relating to Baptism in the New Testament, because the neglect of a close investigation, the want of distinct and particular observations here, would necessarily entail mistaken views of the whole.

Whatever opinions, different Readers may entertain concerning the plan and execution of this work, it is hoped, no improper Spirit, no unbecoming language will be found to hinder its acceptance. It is the Author's wish to improve daily in a conformity of spirit and speech to the Apostolic maxim *of speaking the truth in love*. So far as the sentiments contained here bear the criteria and sacred image of truth, the blessing of God is implored, and expected on them. Personal considerations

ons respecting the Author, are thrown aside: his only concern is, that the REDEEMER'S Interest and Glory may be promoted; and as a Friend of the Bridegroom, he will heartily rejoice at his increase, and the spread of the Gospel always.







Catholic Baptism examined.

CHAPTER I.

Of the privileged State of all Nations under the Times of the glorious Messiah.

K NOWN unto GOD are all his Works from the beginning of the World, We, therefore, conclude from the wisdom, goodness, and veracity of the divine being, that Prophecies and Promises, which are intended to reveal the State and Events of future times, may be depended upon, as containing a true and faithful Account. From the perfect agreement of ancient prophecies and promises with the times they respect, "their Evidence," as a valuable Writer observes, "in its own nature is direct and pertinent; and when its meaning is ascertained, its verdict (*cæteris paribus*) is indisputable." As to pass
over

over these, would be to disregard eligible means of information on the Subject in hand, it behoves us to avail ourselves of their assistance.

Old Testament Prophecies and Promises, stand as sacred Eminences in Scripture, whence we may take a Survey of a widening Prospect, extending through the lapse of ages, down to the consummation of all Things. Hence the Patriarch Abraham foresaw the Redeemer's day, and was glad. His heart gladdened at the scenes, *the bright scenes*, opening to his view from those enlarged declarations, *In thee shall all the FAMILIES OF THE EARTH be blessed.* Gen. chap. 12. v. 3. And again, *in thy seed shall ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH be blessed.* Gen. chap. 22. v. 18. The seed here intended, upon the testimony of an inspired Apostle, is CHRIST. Gal. chap. 3. v. 16. All nations without exception are the privileged subjects of the promise; and the exact position in which we behold them, is *blessed*. O joyful Tidings! O glorious Period!—Blessing, which, like a River, ran in the narrow channel of the Jewish nation for several ages, at length spreads itself far and wide; and like the Sea which grasps in all the shore, comprehends every part of the habitable Globe—Exult, ye nations, at the thought! To interpret these passages without a manifest necessity, so as to exclude the greater part of the nations, must be doing

ing injustice to the force of the language, the parties interested, and the liberal grant of the promiser. Their natural import seems to be, that UNIVERSAL BLESSING *in some important sense*, shall abound under the Redeemer's gentle reign. Like a distant voice, they proclaim in our ears, a change *in the relative state of all nations*, with regard to gospel privileges. Countries known and unknown, polished and barbarous, even those *ignorant* of the gospel, as well as those acquainted with it, are, compared with their former state, benefited in this respect, upon the commencement of the days of Messiah.

Equally auspicious to the world at large, is that passage. So shall He sprinkle MANY NATIONS. Isaiah 52. 15. This, like the former, is spoken of gospel times, and only a varied form of expressing the same thing. It contains the assurance of some benefits, which the nations at large shall be made partakers of under Christ. "The obvious and natural acceptance of the term, *sprinkle*, in this connection," says the author of *Anti-Pædobaptism examined*, "is that of *purifying*; and it undoubtedly alludes to those ceremonial purifications, which were performed by sprinkling persons and things." Vol. 1. p. 264. Seeing in every sense in which the word, *sprinkle*, can be taken, it denotes a benefit; and the benefit, be it what it may, respects nations as such, there is

good reason for observing with the afore-cited author, " the prediction, properly and directly intends *external Holiness*," that holiness, whereby nations, now, are distinguished from nations before the coming of Christ.

In surveying these, and similar passages of the old testament, what a wonderfully constituted state of grace and privilege arises to our view. Virgil, in his pastoral, entitled *Pollio*, kindles into rapture on describing the golden age of the world. Aided by prophecy and promise, is there not much greater occasion, in reference to gospel times, to break out in the language of that Heathen Poet, "*Aspice venturo lætentur ut omnia seculo,*" observe how all things rejoice at the coming age—Well might Simeon embrace his Saviour, in his withered arms, on seeing Him in the temple, and pathetically add, Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

To new Testament History we next appeal. Undoubtedly, *this* accords with former prophecies and promises. Prophecy is but the account, beforehand, of times ; history, of times, when come; and to be true, they must agree with the times, and with one another. It may be further expected, that history and prophecy should reciprocally throw light upon each other; so that by the distinct information of both, we may ascertain in the clearest manner, the state of the times they represent.

The

The history of the new testament, comes in aid of the privileged state already mentioned, with the fullest evidence. Jews and Gentiles, as they formerly differed in this respect, are herein *opposed* to each other. A line appears drawn around the former, while the latter are excluded: within this sacred enclosure, they are called *Children*, and the Gentiles without, were for ages as *dogs*, and *outcasts*, without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. Eph. chap. 2. v. 12. Sad pitiable state! how desirable an alteration! This Abraham saw attendant upon the day of Christ. God's promise to Him imported so much; and new Testament History abundantly confirms it.

Prejudices, like to those which influence the minds of too many still, and which prevent their viewing the world in so favorable a light as to external gospel privileges, as they ought, prevailed in the breasts of the Apostles. To destroy them in Peter, was the design of that extraordinary vision related, Acts chap. 10. He saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet, knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth, wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him. Rise, Peter, kill

kill and eat. But Peter said, not so Lord, for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, what God hath cleansed, that call not thou *common*. This was done thrice, and the vessel was received up again into heaven. V. 11.—

16. Peter doubting in himself what this should mean, Providence becomes interpreter. The sequel of the story shews, the design was, to prepare Peter for an embassy among the *Gentiles*; to teach that servant of God the long existing distinction, between Jews and *Gentiles* was no more; that the latter stood upon equal footing with the former under a dispensation wherein all are *One*; to dispossess him of opinions and prejudices to the contrary, and to excite that liberal spirit in him, which suited the Genius of the gospel, and upon which depended the discharge of the commission he had received,—Go and disciple all nations. Peter, like Paul in another case, was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. Happily, no nation since, as it was before the setting up of the kingdom of Messiah, is debarred from the privileges of the gospel. Adieu, for ever adieu to language, once in use, and confining Salvation, i. e. the means of Salvation, to Israel. God's will and declaration of it rendered Abraham's posterity sole possessors of it. All besides were as nations whom God knew not, as unclean. But, glory to God, times are changed. *Gentiles* at large,
 contrasted

contrasted with their former state, are, by God's full and absolute declarations of mercy to be reckoned, clean, *relatively holy*; and, consequently, are in as fit a capacity for external privileges, as the Jews before them were from their relative sanctity.

A blessing of this nature should not be held in low estimation by creatures, who are less than the least of all God's mercies. It is a blessing to all to whom the promise and prophecy convey it; so that nations, even ignorant of the gospel, being, nevertheless, interested in the constitution of the gospel, as well as those acquainted with it, are benefited. To be situated as gentiles once were, would be an evil, the absence thereof must be a good.

Pertinent to this part of the subject, requisite for its further explanation, and introductory to the sequel, are the remarks which have been made on the terms, *unclean* and *holy*—“It is generally agreed, says the pious and learned Mr. Baxter, that the most common use of the word *holy*, if not the only, both in scripture and profane writers, is to signify a thing separated to God—*Omne Sanctum est Deo sanctum*; whatsoever is holy, is holy to God.—Now as holiness thus signifieth a separation to God, so it may be distinguished thus; a person or thing may be holy or separated to God either in state
“and

“ and standing relation, or else only for some
 “ particular act, or use, whether for shorter time,
 “ or a longer. This sense of the term, he ob-
 “ serves, is used in scripture, near six hundred
 “ times. Baxter’s plain scripture proof, pages
 80 and 82.—The **RULE** for determining the
 situation of the gentiles, in the above sense, clean
 or holy, is, in all equity, and upon scripture war-
 rant, to consider the state of the Jewish nation, to
 which they stand opposed. Now the **ORIGIN**,
 of Israel’s seperation from the rest of the world,
 was God’s promise to Abraham and his seed. To
 put them in remembrance of this, was God made
 known to that people so often, as the God of Abra-
 ham. Exodus, chap. iii. v. 6. 15. 16. chap. iv.
 v. 5. Hence the privileges they possessed. Shall
ANY NATION, (and none is excepted) be declared
 clean or holy as the Jews, upon the free and un-
 incumbered promise of Jehovah, and not at least
 have, *de jure*, correspondent privileges accom-
 panying a similar state of relative holiness? Is it
 conceivable, Abraham in the foresight of the fu-
 ture state of the nations under Christ, guided by
 the promise made concerning them, would view
 them in any other light?—Thus ran the divine
 declarations, as they immediately respected himself
 and posterity. I will make of thee **A GREAT**
NATION, and I will bless thee, and thou shalt
 be a **BLESSING**. Gen. 12. 2. chap. 22. 17.
 Whence was Abraham to judge of the manner
 and

and extent in which CHRIST the PROMISED SEED in *some important sense*, would be a blessing to all nations, unless from the manner and extent in which he himself was to be a blessing?—This Patriarch was a blessing to the whole Jewish Nation by the promise of Jehovah, comprehending himself and descendants: surely, it was natural for Abraham to conclude that to the same extent, CHRIST would be a blessing to ALL NATIONS?—To Abraham and his seed appertained divers external privileges: could he conceive the nations under CHRIST, would not have what was tantamount to them?—With such prospects before him, his believing soul might well rejoice; and like the wise men upon seeing the star, with exceeding great joy.

If Abraham had so much reason to apprehend the nations would be privileged after this manner at that distance of time, and from such grounds of inference, much more does the historical and doctrinal language of the New-testament, warrant us to believe this same state is *the unalienable Inheritance* of the nations, till time shall be no more.

Two passages in proof of this, deserve remark. One is, Rom. chap. 11. v. 16. *if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy, and if the root be holy, so are the branches.* Having in the preceding observations ascertained the sense of the term, *holy*, it

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only

only remains to enquire, to whom the observation of the Apostle is applicable, and in what way it is true, if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is holy, &c.—If we attend to the connection and drift of the Chapter, the passage is plainly meant to refer both to Jews and Gentiles. Is it inquired, upon what ground it is true of them? I answer, upon the ground of the PROMISE, which constitutes both Jews and Gentiles EQUAL ALIKE HOLY in a relative sense. Internal holiness cannot be meant, for it does not follow, if the root was holy in that sense, the branches would be so too. No promise secures internal holiness by way of invariable succession from Ancestors to posterity. Herein progenitors and descendants may differ. The impossibility of applying the Apostle's observations in this way, proves him to have a different meaning. Examine it by the interpretation of relative holiness, it will admit of the most UNIVERSAL application, first to Jews and then to Gentiles under the gospel dispensation. The Generations of the Jews in succession from Abraham to Christ were, *uniformly, universally and equally holy, relatively considered*; and the Gentiles under the gospel are so too. Divide the largest bodies of people into small, and these into still less, it will hold true, if the first-fruit of a nation, city, town, village, family, be holy, the lump is: because the promise which gives birth

to this relative holiness, since it comprehends the whole, must of course, the parts.

The other passage, claiming our notice, is 1. Cor. chap. 7. v. 14. *for the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.* So our translators have rendered the original; and accordingly our Expositors comment upon it. In reference to the subject in hand, it has been strangely bandied about by all parties; and both sides seem to feel themselves bound to abide by the English version of the passage. Drs. Doddridge, Stennet, Williams, and Mr. Booth, apparently regard the order of the English text as true. The author of *Anti-Pædo-baptism examined*, proposes considering, in this passage, the import of the phrase, answering to the words in English, *sanctified by*. By so doing, a coalition or partnership, takes place between two words in the passage which, in the original are quite separate; and if I mistake not, need not, from grammatical construction, or from the design of the Apostle, be joined together. The Greek may be thus read, *The husband who is not a believer with or as the wife, HATH BEEN SANCTIFIED OR MADE HOLY, and the wife who is not a believer with or as the husband, HATH BEEN SANCTIFIED OR MADE HOLY.* The learned Mr. Pool, in his *Annotations*, on the

eleventh verse of this chapter, marks an oversight of our translators, in rendering a verb passive in the active form. The like is observable in the passage before us : for the Verb, which is the preterperfect tense, passive, of the indicative mood, and ought to have been rendered, "hath been sanctified," is on the contrary translated, "is sanctified" which is the indicative mood, present tense, passive. It is as extraordinary that sundry words in the Greek, which immediately and naturally follow one another, should be displaced. Schrevelius observes, the preposition here used has the force and construction of all the prepositions, so that no objection can be made to its being construed *with*, or *as*. No such thing, therefore, is intended as our translation would import, namely, that an unbelieving husband is sanctified by his wife, or that the unbelieving wife, is sanctified by her husband. The idea suggested, is quite different, that though the husband is not a believer as the wife is, yet he hath, nevertheless, been sanctified, i. e. made relatively holy; and that the wife, though not a believer as her husband, has been the same. Not that in either case, the one is sanctified by the other : the unbelieving party is not made better in any relative sense by the believing. The marriage state does in no view affect or alter the relative holiness of either husband or wife; and both are declared, notwithstanding they may be unbelievers, still holy

Is it asked, upon what ground?—The answer is, by virtue of the dispensation they live under, which constitutes every one relatively holy, independent of faith, and unbelief.

The difficulties of ascertaining in what sense the unbelieving party could be sanctified by the opposite, and which have occasioned such variety of opinions, are upon this view of the passage, done away; and appear entirely groundless. Thus understanding it, we admit with vast force and advantage Mr. Booth's remarks, wherein he observes, "On this term, sanctified, the inspired writer, manifestly lays a peculiar emphasis; such an emphasis, that it seems to be the governing word of the whole sentence, and a key to its true meaning." It is, indeed, a word of vast importance: the whole passage rests upon it, as its basis: all besides this word in each clause, denotes, and distinguishes the person spoken of; *this* describes his or her relative state. The Apostle's conclusion concerning their offspring is natural, and the reason of it obvious. The promise on which the relative holiness of the parents stands, equally includes the children; and thus coincides that other passage, if the root be holy, so are the branches.—What farther tends to recommend this explanation of the text, is, that it answers the design of the Apostle, which appears from the context, to be the reconciling of the believing party

to dwell with the unbelieving: it being supposed, that after their marriage, either the husband, or the wife, had been converted. The Apostle's words are to this effect, as addressed to the believer on either side, 'Tho' the Grace of God, hath made so great a change in you, that, your partner by marriage is just the reverse to yourself, remaining in a state of unbelief, yet notwithstanding, you are to regard him, under the privileged state of the gospel, as relatively holy, and your children equally so. Think not then of departing from him, O Wife; for what knowest thou (and relative holiness is an encouragement to hope it may be so in the use of means) whether thou shalt save thy husband? No key can better fit the wards of a lock, than this Interpretation seems to correspond with the drift and scope of the Apostle. It consequently bids the fairer to be the one intended.

Upon the whole then, it appears on the suffrage of Old-testament predictions and promises, and New-testament accounts, that there is the greatest reason to regard all the nations of the earth, indiscriminately, under an advantageous relative change of state, for which they are indebted to the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Well might a Multitude of the heavenly host at the birth of so extensive a Mercy, bless and praise God, saying, *glory to God in the highest, peace upon earth, good will towards men.*

Chap.

CHAPTER II.

Comprehending an Inquiry into the Right Rule of administering the Baptismal Ordinance; who are the proper Subjects of it; and an Examination of scripture Accounts designed to Discover their Agreement, or Disagreement with, their Confirmation or Refutation, of the Author's views of Baptism.

THE design of this work being professedly to ascertain who are the PROPER SUBJECTS of Baptism under the gospel dispensation, and what the REGULATING PRINCIPLE to be observed as to administering the Ordinance, this is the proper place to lay before the Reader, the author's sentiments, together with those upon the subject to which he objects.

In the judgment of Anti-Pædobaptists, the only proper subjects of Baptism, are persons deemed GENUINE BELIEVERS ON A CREDIBLE PROFESSION OF FAITH. According to this sentiment, *all infants and the greater part of adults,* are excluded from the ordinance.—The opinion of the Author of this work is, that, the right and rule of administering the baptismal ordinance, which confessedly

confessedly lies with a minister, stands on a different footing; that true faith does not essentially constitute a proper subject of baptism; that however it may, or it may not be in the baptized, or however the saving advantage of this, as of all other ordinances depends upon faith, (which is granted) that scripture holds forth other tenable ground than this, on which persons may be admitted to that sacred rite.

Of these two sentiments *that*, be it which it may, must be the true and scriptural one, which hath the least real inconveniencies attending it; is most suited to the Genius of the gospel; maintains the harmony in the several parts of scripture; and to which things apparently contradictory, may be most safely and easily reduced.

Among other difficulties, the following lie in the way of embracing the Anti-Pædobaptist plan.

1. On the part of the administrator of the ordinance. "Admission to baptism, says Dr. Gill, " lies *solely* in the breast of the administrator, " who is the only judge of the qualifications for " it; and has the *sole* power for receiving to it " and rejecting from it; if not sanctified, he may " reject a person thought fit by a church and ad- " mit a person to baptism not thought fit by a " church. Body of Divinity. Vol. p. 312. What " an arduous task devolves in this case upon a minister of CHRIST! Every minister, is officially

ally, to decide upon the merit, or demerit of the candidate; and this depends upon his faith or unbelief, as the credibility and the incredibility of profession will make it manifest. CREDIBLE PROFESSION! how vague the term! how varying and clashing as to what constitutes it, may be the ideas of different ministers. Who is to ascertain what degree of knowledge, &c. what kind of practice, or length of time, are necessary to make A PROFESSION CREDIBLE? After all is done to discover the sincerity of the heart, who can take upon him to affirm, the person may not deceive himself, or else, impose upon others? A credible profession being made the standard of administering the ordinance to Adults, it is necessarily an UNCERTAIN RULE, and liable to vary, as ministers entertain different opinions about it. A candidate may be qualified in the judgment of one minister, who is not so in the judgment of another; and the latter may have an equal right to determine unfavourably, as the former may, to do the contrary. Is it reasonable to imagine, that ever *this* was, can, or ought to be, the determining rule of administration? A rule which may be multiplied into as many rules, and differing from one another, as administrators agree or disagree about the nature of a credible profession? Is it likely, that Christ would empower his ministers solely to baptize, each upon his own judgment?

According to the judicious remarks of Dr. Gill, it is allowed, the ordinance of baptism lies *solely* with a minister, and that he is sole-judge of the qualifications for it.—But, these admitted, it is highly desirable for the sake of the baptizer, and candidate, yea, indispensably requisite, there should be some more determinate rule of guidance than credible profession. This is to be sought upon a plan where it is not possible to mistake. This we offer in lieu of the other, by proposing relative holiness; or, in other words, we would exchange that which is subject to such uncertainty, difficulty, and inconvenience, for that relative state arising from the absolute and gracious Will of God.

2. The term “all nations” used in Christ’s commission, and in other parts of Scripture, descriptive of the gospel-dispensation, are, upon the Antipædo-baptist plan, indefensible. Exceptions unavoidably follow it, to the exclusion of, by far, very far, the greater part of the nations. A few, very few comparatively deemed credible professors, and, ALL NATIONS, are terms synonymous! Can Scripture give countenance to such notorious improprieties? Can the oracles of heaven tolerate such an abuse of words?

Free of such embarrassments, consistent with the nature of the baptismal ordinance, comports with the general strain of the gospel, the following

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ing ground of administration is urged, in the room of the other exceptionable plan.

THE RELATIVE STATE OF THE NATIONS UNDER THE GOSPEL, IS IN ITSELF A SUFFICIENT TITLE TO BAPTISM, AND IS THE ALONE INVARIABLE, CLEAR, AND CERTAIN RULE OF DIRECTION IN ADMINISTERING THE ORDINANCE.

It appears to me, the two ordinances of preaching and baptizing, in a particular manner depend on this relative state : it became necessary, therefore, to insist thereon in the first chapter; and having pointed it out in several passages, to examine its merit and use as to baptism. Such is the design of the present chapter.

The prophetic, promisory, historical and doctrinal parts of scripture, justify the idea of a change, greatly in favor of the world at large, taking place on the coming of Christ. It is now for us to enquire, whether, upon that ground, the Nations may be baptized, as well as preached unto, INDISCRIMINATELY. Objections to this idea, if any, are to be found—either in the nature of the relative state and baptism, disagreeing in themselves—or something repugnant to it in some divine order respecting baptism—in accounts of the administration of it, or else in passages addressed to persons, *as*, or *about* to be baptized. These in the following pages, will be distinctly examined: and I

trust, it will be shewn, that on a suitably close and impartial investigation, nothing like an insuperable objection arises from either of them. On the contrary, it is presumed, they will appear reconcilable to the right asserted in behalf of the nations, and in various points of view, confirming them in it.

I. To begin with the relative change, (or that holiness whereof it consists as a benefit) and the ordinance of baptism itself. A Superstructure requires its foundation to be equal to itself, or it cannot stand thereon: an answerable consistency and suitability between the relative state and baptism is discernible, or the argument from it must be abandoned and given up.—What is there in baptism, that will not allow us to attach it to the nations as constituted *relatively holy* under the gospel? “I am led, says Dr. Williams, by an attentive and impartial survey of those sacred passages that have any reference to the baptismal right, to consider it in its most *general nature*, as the instituted ordinance of a regular admission into the visible kingdom of Christ, or as it is sometimes called, the kingdom of heaven; wherein the MINISTER solemnly recognizes the fitness of the baptized to be a subject of that kingdom.” As to the things represented by it,” the same author observes. “Passages of information relating to this particular,
“are

" are very numerous ; but, if I mistake not,
 " there is not one but is naturally reducible to
 " these two heads, viz. *blessings exhibited by it,*
 " and *obligations resulting from it.*"—Under these
 two distinct branches, there is the following enu-
 meration. Blessings exhibited in the ordi-
 nance of the Christian Baptism are—" Remission
 " of sins. Acts ii. 38—Salvation thro' CHRIST.
 " Mark xvi. 16. 1 Peter iii. 21.—Union and
 " communion with Christ and with his body the
 " church. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Rom. vi 3. 4. &c.
 " Colos. ii. 11.—13.—Christ as our spiritual
 " covering and complete righteousness. Gal. iii.
 " 27.—The down-pouring of the Holy Spirit
 " Matth. iii. 11. Acts i. 5.—Regeneration. John
 " iii. 5. Tit. iii. 5.—Sanctification. 1 Cor. vi.
 " 11. Eph. v. 26. GOD all sufficient"—Under
 the list of obligations, resulting from baptism, are
 " obligations to Repentance. Acts xxii. 16. to
 " destroy the body of sin. Rom. vi. 3. 4.—New-
 " nefs of life and heavenly-mindedness. Rom. vi.
 " 4. 8. 11. 13. 19. &c. the answer of a good
 " conscience towards God. 1 Peter iii. 21. filling
 " up the place of departed christians. Rom. xv.
 " 29.—Waiting for the promise of the spirit.
 " Acts ii. 38. 39. chap. 8. 12.—17.—Devoted-
 " nefs to the grace and sovereign Will of GOD,
 " FATHER, SON, and HOLY-GHOST. Matth. xxviii.
 " 19."—Anti-Pædobaptism examined, vol. 1.
 chap. 2. The nature of the ordinance being
 sought

sought for in the above particulars, and having a twofold aspect, *exhibitory* and *obligatory*, what disagreement is there between baptism and relative holiness? It is only a *visible sign* of that state of privilege into which the nations are brought under Christ. It is a *visible mean*, as well as preaching, of holding forth the same blessings, and laying under the same obligations. Instead then, of any contradiction, there is an entire consistency between relative holiness and the baptismal ordinance.—There is no further bar in the way of any being baptized, than of their being preached unto, so far as can be gathered from its nature.—What confirms this sentiment, is, that both preaching and baptizing are classed together in the same general commission. Matth. xviii. 19. Both ordinances evidently grow up out of the same root, the implied relative state. So far as the nature of an ordinance, in itself considered, can determine its use, and proper subjects, there is every reason to view it of the same extent as preaching with which it is coupled: and the objects of the latter, are ALL NATIONS.

There is not a single difficulty more in the way of preaching to all indiscriminately, than of baptizing them, from the *general nature* of the ordinance. All that is required for preaching, is *mere natural consent*, from men as men, independent of their being unbelievers, or the contrary.

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Christ hath invested his ministers with full authority to preach, and the nations with a right to the privilege of hearing, *virtually* in the very commission. Some indeed, cannot be addressed as infants and persons labouring under the infirmity of deafness to a great degree: not that, as parts of the nations, they have not an equal right, but natural incapacity forbids the full benefit thereof. With respect to others, they have a natural capacity for preaching; are fit objects in that respect: still however, their common consent is requisite, but this most essentially differs from true faith; and it is evident, persons may attend preaching, and yet be unbelievers.—Violence is not to be offered, in any branch of the ministry to the common law of nature, so that men should be forced to it, contrary to their will. A disregard of this principle hath occasioned the persecution which hath stained Church-History with so much human blood. Christ intends and enjoins in no shape, *compulsive violence*. Common consent, (*notwithstanding which persons may be unbelievers*) is alone requisite on the a-fore-mentioned reason for ministers to feel themselves at liberty to preach to any; in like manner, we observe, so far as the argument respects the nature of the ordinance and its connection with preaching in the commission, nothing more than NATURAL ACQUIESCENCE is needful
for

for baptism. Persons may be baptized on barely not objecting to it, as they may be preached unto, for *ought* that appears to the contrary from the exhibitory and obligatory design of the ordinance. It is, in truth, a joint-mean with preaching, of exhibiting and obliging to the same things, believers and unbelievers, indiscriminately.

Besides: ordinances having always been attached to relative holiness, in-point of right or fact, among Abraham's seed, it is natural to suppose the like to be the case, as to relative holiness under the gospel. It is notorious, that circumcision was instituted, on purpose to be a sign and seal of Abraham and his posterity's external relationship to God.—Its general nature and use correspond to baptism. Israel was not *only preached unto*, but CIRCUMCISED. The foundation of these distinguishing privileges, was their relative holiness. And is the *self-same thing* unequal under the dispensation of the gospel? Has it no outward, visible general sign annexed to it? Baptism, surely, if we consider its general nature; if we view it by way of analogy with circumcision, looks likely to be an inseparable attendant upon it, and I dare not hesitate to say, it is.

Dr. Doddridge in his Family expositor, delivers his sentiments on 1 Cor. vii. 14. which was noticed in the former chapter, after this manner.
 “ On the maturest and most impartial consideration
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" tion, I muſt judge it to refer to infant baptiſm;
 " nothing can be more apparent than that the word
 " *holy*, ſignifies perſons who might be admitted to
 " partake of *the diſtinguiſhing rites of God's people*.
 " Compare Exod. xix. 6. Deut. vii. 6. chap.
 " xiv. 2. chap. xxvi. 19. chap. xxxiii. 3. Ezra
 " ix. 2. with Iſaiah xxxv. 8. chap. lii. 1. Acts
 " x. 28. &c. And for the interpretation which
 " ſo many of our brethren the Baptiſts have con-
 " tended for, that *holy* ſignifies *legitimate*, and
 " *unclean illegitimate* (not to urge that this ſeems
 " an un-ſcriptural ſenſe of the word) nothing can
 " be more evident, than that the argument will
 " by no means bear it." In the preceding re-
 marks on this paſſage, it hath been ſhewn, that
 on a due rendering of the words, and affixing the
 moſt natural meaning to them, the unbelieving
 party as well as the oppoſite, is relatively holy.
 " Nothing is more apparent, Dr. Doddridge ob-
 " ſerves, than that all who are ſo, are to be
 " admitted to partake of the rites of God's peo-
 " ple." It follows, that the unbeliever being
 equally holy in a relative ſenſe, with the believer,
 hath an equal rite to baptiſm. The whole paſ-
 ſage therefore, ſerves to illuſtrate and confirm
 what we aſſert, that baptiſm is inſeparably joined
 to relative holineſs, and that the latter, is a ſuf-
 ſicient title to the former.

II. Whether that divine order, Matth. xxviii. 19. will oblige us to depart from the ground we have chosen, comes next to be examined.

“ It is, says Dr. Williams, an acknowledged
 “ fact that *baptismal purification* was familiarly
 “ known to the Jews, when John the Baptist
 “ made his appearance, and many ages before.
 “ Should a doubt of this fact still remain, Dr.
 “ Gale stands ready to remove it ; that the Jews,
 “ says he, on account of several kinds of pollu-
 “ tion, used to *purify* themselves by *washing*, can
 “ not be questioned ; the *diverse baptisms or wash-*
 “ *ings* mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews,
 “ (chap. ix. 10.) make it incontestible. It ap-
 “ pears with superior evidence, from the testimony
 “ of competent and unexceptionable witnesses that
 “ BAPTISM was well known as a ceremonial, pu-
 “ rifying rite, prior to the christian æra: con-
 “ sequently, our Lord appointed a ceremony
 “ which *was in use before.*”—Anti-pæd. vol. 2.
 p. 231. Baptism then being no novelty, Christ
 plainly assumed to himself, as was the case with
 John before him, an usual mode of purification.
 It is introduced as making part of the work of his
 disciples. John iv. 2. *Jesus himself baptized not,*
but his Disciples. The original institution of the
 ordinance is no where noticed, only the fact of
 Christ’s Disciples baptizing, (and doubtless by his
 authority) is recorded. Baptism as used and sanc-
 tioned

tioned by Christ in the first instance, imperceptibly and unawares, comes forward to our view. In truth, the formal primary institution of baptism by Christ, is only to be inferred, for it is no where declared. With regard to the passage under immediate consideration, it is manifestly not *institutive*, but *merely directive* as to the baptismal ordinance; and the latter, in only one single point of view. Well acquainted already with the nature, subjects, and mode of baptism, the Apostles needed no instruction concerning them: wherein their *ignorance* required it, it is *informing* to them, and that is, as their ministry was to extend to ALL NATIONS. To expect all that precision in this order as though it was the institution of baptism, or nothing was left us to learn about it, from other parts of scripture, is to stretch our expectations beyond their due bounds. The Apostles, surely, needed not to be taught things they could not but know before upon the subject; and their successors have no reason to complain, unless it be *unreasonably* insisted upon, that the whole of duty must be contained in a single passage; or that sufficient information is not to be received from other passages. Mr. Booth's words are unguardedly strong, when he observes, "If we annex the idea of *obscurity* to a passage of this sort, we either sink the idea of obligation to regard it, or impeach the wisdom, or goodness, or the equity of the divine legislator.

“ legislator.” There is nothing, the language and circumstances considered, to give it the shape of an institution: it is only *preceptive* as to what had before been *instituted*. The passage seen in this point of view, I proceed to make the following remarks with a view to elucidate its meaning and use.

(1) This commission implies what we have before asserted, *viz.* a *secret constitution in favor of its objects, prior to the words, and originating in the Will of Christ, and his Father who sent him*. It was the will of the latter, agreeable to what he had promised to Abraham, that in his seed, CHRIST, all the nations of the earth should be blessed. I ask, whether it does not look likely from the very face of our Lord’s commission, that he delivered it with a view to the performance of that inestimably precious promise? It is beyond all reasonable doubt that this commission respects the divine Will, by which ALL NATIONS are more favorably situated, than before. Pursuant to it, the Apostles travelled to and fro, preaching the gospel of the kingdom. Inspired with a genuine zeal for the Lord of Hosts, with a glowing concern for the salvation of souls, Christ’s ministers may itinerate to all parts of the earth, with the everlasting gospel in their hand; wherever they go, they have this commission to produce, at once to shew the right of all nations to be preached unto, and their right to preach to them.

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All that is requisite for the nations having the full enjoyment of their right, is NATURAL CONSENT, for they must not be COMPELLED BY VIOLENCE. Historical accounts of gospel-missionaries are agreeable to these remarks.— These going on the benevolent design of introducing the gospel where it was unknown, have undertaken the voyage or journey, under the notion of the inhabitants having a previous right to the Gospel. The idea of their being believers or unbelievers, is on such occasions out of the question. All which ministers want, as the first step to an establishment of the gospel, is LIBERTY to preach: *common consent*, is enough to secure them this, and is compatible with a state of unbelief in the persons giving it. Now the question is, whether baptism is not to be administered on the same footing. Having this enquiry in view, I proceed to observe,

(2) There is nothing in the NATURE of baptism in itself, which forbids its immediate conjunction with the other branch of the ministry, *viz.* preaching. From ought that appears as to its use, it may be classed and performed as a joint-mean with preaching to answer the same ends. What has been before advanced concerning the nature of baptism, it is presumed, abundantly evinces this. Its nature, then, allowing us to consider preaching and baptizing, as the names of several persons under a firm, who yet are equal in the partnership

nership, it is plain, as far as the nature of the ordinance is a guide, it may be administered upon the same ground—As ministers are warranted to preach to people, upon obtaining their leave, so jointly with this part of their work, they may baptize them, because there is an equal reason for doing the one as the other.

Here a proper place presents itself for noticing baptism as a MIXED ORDINANCE, *partly positive and partly moral*. So the author of *Anti-ped.* examined, represents it with great propriety and force of evidence. Whether it be considered as positive, or moral, or wherein it is partly both, it is conceived, it appears most naturally and advantageously so, as it is made parallel with preaching. “ A positive institute, is that, the reason of which we do not see, prior to external command, but which entirely originates in the sovereign will of the legislator.” Such is Dr. Williams’s description of a positive institution, and he supposes, his opponent, Mr. Booth, will not object to it. If this be its nature, *some obscurity*, is to be expected in a commission including the baptismal rite: it is no further plain, than as it is plainly the sovereign will of the Legislator. Not to notice how much it behoves Mr. Booth, to allow a certain proper obscurity in Christ’s commission to baptize, if it be positive, I ask in what position *its positive nature* most appears? As following, *teaching, and certain*

certain qualifications in the subjects, according to the baptist plan? Or, as we place it, parallel with preaching and separable from it? Baptism as administered to an adult, without a previous process of teaching and certain effects required, hath a more consistent appearance as A POSITIVE INSTITUTE, than under any other circumstances of administration. It has, on this footing, the aspect of INDEPENDENCY, and the SOVEREIGN WILL OF THE INSTITUTOR is at ONCE CONSPICUOUS AND STRIKING.

It is however true, that it is partly moral, not as *requiring* moral qualifications in the subjects before-hand, but as denoting and obliging to moral uses, and ends in them, when baptized.—So far then as the nature of baptism, whether positive or moral is considered, it is reducible with the greatest advantage to the basis of a sovereign constitution, favorable to all nations.

Baptism further considered as an ordinance *out of the church*, is a proper associate with preaching, and both respect the kingdom of heaven, or the dispensation of the gospel, as it includes the world at large.

3. To the remarks already made towards elucidating the passage in hand, I add, the due rendering of the original must be settled; and when that is done, its just and genuine meaning also. Here it should be remembered. “Nothing is capable of fixing the exact legislative force of a word,
or

“ or phrase, but a careful and impartial attention to *circumstances*.—THAT must needs be the most *natural* signification, which results from a “ due weighing of *all circumstances*.”

It is admitted that either, TEACH, OR DISCIPLE ALL NATIONS is a proper translation of the original. If number, piety and learning can establish the pretensions of the Greek word to be rendered, *disciple*, be it known, it has all these in support of it. Dr. Williams tells us, it would be easy to produce a long list of eminent authors, ancient and modern, who render the original word by, *to profelyte, to disciple, or to make disciples*, as well as by, *to teach*.—Authorities of not less weight than the following are producible, Bullinger, Dutch-Annotators, Pool’s Continuator, Doddridge, Turretine, Stockius, Beza, Gataker, Lightfoot, Hammond, Witfius; and this list might be increased by the names of many more.

The term *disciple*, as the same Greek word is englished elsewhere, often appears in scripture, in the substantive form. Persons are said to be disciples; thus we read of Moses’s disciples; and such, it is notorious, were infants and adults, being initiated by circumcision. “Some” says Dr. Addington “may think it improper to call children disciples; but there seems no more impropriety in calling them disciples of Christ, than servants of God, as in Lev. xxv. 41. 42. And they

they seem at least included, if not principally referred to, in the term in Acts xv. 10. where the design of the judaizing teachers, which is mentioned, Acts xxi. 21. as the scheme for circumcising their children, is censured as an attempt to put a yoke upon the neck of the DISCIPLES." The learned and judicious Turretine remarks, "the word, which Christ here uses, does not so properly signify *to teach by preaching*, as MAKE DISCIPLES, which may be done by the administration of baptism, it being a Sacrament of initiation. Thus John iv. 1. Mathetas poiein (*the Greek in English Characters*) is not *simply to teach*, BUT TO MAKE DISCIPLES, and to introduce into a professional state of discipline, as among the Jews, persons were often made disciples, *not as already taught*, BUT IN ORDER TO BE TAUGHT. Thus a Gentile addressed Hillel, *make a profelyte of me, that thou mayest teach me*. And that the word is so to be understood here, is demonstrable from the word afterwards, rendered *teaching*, which appears *tautological*, unless the first word refers to something more than that." Turretini Theologia.—What was the judgment of Justin Martyr concerning the controverted word in the commission, as well as what was the practice of his time, which was very early in the second century, appears from one of his apologies: wherein he observes, there were in his day, "several men and

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women

women sixty or seventy years old, who from infants, had been *discipled* to Christ." "Here," "says Dr. Williams, noticing this passage," he uses the very word of commission, with which Baptism is so strictly and inseparably connected." Ignatius in his Epistle to the Romans, speaks of his being DISCIPLED by his sufferings from his persecutors. The use of the same Greek word in connection with sufferings, which are figuratively stiled *baptisms* in scripture, favors, at least remotely, a more general sense of the term, then mere teaching; and surely does not contradict the idea of baptism as a mode of discipling.

Having examined such passages where the term, DISCIPLE, either as a Substantive, or else as a Verb occurs, I have not been able to perceive in one of them, any thing to establish its limited meaning *teach*. The propriety of rendering THE VERB, *disciple*, is acknowledged in translating the SUBSTANTIVE after that manner. Then why are they not invariably so englished? How comes it to pass, that the same Greek word is one while, and uniformly, as a Substantive rendered DISCIPLE, anon, as a verb, *teach*? I answer, that in many passages, it would be manifestly harsh and improper to render the substantive by *teach*, though it is so strictly urged, and contended for, to be the meaning of the verb in the commission. How uncouthly would the following passages run,

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When he had made an end of COMMANDING his TAUGHT.—Matth. xi. 1. *Teach us to pray as John taught his* TAUGHT. Luke xi. 1. *If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be MY TAUGHT,* Luke xiv. 26. If necessity, or conveniency, introduced the translation of the substantive, by *disciple*, it had been better to have retained it on all occasions. This, however, is no where the case, when the *Verb* is used; and the variation, from what is evidently the occasion of it, countenances the idea of the original word, being of greater latitude than some are willing to allow it. Besides, TEACH occurs twice over in the commission according to the common rendering. But if the same thing is meant, why not the same *Greek word used* in both places? Why a needless tautology of sense, and superfluous variety of language?—If the last word rendered *teaching* is explanatory of the first, properly translated *disciple*, BAPTIZING which *immediately* follows it, may be referred to it also. If it be quite *distinct*, then it follows, persons may be disciples without teaching. If *teaching* and *baptizing* are referable to the first word, then *disciple* stands as

2 GENERAL TERM.

Mr. Booth seems to think the Apostle Paul has helped him to a declaration much to his purpose, and quite inconsistent with the idea of its being an apostolic duty to make persons disciples by baptizing them. *Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.* 1 Cor. i. 17. Mr. Booth remarks, “ on the supposition of its being an apostolic duty “ to make persons disciples by baptizing them, “ either the Apostle Paul received a commission “ from his divine Lord essentially different from “ the words under consideration, Matth. xxviii. “ 19. or, he failed to a great degree in the “ execution of it, especially among the Corin- “ thians. -Our opponents at every turn insist “ that the great Law-giver ordered his eleven “ Apostles to disciple all nations by baptizing “ them; while he who laboured more abundantly than they all, tells us, that he was *not* “ sent, comparatively speaking, to baptize even “ those that believed. Consequently, he was not “ sent to make disciples, in that way for which “ our opponents plead, is clear from the copy of “ it, which Luke has recorded. Nay, so far from “ thinking it would have been his happiness to “ have made a multitude of the Corinthians disciples by baptizing them, that he thanks God “ he has baptized but very few: and this he does, “ while claiming the honour of having been the “ favoured instrument of converting a great part “ of

“ of those that were saints in the city of Corinth.” Thus far Mr. Booth: and notwithstanding his view of the passage, I cannot help thinking, it requires a different comment and conclusion. Mr. B. will not himself presume to deny (for how can any one ?) that part of Paul’s business was *baptizing*; and that he acted under this *general* commission, made to the eleven Apostles. If baptism was a branch of ministerial duty, or a benefit conferred on the subject of it, could Paul, consistently either with truth or charity, thank God absolutely, that he *did* not baptize, or was not sent for that work? Impossible. Paul intends no such thing; but it is evidently an expression, which the particular circumstances of the Corinthians prompted him to use. There were divisions in the church: they were split into parties, and each had its head or master. One said I am of Paul, another, I am of Apollos, &c. Whence is this? The Apostle in effect asks, by proceeding thus: Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you, or were you baptized in the name of Paul? You have no pretence, as it happens, for what you do in setting me up as your master, from *my* baptizing you. And however it is my work and delight to baptize as well as to preach, I thank God, under your divided circumstances, that you have it not in your power, from any part that I took in administering that ordinance for you, to say, I baptized you in my
name,

name, or made; you, in a sort disciples of mine. They were baptized, and many of them too, as appears from Acts xviii. 8. Consequently, there was a baptizer besides Paul, at Corinth, and in reference to that providence of God, which provided him with an auxiliary in that part of his work, and not to his general commission, he adds, God sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel among you. If these remarks subjoined to Mr. Booth's, are deemed more natural and preferable than his by the impartial reader, the passage agrees to the idea of its being an apostolic duty to make persons disciples by baptizing them, and strongly confirms it, if any force be allowed to the Apostle's reasoning.

In Acts xiv. 21. it is related concerning Paul and Barnabas at Derbe, that *when they had preached the Gospel to, (literally according to the Greek) EVANGELIZED THAT CITY, and taught (Greek,) DISCIPLED MANY, they returned again to Lystra.* In this passage we have all that is preserved of the history of this place, as it relates to the ministry of those two faithful servants of Christ there. The consequence of their coming to it, and opening their commission, was, they *avangelized* the place. They ministerially recognized the whole city by preaching in it, as within the compass of the commission by which they acted.—They *discipled* many in it.—It is manifestly
a very

a very *summary* account that is contained in this latter clause. Did they only *teach* many? Did they not *baptize* them? Doubtless they did; but all, the history tells us, is, THEY WERE DISCIPLED.—Surely then, this phrase is proper to express, and represent them, as both baptized and taught: their baptism is not barely inferable from it, but included in the common term.—It is observable, that the word, *disciple*, is not introduced in Scripture, as adopted by Christ, nor applied to particular persons, till there is good reason to conclude they were baptized. Christ is even said to teach multitudes, and they are said to follow Him; who nevertheless, seem distinguished from Disciples. Matth. v. 1 &c. It is true there is an entire silence observed concerning the baptism of the twelve disciples, but doubtless as baptizers of others, they were baptized themselves, tho' the fact of their being so, is not recorded. The first time, New-testament history makes mention of persons being made disciples, is, when they are said to have been baptized.—The passage alluded to, is John iv. 1. On this Mr. Booth observes, “To make disciples and to baptize one or another, are plainly represented as different actions: for Jesus made more disciples than John, though He baptized not any of them.” The purpose for which, this Author makes the observation, is very plain,
but

but it is by no means so clear, that the passage will justify it. It must be allowed to be of importance, to regard the circumstances of a text; in order to determine the design of it, and after what manner, the Phraseology is to be understood. Now the *circumstance* and *language* controverted in this text are evidently introduced, *merely* to account for the departure of Christ from Judæa. The increase of his Disciples had excited the jealousy of the Pharisees, and he retreated to Galilee, to escape the consequences of it. The Historian with a view to account for the removal of Christ to this latter place, relates the rumour which had reached the ears of the Pharisees concerning him. That which rendered Christ obnoxious to this sect was, *making disciples*, and this in general, would be naturally reported to them, and the other clause, "*and baptized*," to confirm the former, as asserting a general fact. There is no room, therefore, whether we consider it as a matter which some reported to the Pharisees, or as related by John, to conceive, either the one or the other meant, to represent the actions of making disciples and baptizing so distinct, as Mr. B. imagines. The disciples baptizing is nothing to the purpose, for it was the same, done by his authority, as if Christ did it himself: and accordingly he is said to have baptized.—Nor is it likely,

that

that the Pharisees, to whom the report was carried, and in reference to whom this historical circumstance is mentioned, considered *making disciples*, and *baptizing*, different and distinct actions. What ! the Pharisees, so apt to boast themselves the disciples of Moses, among whom they were entered by circumcision !

“ To make disciples, and to baptize one or another, are plainly represented as different actions, FOR JESUS made more disciples than John, though He baptized them not”—If *baptizing* and *making disciples*, be so very distinct, and it is evident the *making disciples*, was the obnoxious circumstance to the Pharisees, what occasion for adding any thing about baptism, or for the Historian’s enlarging upon it ? If it be so very distinct, was it not immaterial, neither here nor there, whether it was mentioned or not ? But the Historian takes pains to inform us, that JESUS baptized not, but his disciples.—Is not this best accounted for, I beg leave to ask, by thus considering the drift of the passage in question, ‘ Jesus made, and for that purpose, baptized more disciples than John, by means of his twelve disciples.’ Mr. B. very well knows, that *and* in the passage, is *exegetical*, as well as copulative, and answers, in sense to *even*, when it follows some general design or fact mentioned, and something is introduced, which is a branch or mode thereof. The clause *then and*, or *even baptized*, seems particularly noticed, as

part of the report made to the Pharisees, which as a branch of Christ's work by his disciples, would certify the circumstance so offensive to them of his MAKING DISCIPLES.—It may be observed, that it is with little propriety, Mr. B. raises the distinctions, which he does upon this passage, after the account given in the preceding chapter, by some of John's disciples, concerning Christ. *Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, BEHOLD THE SAME BAPTIZETH, and ALL MEN COME TO HIM.* So far from discarding baptizing, as no part of making disciples, these passages may be added to others in support of the contrary.

Mr. B. well aware of the importance of limiting the sense of *disciple all nations to teach*, in support of his cause, labors hard to establish it to the exclusion of any thing besides.—But after all, that he hath said, and all which he produces from others, there is one thing, on which I think, I may venture to challenge him. Namely, to produce a passage, where the original word in the commission is used, and applied to person or character, under the name of *disciple*, or *discipled*, and *Baptism* may not fairly and easily be considered as included in its general import.

Till this is done, all beside is labor lost.—If it cannot be done, but on the contrary, Scripture uses it as a general term in other places, there is no
reason

reason, but what predilection for a particular hypothesis suggests, to regard it in its limited sense, *teach*.—To adopt the words of Dr. Guyse, in a note upon Christ's commission. Upon the above grounds, to me it seems, "That, *disciple all nations*, relates to the whole design of Christ's commission, for making disciples to him, and that *baptizing* and *teaching*, are mentioned as particular branches of that general design, the order of which, was to be determined by the circumstances of things."—See his Paraphrase.

Disciple all nations thus understood, the latter phrase, *all nations*, will bear a consistent sense, as it denotes ONE GREAT WHOLE, consisting of ever so many parts. Upon Mr. Booth's and the Baptist interpretation of it, confining it to *teach*, including therein its particular effects, it certainly dwindles into a very small number. "According to the principles of our opponents, the term, *Nation*, must have, a very singular acceptance indeed, for in the first place, they must exclude from it, *all infants* and *young children*, and in the next place, they would exclude from it *all adults*, the few, comparatively very few excepted, who are deemed by them fit subjects for baptism. Well, when they have taught them, few as they may be, the NATION is discipled!" So Dr. Williams remarks, and

if such be the natural consequence, is it not enough to render their *limited* sense suspected? And the more so by Mr. Booth, who insists, that this law is most express and unequivocal.

How Mr. B. would get rid of the arguments taken from the objects of the commission *all nations*, in combating with a Pædobaptist, the following extract will shew. "All nations are to be
 "discipled. Infants are part of the nations.
 "therefore, say Mr. Henry and others, infants
 "must be discipled by being baptized. As if
 "whenever we find any thing mentioned in the
 "new Testament, respecting *all nations*, we were
 "obliged to consider millions of infants, as im-
 "mediately interested in it? But whether this
 "be a fact, let the following examples declare.
 "Matth. xxiv. 9. 14. Rom. xvi. 26. Mark,
 "xi. 17. Rev. xiv. 8. xv. 4. xviii. 23. Rom.
 "xv. 11. Psalm, lxxii. 11. 17. lxxxvi. 9. cxvii.
 "118. 16. Zech. xiv. 2. Mal. iii. 12. Now
 "as in these and other passages, the terms, *nation*,
 "*all nations*, are used without any reference to
 "infants; the arguments formed upon them, by
 "our opposers must be quite futile." Confident
 as our remarker may be, that these passages are
 used without any reference to infants, TRUTH
 will justify the observation, they *may*, every one
 of them, have a reference, in a very consistent
 sense; and if so, why should they be excepted.

Mr.

If Mr. B. is unfortunate in his list of specimens, the argument formed upon the terms, *nations*, and *all nations*, from ought that appears to the contrary in the texts produced, is valid. After a close examination of those passages, where the terms in question occur, I venture on a publication of the following remark: namely, that where they are used, as large collective bodies, and things are described as done to, or performed by a nation, or nations *as such*, individuals of all sexes and ages, are included, as having one common interest therein. Now if the idea of *interest* is transferred to our Lord's commission, which hath *expressly* for its objects *all nations*, it is but maintaining an uniformity of interpretation in the sacred Scriptures, and establishes the interest of all, indiscriminately, in the branches of the commission, *baptizing* and *teaching*.

Millions of infants, as acknowledged in the last quotation from Mr. B's work—and it may be added, millions of adults also, are not a little concerned in the just sense of this leading text; for as that is determined, they are all either excluded from, or admitted to participate, *de jure*, i. e. in *point of right*, the benefit of the commission. That scheme which impoverishes the phrase, *all nations*, by millions and millions of infants and adults, may well be suspected to be wrong, as
repugnant

repugnant to propriety of expression, and the feelings of humanity also. By what authority is such an unnatural, unprecedented dismemberment of the objective term, made? Is it out of conveniency to the term, teach, asserted to be the strict and only meaning of the verb, rendered properly *Disciple*? That sense, which will not admit of a compromise between the two terms, but if maintained as to either, will offer violence to both in turn, must certainly be illegitimate. This is the unavoidable consequence of the baptist rigid interpretation, therefore let it be cashiered—and that which will be more accommodating between the seeming opposites, *teach* and *all nations*, be adopted. The sense, deserving of acceptance on *this ground*, is, (even if the first word be rendered *teach*) that which has been just hinted, under the idea of *common interest*; and may be seen under the following observations upon Mark xvi. 15.—To this passage, I immediately proceed, because it is a parallel one and, as Mr. Booth files it, another copy of the enacting statute respecting baptism. *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel, to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not, shall be damned.*

On making the slightest comparison between the two, a disparity is at once perceivable; and
of

of the two copies, that in Matthew is found the most perfect.—In this, recorded by Mark, *preaching* only is noticed in the *preceptive part*. Baptism makes its appearance in the *character* drawn afterwards of one who shall be saved.

The difference which appears incontrovertibly, in these two copies, though relating to the same object, and where our opponents seem to expect language the most express, is not a little extraordinary. If it be maintained (as some do according to Matthew's commission) there is a *teaching previous* to baptism, and a *teaching after*, expressed by two different Greek words—it is natural to ask, to which does Mark's copy answer. To the first or to the last? if to the *first*, there is in that case an omission, or silence, as to baptism and subsequent teaching, as supposed in Matthew's account—If to the *last*, it is then most likely to be, as we consider it in Matthew, a branch of the general design, as contained in the first word, and properly rendered, disciple.

Of the two cases, there can be little hesitation, in pronouncing, which claims the preference—for, admitting the first, Mark's copy strangely falls short of Matthew's. If the last, the first word in Matthew's, unless it be a general term, must be superfluous. This by the way, is a *presumptive* argument of its partaking of a
greater

greater latitude, at the head of the Passage, and that baptizing and teaching, are the modes of it.—

Preach the gospel to every creature. If I mistake not, there is just and strong ground to conclude the sense of this clause, expressed in words to the following effect. Ministers are authorized to look upon all, young and old, inclusively, as teachable *de jure*, i. e. in point of right. Not one is under any disqualifying hindrance from the commission itself. This, as a legal instrument, conveys and secures to the World at large, a grant and right which they had not before. The ministry of the Apostles, was confined heretofore, to the Jews, by a prohibitory clause. Matth. x. 5. Consequently, till their commission is enlarged, Gentiles, adults and infants, were *de jure*, in point of right, UNTEACHABLE. Since the commission before us, ALL are to be regarded as fit objects for ministerial teaching, not from any qualifying circumstances in themselves, but in the Redeemer's authoritative grant and constitution. Is it a matter of inquiry why the gospel is preached to any, the answer is, because our Lord impowers his ministers to consider them teachable.—But how?—As grown to years of maturity or understanding? No, for it is evident, that prior to this enlargement of the ministerial commission,

commission, the Gentiles, in *point of capacity*, were *teachable*, when they were not so, in point of right—Infants and adults, stood upon an equal footing, for want of this commission, however different as to age and capacity, &c. Under the commission, their case is just the reverse, the design of our Lord being to establish a general right: and what, from circumstances is so evidently the spirit of the passage, ought, in all reason, to regulate our interpretation of the letter of it.—Was *every person's capacity* made the *measure* of our Lord's commission, and the *standard* of a right to preaching, what absurdities would follow? The deaf among adults, as well as infants, must, for that incidental infirmity, be set aside, as not concerned in this commission. Persons at different times, under different circumstances, are interested and not interested. Interest (strange to tell!) will, in this case, be suspended on hearing, or the loss of it. Yet, if the deaf are not blind also, the use of God's word by their eye-sight, proves, they are just as much interested, *in respect of right*, as if they had the use of their ears, as well as their eyes.

To understand the general commission in the two copies without the above latitude, would it not seem to be an impeachment of Christ's wisdom,—derogatory to his authority—and virtually subversive of the ministry of the gospel? If when he says,

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preach

'Preach the gospel to every creature,' &c. He had no design to establish a certain universal right, or interest therein, would not other language have been chosen, more adapted to the limitations and exceptions, with which the words are incumbered on the Antipædobaptist plan? If, to give an universal interest, be the object he has in view, it at once comports with his wisdom, dignity, and authority, by fixing, 'every Creature,' 'all Nations' in a preaching, teachable, baptizable State; rising above, and not regarding, as an hindrance to their CONSTITUTED CAPACITY, any natural incapacity from age, infirmity, &c.—If this commission be weakened, will not the Ministry which stands upon it as a Basis, totter? Is it not owing to the sanction of this commission, that Ministers preach the-gospel to *any*—and if to any, then to *all*, de jure, but if their official right to preach to all, be denied, it is in effect, denying a right to preach to any.

Now, all who are considered teachable in right of the Grant, are baptizable. Adults and Infants are constituent parts of all nations; teaching and baptizing, are parts of the commission, common to both parts of the nations, Infants and Adults. *Natural* capacity from age, &c. a *spiritual* capacity including believing, &c. are only secondary things, mere circumstances.—A CONSTITUTED CAPACITY—A GIVEN INDISCRIMINATE RIGHT,
is,

is, I conceive, the **PRINCIPAL THING** in the **COMMISSION**, as **SUCH**—Ministers are to preach to Adults, not only for their sakes personally, but virtually recognizing the given right of **ALL** their Fellow-creatures to the same. Baptism, is to be administered as declarative to the same extent.

“ *Every Creature, all Nations*” viewed through the medium of our Lord’s Grant, are upon an **EQUALITY**.—In the execution of this commission, Fidelity to their Master demands of Ministers, that all be treated as **EQUAL**. Which way is this to be done? Is it not by baptizing Infants, who are in possession of the right, and are capable subjects of the ordinance? Incapable of actual preaching, (to which, nevertheless, they have a right) there is the greater reason, that they should be baptized, to which the grant and natural Capacity concur; that thereby the whole of the **Commission**, and their **Right** to baptism and teaching, may be acknowledged in the administration of **ONE** ordinance.

ADULTS are equal in respect of this commission. To recur to what has been said, I ask, why are they teachable? I answer, from a **GIVEN RIGHT**, independent of understanding, &c. Why baptizable? The reply is the same. The intervention of particular effects of the ministry, producing a credible profession of faith, as con-

stituting a right to baptism, appears to me totally unauthorized by the commission. Baptizing and teaching, as branches of Christ's general design, are associated; they are, *de jure*, of equal extent, which is the thing to be regarded; and therefore, adults are, indiscriminately entitled to preaching as well as baptizing, to baptizing as well as preaching. Particular qualifications, such as are supposed on the plan of Antipædobaptists, are not within the compass of a commission to ministers, as such. Believing, repenting, &c. are things which may be brought about, and doubtless are, by the ministry: both ordinances are appointed for these ends; and the Lord may, and often does render them effectual. But is not the distinction just, necessary, and manifest, between Effects flowing from the immediate Agency of the Holy Spirit, and baptizing and teaching, as committed to ministers. What would the Apostles have had reason to say, when the commission was just issued, or ministers still, as acting under it, if we are to consider, *disciple all nations, Teach all nations*, as synonymous with, *make them true believers, real penitents*. Though it is granted, Faith, Repentance, and Salvation, are the designed ends of the ministry, on the part of Christ, yet, it is impossible, that discipling, teaching, baptizing, should be A LAW to ministers,
but

but as MEANS—Repentance and Faith are effects, for which no human Being is, or can be strictly, either equal or responsible. The TRUST, as assigned in the commission, hath responsibility and capacity attached to it; and who must not perceive, that these can only relate to the external work of teaching and baptizing. Let impartiality judge then, whether it is not reasonable to conclude that the Nations have a right to baptizing and teaching, according to the state in which the commission becomes a LAW to ministers. Is it a law to ministers, only as it relates to external teaching and baptizing? What is the conclusion, with respect to the nations, but that, in the moment, that ministers are in a situation, externally to teach them, they are at the same time, in a situation, as warranted by the commission, to baptize them. If this be true, Believing and Repenting, are not to be taken into the account, but under the *notion of prerequisites* to baptism, to be discarded, as they are in regard to preaching, whatever use they may be of, on other accounts, under both ordinances.

But is not, Mark xvi. 16. inimical to the point contended for, where it is said. *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved. He that believeth not, shall be damned.* Often as this text is cited by Mr. B. and Others, as containing an

an indispensable qualification for baptism, I suspect, it will not answer the purpose intended. If baptism rests on a credible profession of faith, which is the sentiment of our opponents; to countenance it, the phraseology ought to be very different, and the words run after the following manner, *He that credibly professeth to believe.* To this variation from the letter of the text, the declaration which follows, *shall be saved*, is totally repugnant.—**SAVED!** consequently, a **GENUINE BELIEVER**, so that if we find a **RULE** here, our conduct must answer to this principle, *Genuine believers only are to be baptized.* A judgment of charity will, in this case, not be sufficient to determine, who is a proper Candidate: nothing less than a judgment of certainty will do. But, alas! the latter is not to be had; and if a judgment of charity is proposed in lieu, it is evidently deviating from the text in question; and not only so, but lies open to the charge of an uncertain rule, varying as the temper, or views of the administrator, may differ. As “He that believeth and is baptized,” cannot serve as a rule, so it is plain, it was not intended to do so; otherwise, we should have found it in the *preceptive* part of the verse before, whereas in the place in which it stands, it is a description of the **SAVED**, and with its opposite, of the **DAMNED** according to characters existing

existing under the gospel-dispensation. By the UNBELIEVER, of whom nothing is said concerning baptism, is it not reasonable to understand him, as an Infidel, or ONE who professeth to believe, and IS BAPTIZED, and yet void of true faith.

Common sense requires, that the ORDER of the words should be considered in reference to the DESIGN of the whole, which is not to shew, how we are to proceed as to baptizing, but who shall be saved and perish. *He that believeth*, is the essential part of the character, to which Salvation appertains; *and is baptized*, follows merely as an attendant on it, which with respect to the Person, might either be before, or after, without or with genuine faith.

One thing more is deserving of our notice, concerning *teaching*, as part of our Lord's commission, namely, that it has a POSITIVE ASPECT.—To teach one another, is agreeable to the law of nature, but that law was counteracted, when the Redeemer delivered that positive precept to the contrary. Matth. x. 5. *These twelve, Jesus sent forth, and commanded, saying, Go not into the way of the gentiles; &c.* Here was a positive embargo laid upon ministers, not to stir beyond the Jews; and had it continued in force; the consequence must have been, a restriction of labours to the circle prescribed. WHO or WHAT can take it off? Only HE
 who

who laid it on, and by the same manner, A POSITIVE PRECEPT, such as we have in the text. Thus the Law of Nature returns to its old course; all which stopped its current, is taken away, and *teach*, in the commission, is a joint-positive branch of it with baptizing. Consequently, 'disciple itself' is positive too.

Let partial baptism then, as maintained by the Baptists on one hand, infant and adult Baptism, as avowed in this work on the other, be balanced together; will not the scale turn in favor of the latter? If the observations be true, which have been produced, the Commission commands the Baptism of infants and adults, indiscriminately. It gives no sanction to the partial principles, and practices, of our differing Brethren. "In religious matters, and especially in the worship of God, it is not only sinful to go *contra Statutum*, (against a statute) but to go *Supra Statutum* (above a statute) or to speak home in the case, *acting supra statutum*, is all one with *acting contra Statutum*. Therein God's requiring is equivalent to forbidding; and doing more than he commandeth, to doing contrary to it." As these are Sentiments which have obtained Mr. B's approbation, being part of a quotation found in his work, may I not venture to ask, in what light are we to consider, *doing less than the Statute?*

Is there not evil annexed to acting *Infra Statutum*, (beneath the Statute)? If so, and the preceding pages do not bear false witness, there is no little blame imputable to the principles and practices of Antipædobaptists. The commission is very large, their scheme very narrow; all the difference there is between both, will determine the degree of enormity chargeable on the Authors of it.—Besides: upon the presumption that what is urged is true, it may be retorted upon our Brethren in their usual strain, *No precept for what you do!*—The detail of strange consequences may be yet further increased by observing, that, if *teach all nations* be understood as our opponents do, of that *teaching*, which is followed with Baptism, and includes in it *particular effects*; then, to maintain consistency, they should preach or teach no more than they do, or, than they are sure, they shall baptize, for the commission in this sense, requires, that whom they teach, the same they baptize. As “rare are solitary woes,” so rare are solitary absurdities; one begets another. For instance, this absurdity will accompany the former. Ministers can only be *Teachers* to such who are so taught, as in the judgment of Antipædobaptists are fit subjects for the baptismal ordinance. They may be *Preachers* according to Mark’s copy, but not *Teachers* according to Matthew’s. Alas!

for my aged Fathers, and beloved Brethren in the Ministry, if this be true Doctrine. To disprove it to be a natural consequence from the views of our opponents, as well as the rest mentioned, will, I conceive, be a difficult task to perform.

Judge then, Reader, judge for yourself, after attentively weighing the commission, and what has been advanced upon it, whether there be not good reason to consider Baptism, and Teaching, as positive branches, (at large, moral-positive) of Discipling the Nations founded upon some positively favored State, which can be no other than Relative Holiness,—to which state, while the Jews enjoyed it, external privileges appertained.

III. The Investigation of the principal historical accounts of Baptism in the New Testament, next demands our attention.

The object of the inquiry, it should be remembered, is, to ascertain the agreement or disagreement of these accounts with the author's principles, or those of Antipædobaptists, concerning Baptism. In tracing this object, I remark on the leading historical cases recorded, as follows :

(1) That Preaching, Teaching, or what amounts to it, introduces to baptism, and that the Baptifmal Ordinance was administered very soon.

How

How this mode of procedure, this dispatch in baptizing, is accounted for; and its consistency with the avowed principle and design of this work, the sequel will make to appear. When our Redeemer delivered the commission already considered, He, doubtless, did not mean himself to regard the Nations; or that the Nations should be regarded, as if they were a collection of irrational Beings. He did not design to give a sanction to the principle or practice of unnatural compulsion. He did not intend passing an act in favor of criminal violence in a holy cause. While we cannot but conclude this was far from his design, Ministers are not to act in reference to the commission, towards their Fellow-creatures, but as persons having a natural unalienable right to act for themselves in religious concerns. Two views of the Nation's ought to be distinctly taken and considered in connection with our Lord's words—One is, that view of them but just mentioned, as rational creatures—the other is, that which immediately presents itself from the body of the commission as they are the objects of it.—Unless this distinction be allowed and regarded; violence and persecution by those who assume the discharge of the commission, will meet with a patronage, to which one cannot forbear saying as Abraham, *That be far from thee to do*

after this manner. It is a proposition therefore, which, I conceive, may be laid down, as strictly true, that any professing to act under the commission of Christ, either as to baptizing or teaching, and therein offers violence to the law of Nature, deviates from the design of the Legislator, misconstrues his words, and practically calumniates his blessed religion.

Upon this principle, all instances of Baptism, however, by whom, or upon whomsoever performed, infringing upon the Law of Nature, demand the severest censure. As Baptisms of this cast, we regard those administered by the Missionaries of the Church of Rome upon the Indians; concerning which, Millar in his history of the propagation of Christianity gives us the following intelligence. “ ’Tis (says He) reported of twelve Franciscan Friars, that each of them baptized an hundred thousand Indians, and one of them four times that number, asking no more, but, what is your Name? Yea, they baptized vast multitudes all at once, without any previous care, so as that these pretended Profelytes did not know whether they were baptized or not.” To this Paragraph may be added Mr. Ramsay’s Story, related by Mr. Booth. “ The absent Owner of a Plantation, [in the West-Indies] sent out positive standing instructions to his M-
“ nager

“ nager to have his Slaves carefully instructed
 “ in the Christian Religion, and baptized. He
 “ [the Clergyman that was employed] came to
 “ a Plantation on a Sunday afternoon, and de-
 “ sired the manager to collect eight or ten
 “ Slaves to be baptized. They were brought
 “ before him. He began to repeat the office of
 “ Baptism. When he had read as far as that
 “ part of the Service where he was to sprinkle
 “ them with water, if their former name plea-
 “ sed him, he baptized them by it, but if he
 “ thought it not fit to call a Christian by, as
 “ was his opinion of Quamina, Bungee, and the
 “ like, he gave them the first Christian Name
 “ that occurred to his memory.—Some of the
 “ baptized would mutter and say, *they desired*
 “ *not the Parson to throw water in their face,*
 “ which was all they knew of the matter, and
 “ therefore were *loth* to suffer themselves to be
 “ so dealt with.” This is the Story: Mr. Booth’s
 Remarks upon it shall next come forward. “ Now
 “ this is *genuine Discipleship* by baptism, for here
 “ is not the least appearance of professing Faith,
 “ nor of instruction previous to the use of wa-
 “ ter. A fine illustration this of what our Lord
 “ meant by *Matheteusate!*—Nor is it of any
 “ force against this method of making Disciples,
 “ that these poor Negroes *muttered*, and knew
 “ not what to make of the parson’s conduct.
 “ For

“ For, if it be the command of our Lord to
 “ make Disciples without instruction, and mere-
 “ ly by baptizing them, the Work is done,
 “ the discipleship is effected by barely admini-
 “ stering the Rite.”

Having laid this strange West-Indian Case before the Reader, and Mr. B—’s Remarks upon it, I hope, I may be permitted to subjoin a few of my own. “ The glasses need not to
 “ be wiped very clean” (to adopt a borrowed Phrase in Mr. B—’s Work) nor be used very long, to see that Author’s design in introducing this story, and commencing a Remarker on it. Was it with a view to strengthen his Argument in support of his favorite rendering of *Matheteusate* by *teach*? Was it to entail ridicule and abhorrence upon principles as to the Administration of the Baptismal Ordinance more wide and liberal than his own? If such were the objects Mr. B. had in view, I am happy to say, He has undertaken a bad cause, and has no occasion to triumph. Such a course as was pursued in the West-Indies, receives no countenance from the distinguishing Sentiments of Pædobaptists, or from the Author’s still larger plan in this publication. The Relation of it, creates not a little disgust, so abhorrent are our principles from such practices. And some withal, at Mr. B—’s insinuations to the contrary.

That

That the case held up to public notice, as A FINE ILLUSTRATION of what our Lord meant by MATHETEUSATE—AS GENUINE DISCIPLESHIP—does not make it necessary that, *the Greek*, should be rendered *teach*, and so throw any advantage into the cause of our Opponents, I would endeavour to prove thus—I ask, did Christ or did He not mean, to authorize his Ministers to force or compel any by an unnatural violence, or infringement on the Law of Nature, to be baptized and taught, under the commission? If it be answered in the negative, which it must, the Apostles had one obvious step to take, which was to address themselves to the People, that they might obtain their consent. The commission at large is positive in part, resting on the sovereignty and gracious Will of its Author—intrusted to Men to execute among their Fellow-creatures. From the very nature of things, even if it were admitted that the first word in the commission required *teaching*, who does not perceive, there must be a *teaching* due to the Law of Nature, to the natural liberty of Adults before that. Accordingly, there must not be less than a first, second, and third teaching: the two first before; the last after Baptism.—The Nations must be PREVIOUSLY TOLD, alias, TAUGHT, *what commission* is about to be executed
among

among them, what it consists of, and according to the approved rendering among the Baptists these are, *teach, baptizing, teaching*—Besides, it is a quite unprecedented thing for a positive Ordinance which is to be administered by men among men, to be done without previous consent among Adults. Administrators are obliged by the unrestrained Law of Nature, to treat the Subjects of their Administration as rational Beings, be they of what age they may.

Abraham upon receiving command from God, to circumcise every one born in his house, and bought with money, took every male and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin on the self-same day. What means did Abraham pursue? Violence made no part of them by compelling, contrary to their consent, the men of Abraham's house to be circumcised. Would he not make a declaration of this positive Order, the nature, and ends of it? Doubtless—The Law of Nature requires so much: the divine Order though positive, did not exclude it, and so authorize a violent course. The Nature of an Ordinance as positive, is not necessarily hostile to these ideas; for let the definition of such an Ordinance be given (as it ought) to distinguish it from moral ones, the Ordinance as positive, must have a *certain situation*; and it is a thing entirely new for it
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to have either such a situation or direction as to infringe upon natural liberty from the conduct of the Administrator.—When it was mentioned under a former Head, that the prohibitory clause, Matth. x. 5. counteracted the Law of Nature, my meaning was merely with regard to the Gospel-ministration. The Gospel-ministry being a matter of positive Institution and limited to the Jewish Nation, though as Men, it was agreeable to the Law of Nature that the Apostles should teach the World at large, yet as Ministers, they had no right for want of an enlarged commission. Thus the Law of Nature received a check, but entirely in reference to the Gospel. As far as the commission went, under which the Apostles acted at first, which was to the Jews, the Law of Nature had no restraint. Under this new enlarged glorious commission to all Nations, there is room for it to act still; and thus it becomes an honored auxiliary to Christ's Ministers in the execution of it. If there be any force in these remarks, which are submitted to the Reader's consideration, it is plain that the plan here proposed for enquiry allows no such procedure as Mr. Ramsay's Story discovers.—They make for the rendering of the term in question by Disciple, rather than teach, as upon the latter there will be quite a superfluity of it—and

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there is no occasion for setting it up under the idea that *discipling by baptizing* lies open to the making of such Disciples as the Clergyman afore-mentioned, because consent being requisite to prevent any infringement on the Law of Nature, something tantamount to *teaching, preaching*, must ordinarily precede it. To disciple by baptizing, stands clear of those incongruities which Mr. B. would annex to it, by having recourse to what has been said. Here, let it be observed, that the commission, as we have seen, including Infants as well as Adults, the Law of Nature receives no infringement from discipling them, (*it being their right*) provided it is done with the consent of those who have from natural Relation their disposal.

Mr. B. animadverting on Mr. Horsey's sermon on Infant-Baptism inserts the following Note. " *Regularly admitted into the dispensation of the Christian Religion, by being baptized.*" " While I cannot but question the truth of " this position, yet, I freely allow it the merit " of originality. For though many have talk- " ed of baptism admitting into the visible " Church, yet Mr. Horsey is the only Author " whom I have observed, that speaks of it " admitting into the Christian Dispensation. " To live under the Christian Dispensation, to " enjoy the privileges of the Christian dispen- " sation,

" fation, and such like phrases, are commonly
 " used, but regularly admitted into the Dispens-
 " sation of the Christian Religion, and that by
 " Baptism, is both uncommon and improper." Thus finding fault with the expression " He proceeds. " To convict it of impropriety." Then follows a set of questions, which as they belong to the subject in hand, I will beg leave to consider myself as Catechumen, and answer. Does Mr. B. inquire, " Is it a fact that nei-
 " ther Jews nor Gentiles had any regular In-
 " terest in the Christian Dispensation till they
 " were baptized" ? I answer, it is a fact they had no visible regular interest in the Christian Dispensation, till they were baptized. " Was
 " not the Gospel, by divine order, preached to
 " them, and was it not quite regular for
 " them to hear it, prior to their being baptized ?" Preached to them, and regular for them to hear it in an *unbaptized* state, only upon the afore-mentioned end of obtaining consent. The divine order to which Mr. B. refers, and which has been considered under the second general Division, it is apprehended, requires no more. " Might not both Jews and Gentiles, while unbaptized, attend the Apostolic Ministry, in all branches of moral Worship, without the least irregularity" ? The Worship under the Gospel is an evangelically-instituted

tuted, moral-positive Worship.—And premising this, I reply, without hesitation. There is no impropriety, but the contrary in the Jews and Gentiles attending the public ministry, *till* baptized. But before Mr. B. can obtain any advantage to his cause either from the question or the answer, it behoves him to shew, that Jews and Gentiles did attend on all the branches of moral Worship in an *unbaptized* state. For want of precept and precedent to establish the fact, there would be no small irregularity in such a conduct. To become spectators of such a scene, as the question supposes, we must repair to the congregations of professed Baptists: the eye will quickly discover some who twenty, thirty years, &c. have attended on the branches of moral Worship, as Mr. B. calls them, and notwithstanding *unbaptized*. Where will Mr. B. find a precedent for this in all the New Testament—? “ Might they not study the Scriptures, “ converse with christians about their Souls, and “ solemnly pray in the Name of Jesus, without being suspected of irregularity, except “ they were baptized? ” What! study the Scriptures, converse with Christians, pray in the Name of Jesus, and be unbaptized! Has Mr. B. no suspicion of irregularity here? Does he carry his notions of *credible profession* so much further, that he will not baptize persons who
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admit of such a description? “ From what “ branch of moral worship are unbaptized persons debarred by any rite of Christ, or the “ custom of the Apostolic Churches?” No Rule of Christ, no custom of the Apostles, debars persons as unbaptized from moral Worship as such.—But, be it remembered, both the rule of Christ and the custom of the Apostles and Apostolic Churches require, that moral Worship should be made evangelical, according to the institution and Genius of the Gospel. And here our Opponents are greatly to blame, who lay stumbling blocks in the way of its being so.

It is now time for me in turn to interrogate. From the practice of the Apostles as recorded, is there no reason to consider them acting agreeable to the above views? Do we not mark the speed with which they proceeded to the administration of baptism? and a *solid reason* for it likewise? May we not here obtain a light to discover emphasis and weight in such language, as, *Why tarriest thou, arise and be baptized?* In such accounts as, *He and all his were baptized Straitway?* Laying aside this view of the case, and supposing for the moment, the Apostles had considered the import of the first leading term in the commission to imply very particular effects, they might have allowed themselves more time,
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after the example of certain persons amongst us now-a-days ; they might have gone on *teaching and still teaching*. But the King's business demanded haste. The commission is admirably framed to expedite ; the pattern drawn therein the Apostles manifestly followed and so generally, that a reference to the whole of their conduct is enough.

Through an oversight of the *exact position*, and regard which the commission of Christ bears to THE LAW OF NATURE, which, as the Will of Christ, forbids any part of Christ's positive Commission to be executed without a certain previous consent obtained, it is, I suspect that our differing Brethren have insisted so strenuously for *their* rendering Matheteusate : not distinguishing between what is done *in reference to* the commission, and what is performed *under* it. To the same circumstance, if I mistake not, Mr. B. may consider himself indebted for some observations, which he regards as concessions of Pædobaptists. A Reader may perceive in several of the quotations produced in Mr. B—'s work under Matth. xxviii. 19. That the Authors are impressed with the expediency of teaching of some sort previous to the baptismal Ordinance. This is particularly to be observed in the Specimens given from Dr. Doddridge, Grotius, Hoornbeckius, Dr. Ridgley, Poole's
Continuators,

Continuators, Beckmannus, Episcopus.—The Testimony of Beckmanus is not a little striking. “ That the word *Matheteuein* according to its etymology signifies TO MAKE DISCIPLES, is readily allowed by ALL”—Still however, these Authors seem to consider instruction, as belonging to it, which is most readily granted, as a general term, including *baptizing and teaching*—This placing *teaching* in the commission after *baptizing* rather than before, if the order in which they are represented is tenaciously followed, and at the same time, the circumstance of *natural consent* being over-looked, led them to such accounts of Matheteufate, which are inconsistent with themselves, and if admitted, would over-load the commission, with a *super-abundance of teaching*, as before remarked.—

(2) I proceed to notice the language which the New Testament-Baptizers use as to their preaching and baptizing, having their great commission before them. While under the former head of subdivision observations have been made, intended to account for the Apostles’ baptizing with such celerity—namely, that the parties might with all speed be visibly stated under the commission—this particular leads us to examine, whether *a credible profession of Faith, entitles to Baptism*, is a sentiment which
 Scripture

Scripture-Precedents of Baptism warrant. It is natural to expect, that the language used by administrators should assist us herein. Let us, therefore, examine it with care and impartiality.

The Ministry of John, the venerable Forerunner of our Lord, consisted of *preaching* and *baptizing*. What was the substance and scope of his preaching? Repentance, and the Baptism of Repentance.—Matth. iii. 2. Mark, i. 4. What Repentance? Doubtless, sincere and unfeigned. The very word *Repent*, means the essential of Repentance, as it respects the Heart; not indeed to the exclusion of the form and fruits of it, but this is rather implied than expressed. If the Tree be good, the Fruit will be so also. But if John preached true unfeigned Repentance, and we are to make his preaching the rule of baptizing, and so true Repentance a prerequisite to baptism, it follows none but real penitents ought to be baptized.—John, we are given to understand, preached also the *Baptism of Repentance*. A mode of representing the Ordinance that strongly befriends the idea of Baptism as *exhibitory of, obligatory and helpful to Repentance*; and the conclusion, that it is a joint-

joint-mean with preaching to bring about Repentance where not, and aid it where it is. *I baptize you with water UNTO REPENTANCE.* The preposition used appears in that remarkable passage concerning Israel at large where it is said, they were all baptized unto Moses, in the Cloud and the Sea. 1. Cor. x. 2. Turretine understands the phrase, UNTO MOSES, *Metonymically*, q. d. unto the Doctrine and Dispensation of Moses. Not to notice that here we have an instance of Baptism, wherein, *unquestionably*, Infants and Adults promiscuously are included, I ask is it not Scriptural, in the passage just adduced, to regard the phrase, *unto Repentance*, in a sense not to the exception of Infants or Adults, as making Repentance an essential prerequisite to Baptism? Is not Repentance, as here represented, rather held forth as a *terminus ad quem*, an END for which, than *terminus a quo*, a GROUND ON WHICH, it was administered?

Among the number who repaired to John's Baptism were MANY of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Upon seeing them, he addressed them in Language, which bespeaks faithfulness, but no refusal. The contrary to a denial is intimated in v. 11. where in a speech immediately directed to them, he says in the words before noticed, *I INDEED BAPTIZE YOU with water unto Repentance.* Can language more expressive of

consent, or of actual administration on the part of a person baptizing be used? He, however, accompanies what he does, and which these Pharisees and Scribes came for, with reasonable and suitable advice, that as persons submitting to the Ordinance of Baptism, they would bring forth fruits in their future lives meet for, or becoming the nature, design, and obligations of the Baptismal Ordinance.—To this effect, is that language, *Bring forth therefore Fruits meet for Repentance.* The Pharisees and Lawyers, whom our Lord represents as rejecting the counsel of God against themselves being not baptized of him, were certainly not these persons, for the fact disproves it— Mr. B. allows Baptism in the passage here alluded to (Luke, vii. 30.) to be called the Counsel of God.—COUNSEL! How congruous such an account to the idea of its being an ordained mean with preaching, of advising, obliging, and being helpful to Repentance. This Ordinance, the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected against themselves. The *many* said to come to John's Baptism, must in all reason be excepted—and where lies the difference between those two classes of Pharisees?—The one came to John's Baptism i. e. to be baptized; the other rejected it and did not come. What conclusion then, is warranted by a comparative view of our Lord's charge against the Pharisees as

rejecters of John's Baptism? Of the Pharisees as coming to John's Baptism? I answer, that those that did come, were baptized; that it was the fault of the others, for want of a professed willingness, that they were not baptized—that if Repentance had been urged as a prerequisite for Baptism, our Lord would have blamed them in the first instance, for *non-repenting*. But if upon the confession of Mr. B. Baptism and the Counsel of God be strictly synonymous, Christ so expresses himself as to make their criminality to lie in their *rejecting* John's Baptism, the opposite to which is *consenting*.—John's grand argument for what he did, was. *The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand*.—The period was drawing near, when the adorable Messiah would enter on his public Ministry, and introduce the most illustrious dispensation of Grace, which should continue till Time would be no more. What the morning Star is to the rising Sun, such was John's Ministry to our Lord. He therefore comes forward, saying, *Repent, FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND*.—He publishes a call to Repentance, and announces Baptism, as we have seen, a joint-mean with preaching, to bring the nation to Repentance. A suitableness of State to the Dispensation coming on, seems to be one general idea intended.—Repentance may be conceived in a two-fold view, either

as it respects THE THING ITSELF—OR AS THE END OF A GOSPEL MINISTRY—In either case, I see no reason why Infants should be excepted from a certain interest in this general call. To deny their capacity for that which is tantamount to Repentance in Adults, brings along with it one or other of these consequences—either that they were not born in Sin contrary to the testimony of Scripture—or a denial of their Salvation as incapable of what is essential thereunto—If Repentance be considered as the *end* of a Gospel call, and Infants, as I think must be allowed, are proper subjects of certain obligation, it is unnatural to consider them as not interested in a call which rests on the obligation of the objects of it, to the thing it specifies, namely, Repentance.—Other testimony of Scripture favors these ideas as to a general call. Thus, when Jonah received a commission to go and preach to Nineveh, more than six score thousand persons that could not discern between their right hand and left, *alias* Children, were interested in the preaching of that prophet—As far as children were capable of an external State of Repentance, they were put into it by wearing sackcloth. Making Scripture our guide from the case of Nineveh, what is more natural than to view Infants as well as Adults, *indiscriminately* involved in the call to Repentance,

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under John's Ministry; and *Baptism* being as suitable to the people on his preaching as *covering with sackcloth* was to Nineveh on Jonah's, Infants in the one case, might be so situated, as to answer to the Infants in the other.

Besides: if the Kingdom of Heaven being at hand was a reason of John's Ministry, then both branches of it, *calling to Repentance* and *baptizing*, must apply to all under the Kingdom of Heaven; and it seems fair to consider that interpretation of the passages in question, as not the true and genuine one, which makes the matter of John's call, repenting and baptizing, UNEQUAL TO IT.—But the Kingdom of Heaven, is a glorious Dispensation of wide extent—it includes Infants and Adults promiscuously. Concerning *the former*, Christ was pleased to declare. Matth. xix. 14. *Suffer little Children to come unto me*, (or to be brought, as they are said to have been carried, and taken up in Christ's arms) *for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*.—Beside the gracious assurance expressed in these words on behalf of Infants without exception, it is obvious, that Christ speaks of that act of parents or friends bringing children to him as if their own act of coming, though from the circumstances related, we know it was not.—Are Adults included under the Kingdom of Heaven? Few, very few, according

cording to the practice and principles of our Antipædobaptist friends, but, surely, our Lord was of a different way of thinking, when He dictated, Matth. xiii. 47. *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the Sea, and gathered of every kind both good and bad.* The commission of Christ before considered, is doubtless this net, in the execution of which, Ministers are to gather; the Sea the World, where persons, indiscriminately, are to be gathered by the two parts of the commission, *baptizing* and *teaching*.—Ministers officially considered may throw the net into the sea, or execute their commission in the World, without distinction of parts, places or persons.—All in respect of the commission, are allowed to be in a state to be gathered. —Such seems to be the description of the Kingdom of Heaven, as pictured in the aforesaid parable—Now was it on the eve of the commencement of this glorious constitution, that the New Testament Elias appeared? Was his Ministry owing to its speedy approach? Surely, ALL included in the Kingdom of Heaven, were interested in the joint-branches of his Ministry. Consequently, Infants and Adults promiscuously. If other circumstances, then, should not arise in the account of John's Baptism repugnant to the general right of all indiscriminately, it is presumed, the language John made use of as to

preaching

preaching and baptizing, is not discouraging to the object of this work.

Acts, ii. 28. 39. *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of Sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and your children, and to all that are afar off [EVEN] as many as the Lord our God shall call.* Here, and in the case with which these passages are connected is a sort of COLOSSUS among BAPTISMAL PRECEDENTS. The more attention is due to it on that account. How far Peter's address as now before us, will support the principle of our Opponents, baptizing on a credible profession of Faith, I shall attempt to scrutinize, and to this end notice those things in the texts, whence they derive their argument, and consider them as conclusive in their favor.—To secure themselves in possession of this part of Scripture, *Repent ye and be baptized, or the order of the Words, the promise mentioned as meaning that of JOEL'S Prophecy, the term Children as denoting such only who are the distinguished Subjects of divine Grace, the Call as spoken of God's Spirit, are each of them insisted upon.* Of each of these, I shall take notice in the Sequel.—The arrangement of the words,

words, *repent ye and be baptized*, is and can be of no service to the cause of Antipædobaptists, in my apprehension, unless two things can be shewn, namely, that the Apostle, by "Repent ye," means any thing less than *genuine Repentance*, and that a *credible profession* of Repentance is the same thing as genuine Repentance. Despairing of the possibility of these things, I cannot but consider an argument in favor of the distinguishing sentiments I oppose taken from the mere words of Peter or their order to be futile. For the difference is, or may be as much as between the shadow and the substance. *Credibly profess Repentance and be baptized!* No, if the mere order of the words is to decide, and the most natural sense of the call, "Repent ye" be considered, TRULY AND UNFEIGNEDLY REPENT AT HEART AND BE BAPTIZED, is Peter's language constructively. I scruple not to affirm if this was the Repentance urged along with baptism by Peter, and as an ESSENTIAL PRE-REQUISITE to baptism, it was out of his power, and it is out of any man's, to act according to it, without a discernment of spirits. Respecting Repentance as required in the text in question, and profession of Repentance which may be deemed, credible, as required by our differing Brethren, a person may come up to the latter, and fall short of the former. To
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cite *Peter's Language*, which is express and unequivocal, demanding true Repentance as affording a Rule, when the main thing in that Rule, (if Baptism rests on profession merely) may be wanting, is, to say the least of it, *strange indeed*. Yet this is the conduct, and way of reasoning on the part of our Opponents.—Allow to the call *Repent ye*, but ITS NATURAL GENUINE SENSE, and the Worm at the bottom of Jonah's gourd did not render that more useless to him, than this sense will the mere order of this passage to the cause it is urged to defend.—The design of the Apostle being beyond all reasonable doubt to press true Repentance, how suitable such language, speaking as he was to persons who were unexpectedly wrought upon and evidently the subjects of some compunction. *Repent ye and be baptized*, are both parts of the Ministerial Call, and as one must unavoidably precede the other, how pertinent and proper that *the end*, Repentance, to which baptizing and preaching are subservient, should be mentioned *first*. “Positive Institutions” says Bishop Butler, “I suppose all those which Christianity enjoins, are *means* to a moral end, and the *end* must be acknowledged more excellent than the *means*.” Agreeable to this remark, if it cannot be denied but Baptism is a mean to repentance, is it at all to be wondered at, that “*Repent ye*,” should precede “*and be baptized*.”

baptized.—Impartiality must, I think, acknowledge, that the words in Peter's address, do not necessarily draw along with them the sense, which would make Repentance an indispensable prerequisite. They may admit, perfectly consistent with the Phraseology, a very different meaning. Now suppose Peter's call, capable of two different constructions. It, in this case, resembles a pair of scales in equilibrio, or equally balanced. Only as both sides can produce solid arguments for their own and against the opposite opinion, can they expect the scale to preponderate in their favor. What is there on the Antipædobaptist side of the question? Nothing from the nature of the Ordinance. Nothing from Christ's commission, both which we have considered. I add by way of anticipation, nothing from the *promise* by which Peter backs this Call. So far as I can see, the mere order, without any regard to the strict and natural sense of the passage, is set up. To say the most of it, an apparent sense of Scripture is brought forward as a candidate for acceptance, though such consequences would follow from the admission of it, as to render it of no service, even to those who contend for it—for true Repentance is the requisition and the requisition can alone be the Rule or Precedent.

The Promise in the book of Joel quoted by Peter expressly, as mentioned in the former part of the chapter, is insisted upon to be the promise meant by Peter in the passage under consideration. In opposition to this, others step forward in behalf of the ABRAHAMIC PROMISE. Mr. Bostwick in his sermon on this controverted text, argues against the former and for the latter in the following manner. "Some suppose" (says he) "that by this promise the Apostle only intends " that of Joel's prophecy which he had quoted " in the preceeding sermon from the 16. to the " 22. v. But let any one read that prophecy of " Joel as quoted by the Apostle in these verses, " and he must be immediately convinced, that the " extraordinary and miraculous gifts of the Holy " Ghost are there intended; consequently that " the promise, contained in this prophecy, could " never here be urged as a ground or motive " to baptism; for extraordinary and miraculous " gifts were neither required as the ground of " Baptism, nor numbered among the blessings " that usually attend or flow from it. Nor is " there the least intimation given in this history, " that the three thousand here baptized did re- " ceive these miraculous gifts. If therefore this " was the promise the Apostle speaks of to them " and their children, it will follow that the " promise was not made good; for neither they

“ nor their children, (that we read of) were
 “ ever possessed of these extraordinary gifts.—
 “ Besides, the promise in Joel had already its
 “ accomplishment in that extraordinary effusion
 “ of the Spirit upon the Apostles. This Saint
 “ Peter declares, and quotes the promise on pur-
 “ pose to prove his declaration. It is plain then,
 “ he can have no reference to this in the Promise
 “ here mentioned.” As to the Promise he con-
 ceives to be meant, the same Author observes,
 “ It is notorious that THE COVENANT WITH
 “ ABRAHAM was well-known and often empha-
 “ tically called THE PROMISE without any other
 “ Characteristic or note of Distinction. But to
 “ conclude the point, the Apostle himself has
 “ plainly informed us in another place, what he
 “ here intends by the Promise. See Acts iii. 25.
 “ where urging much the SAME EXHORTATION
 “ upon his Jewish Hearers as he does here, he
 “ enforces it with this argument : *Ye are the chil-*
 “ *dren of the Covenant, which God made with our*
 “ *Fathers, saying unto Abraham, AND IN THY SEED*
 “ *SHALL ALL THE KINDREDS OF THE EARTH*
 “ *BE BLESSED.*” It would be easy to shew that
 this worthy Author is not singular in his views or
 reasonings by producing other quotations. But
 to proceed : let the Promise be what it may, one
 thing must, I think, be granted that it is intro-
 duced as the ground of the Apostle’s address in
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the verse immediately preceding it. It is remarkable, that our Lord's commission, notwithstanding the capital figure it makes, was not either in *this case or anyother we read of*, pleaded. THE PROMISE, whatever it be, doubtless of ancient date compared with the commission, is brought forward. Now does not the Apostle's mention of the one, and the silence about the other, when one would have expected, the commission of Christ might have been urged as the sole basis of his conduct and their compliance, bespeak, that Christ, when he made the commission, had respect to the ancient promise, agreeable to what has appeared in this work already? Peter directs their views to the promise, as that whence they may derive encouragement as to repentance, baptism, remission of sin and the receiving of the Spirit.—The *Commission* under which Peter acted, he seems to consider more immediately as the Rule to Christ's Ministers, who are the executors of it. The *Promise*, as that which respects the people, as the objects included in the commission. Thus both the commission and promise have a mutual aspect to each other. By the One, Ministers as the smaller body, are warranted to perform their part, the large Body of the Nations is prompted to their's on the ground of the promise. If the promise be allowed to be the encouraging matter to the people, to Repentance, Baptism, &c. and as
such

such urged by the Apostle, it appears to come to the same thing whether, the promise be understood of that in Joel—or of the other mentioned, Acts, iii. 25—Both the promises respect the *same period of time*, the commencement of the Gospel Dispensation. Of the two promises, that in Joel being much later, and yet respecting the same period, requires to be considered, as *subordinate* to, or *virtually* in the older comprehensive promise. The promise is manifestly urged to enforce a compliance with the Grand Call of the Ministry and its objects. How could it be mentioned by Peter, or so understood by the people, unless OBJECTIVELY exhibiting Blessings.—*I will pour out of my Spirit on all Flesh.—In thy Seed shall all the Nations of the earth be blessed.*—Having their views directed by the joint assistance of the commission and of such promisory language, what greater encouragement could the Apostles or the People have? ALL FLESH, ALL NATIONS, on the authority and exhibitory Grace of the commission and promise may be ministerially called. How confirming this to the leading idea of this work, namely the privileged state of the World at large!

The Promise is to you, AND YOUR CHILDREN.—The term *children* in this clause, undergoes a strange limitation, both from Pædobaptists and Antipædobaptists. Infants are understood to the exception of Adults, as it is supposed to respect the

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the Ordinance of Baptism by one party, and only visibly professing children are regarded by the other, and so all Adults beside, and Infants as well, thrust out of the term. "Some of our learned opposers indeed (says Mr. Booth) contend for the indefinite sense of the term, *children*. Thus for example, VOSSIUS: To you and to your children was the promise made. Now mention is made of children simply, without difference of age. HEIDEGGERUS: The promise was made to their children indefinitely without difference of age. WITSIUS: Mention is made of children simply without difference of age." Not a little pleased with the sanction of such a learned Triumvirate to my own opinion, I am not at all afraid of Mr. B—'s consequences. No, I admit his "consequently, all the children of the Apostles' awakened auditors, whether Infants or Adults were without exception to be baptized."

To all that are afar off, WHETHER JEW OR GENTILE. General and indiscriminate as the objective terms are; calculated, as they seem to be to give us an idea of the extensive latitude, or compass belonging to the promise; natural as it was for Peter's *Jewish* hearers to consider it in that light, yet the last clause of all, if Mr. B. be right, has the same effect upon the foregoing terms as some baneful Frost on a Tree laden with Fruit. Thus he observes, "*As many as the Lord our*
God

shall call, is as plainly as possible a limiting clause, and extends a restrictive force to the term *children*, the pronoun *you*, or to that descriptive language *all that are afar off*." These Remarks may be confronted with the following of Dr. Williams's, which serve to shew, that Mr. B. confounds what ought to be distinguished; and that while it is unnatural, so it is unnecessary to mutilate the former parts of the passage by reason of the last. "Here we should carefully distinguish between *God's call* and *men's compliance* with it. The latter of these ideas is out of the present question; being excluded by the nature of the subject, and the proper force of the term. Nor should we confound the *CALL of the gospel*, with God's *secret* choice of individuals, or his *efficacious* drawing of them to himself to love and serve him in spirit and in truth. These things belong to a sovereign invisible dispensation; a dispensation of quite a different nature from what our apostle mainly intends. And indeed, with regard to what is termed *effectual calling*, which Mr. B. seems to take for granted is here intended, the *call* must not be confounded with the *effects* of it. In my apprehension, the secret and efficacious influence of God on the sinner's mind, whereby it is disposed to receive the truth, is very improperly termed *God's call*. For his *calling* of them, properly speaking, is by his *word*, his will *revealed*,
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the *ministry* of reconciliation, &c. but what renders this calling *effectual*, is the imparted influence or powerful operation of the Spirit on the mind, and thereby a disposition, inclination, or moral ability, is produced, to *comply* with the call. Hence *many* are called, but *few* are chosen*.

BESIDES : The promise, or gospel grant, is not any blessing conferred *in consequence* of *effectual calling*, but in *subserviency* to it. For the promise is the *foundation* of our access to God, and our *encouragement* to repentance, and not a blessing consequent upon either. Repenting, complying, coming to God, &c. are *our* acts and exercises ; but without a promise they have no ground, no motive, no existence. Persons, families, and nations, are called THAT THEY MAY COMPLY, and the promise is given them as the *inducement*. When any *actually comply* with the purport of the call, we are taught and obliged to ascribe that efficiency, not to our own distinguishing worthiness and ability, but to the power of God, executing the plan of sovereign distinguishing love. Thus God *calls*, but man, through the stupifying effect of sin, refuses ; yet when God *works* in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, who can let ? Nevertheless,

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the blessings promised, or exhibited in the promise, become actually ours in consequence of our answering the divine requisition or *call*.

On the whole: As the Apostle has no reference to the *internal* power of grace, we are constrained to seek his meaning in the *external* call of the gospel. Unto whatever part of the gentile world, as if he had said, the cloud of divine providence moves, from henceforth, the ministry of reconciliation, or God's *call* to men by the Gospel, is designed to follow it. Our call has no limitation but what arises in the course of providential conduct. If *all* the gentile nations are not actually evangelized, such confinement and seeming partiality is not owing to any limiting clause in our commission, but to the all-wise conduct of providence, while it opens a door of entrance to some nations, and leaves others for a time shut. But no sooner is a person, a family, a nation or a people, *evangelized*, or addressed by a gospel ministry, than we can assure them, that the promise is to *them and theirs*. If they *reject* the call, they reject also the promise; and if they *reject* the promise, grant, or covenant, they have no right to the *seal*; for the instrument and the seal must not be separated. *External* compliance is sufficient to secure whatever is in the covenant of an *external nature*; and baptism, the *initiating seal*, being *such*, by that compliance it is secured.

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But an *internal* and spiritual compliance, and that alone, secures to us whatever is in the covenant of an *internal* and spiritual nature. And whence the ability to comply, as before observed, belongs to another question, and flows from the covenant of redemption, well ordered in all things and sure, in its *internal form*."

If Ministers, as they ought to be, are considered as the Persons to whom God has intrusted the call, then the *limiting clause*, as Mr. B. styles it, is quite the reverse. So far as our Lord's commission is made the rule of administering it, Ministers are authorized to preach the Gospel to every creature. We have before seen, there is no nation under Heaven, nor any part of each which is under any disqualification or excepted, in respect of the commission itself. A Minister's address should comport, and ought to have that sense affixed to it, which will make it harmonious to the liberal and genuine Spirit of the commission. Peter, though acting in the instance before us under it, supports the call by the Promise. The latter is presented as a glass in which the objects of it might discern their favored and advantageous situation. Whether it be that taken out of Joel, or that made to Abraham, the state is such, of all flesh, all nations, as suffers none to consider themselves, or to be considered, as *excluded* from the Spirit or blessing.

It is absolute, unconditional, a general revealed exhibition of mercy. While on the basis of the commission in respect of himself as a Minister, Peter, on the basis of the promise in respect of his hearers, addressed them, saying, Repent ye, &c. The inherent power of the creature being justly discarded, the requisition contained in the call turns not upon what the creature *has not*, but WHAT HE HAS. This is the FREE UNLIMITED PROMISE. Our Lord's commission is subordinate to the promise, as the nature and date of both evince. Ministers are encouraged to the execution of the former, because of the *possibility* as well as necessity of Repentance, appearing from the latter. In other words, the ministerial call is made in reference to the favored state of mankind depicted in the promise, shewing itself through the medium of our Lord's commission. From the very nature of the case therefore, *repent ye*, which denotes a state of real Repentance, cannot be urged as an indispensable prerequisite to the Baptifinal Ordinance, for as the secret intention of God can be no rule of administration, so the secret Work of God's Spirit can be none. Repentance, considered as to its essence, is seated in the heart, and nothing less than such a Repentance never to be repented of, agreeing to the call, it is not to be supposed, that the Apostle meant to propose

as a ground of administration, that qualification which neither he nor any other, is competent to determine with a certainty that a person possesses. Some other view of the call then must be the just one, which frees it of any such embarrassment. And a due attention to its language as it relates to, and is supported by the promise, must, I think, convince us, that Repentance as contained in the call, is not a CONDITION in reference to the promise, but as an END, and so, Repentance is proposed not as that which *leads to*, but *proceeds* from it.

Considering the relation of the call to the promise, the objects of the latter specified under the pronoun, you, meaning those whom Peter addressed, children indiscriminately, and all whom the Lord our God shall call by his Ministers (and none are excluded in respect of the commission or promise, but quite the contrary)—the *exhibitory* import of the promise, and the nature of the call, “repent ye” correspondent to it, what light more pertinent and natural, to see Peter’s language in, than as a call to a STATE OF REPENTANCE, arising from the necessity and possibility of being in it under the Gospel? What hinders, that it should not be understood as a call to all virtually—not in reference to *their present state*, however that be of penitence or the contrary, but what *ought* to be the state of all under the Gospel? God
now

now commandeth all men every where to repent. Acts, xvii. 30. The call to repentance being adapted to the nature of Gospel-times, and urged as in Peter's case, in such a manner, as to suit a mixture of characters, penitent and impenitent, and consequently relating to the state of Repentance, rather than persons, so it is natural to consider the other part of Peter's call, namely, to the Ordinance of Baptism.—Is it an evangelical ground for Repentance that it is a blessing exhibited? By parity of reason, Baptism is an exhibited Ordinance in reference to that state of Repentance, and so ALL should be baptized. To this mode of reasoning, the passage literally rendered, well agrees. *Repent ye, and let EVERY ONE OF YOU, EVERY ONE BELONGING TO YOU be baptized.* "Some," says Dr. Addington, "have remarked the change observable in the Apostle's phraseology from the plural, *repent ye*, to the singular disjunctive, *let every one of you, &c.*"—It is added, *for the remission of sins.* WITHOUT REPENTANCE NO FORGIVENESS, is an evangelical AXIOM. In the order of the passage before us, Baptism intervenes between "*Repent ye,*" and remission of sins. If an argument is taken from the literal arrangement, we may as well infer on that ground, that Baptism precedes remission, necessarily, and is of essential importance to it, for the words run, *Repent ye and be baptized every one of*

of you, for the remission of sin. No such thing in regard to Baptism can be *justly* inferred; from the MANNER of the Apostle's phraseology, and *and its place too*, forming a call to Baptism, there is every appearance of its being connected with that state of Repentance, which is the object of the Gospel-ministry; and the sense of the whole to be this, Repent ye, and or but, let every one of you, every one belonging to you, be baptized, as
 A MEAN TO THAT STATE.

Pricked, as some of Peter's auditory are said to have been, in their hearts, whereby the serious inquiry was extorted from them, *men and brethren what shall we do?* The Apostle plainly replies to them in a manner suitable to the *opposite characters*, of which the whole assembly might consist. He informs them, one and all, that they *must repent*. Did he mean to insinuate, they were all impenitent? This cannot be imagined with respect to the awakened part of his auditory, whose interrogatory he immediately resolves. If he had reason to consider them as awakened, doubtless he must consider them as the subjects of Repentance begun. Peter's language then, immediately addressed to *such a description of persons*, and interpreted consistently with an application to the circumstances they were apparently in, leads us to consider him, not as requiring Repentance of them, in order to be baptized, for why demand that,
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which as awakened hearers, he had reason to imagine they already had. But a *real state of repentance* is insisted on and urged, independent of the *character of Peter's hearers*; and if so, it cannot be as a prerequisite to Baptism, because that which is not plain and evident in this case can be no rule. It is far more natural to consider that state as an END, to which preaching and baptizing are subservient. And agreeable to this last idea, the subjoined clause, seems to partake of the nature of a parenthesis, *and or but let every one of you, every one belonging to you, be baptized.*

Such views of this leading passage of Scripture have the advantage and claim of rendering the *exhortatory* and *promisory* parts of Peter's address, natural, harmonious, and conclusive, and that sense, which has such effect, is likely to be the designed and legitimate one. In support of the sentiments of our Baptist friends, *the order* of the words is in vain pressed into the service, and with the most evident sense of the call, repent ye, will not answer the end they wish. An unnatural construction and limitation is made of the term *children*. That which ought to be distinguished, is confounded in respect of the *call*. The promise itself is misapplied. That interpretation which offers such violence to a text, can never be justly admitted. The inference in regard to the subject in question, must be derived from a

DIFFERENT, AND MORE CONSISTENT EXPLANATION. If the preceding pages offer such, as I cannot help thinking they do, it is plainly in favor of the indiscriminately privileged state of the world under the Gospel, of the general use of baptism as a joint-mean with preaching, of calling the Nations to a state of Repentance.

What meaning are we to affix to Philip's reply to the Eunuch, *if thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest*, upon the latter observing, *See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?* Acts, viii. 36. 37. The nature of that Faith which is here required, *is genuine, saving Faith*. If Philip's reply be made a guide in administering the baptismal Ordinance, then it follows, that nothing less than genuine Faith possessing the heart, can qualify for the baptismal Ordinance; and Philip could not consistently with his enforcing Faith, as an indispensable pre-requisite to baptism, administer the Ordinance but on evidence *demonstrative* of it. Philip had before baptized Simon Magus, whom, whatever his profession might be, Peter declared to be in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity. Unless Philip was inconsistent with himself, and did baptize Simon on a different ground, than he would the Eunuch, nothing, (if words have any true and genuine meaning)

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ing) but demonstrative evidence of his possessing true Faith would suffice. If he had demonstrative evidence, how came he so much to mistake Simon's character? If he did not require it in one case, how comes he to be *made* by an improper interpretation to require it in his reply to the Eunuch? Whence such a demand—as if thou believest with all thy heart—thou mayest be baptized? The only natural and consistent way of resolving this matter, is, by taking into account, what there is so much reason to apprehend, the views at large of the Eunuch were when he asked the question. It is highly probable that some conversation had passed between them, relating to the Ordinance. No doubt the nature of the Ordinance and its use, of Faith and its use, would be noticed by Philip who expounded to him Jesus. Answerable to the ideas, the Eunuch had, or which Philip might consider his new Convert to have, he replied, *If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest be baptized with the most encouraging hopes of Salvation.* So much is implied, and so in effect asserted, for the nature of the Faith urged, is saving Faith, nothing less. What is more natural therefore, than to consider it here in relation to its end, *Salvation*, and baptism being one mean, which as every other Ordinance, derives its efficacy from true Faith, Philip presses it in that view. Consequently, the reply of Philip, con-

concurr with our Lord's general obſervation (before noticed), *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved.* It is a reply modelled according to the views of the inquirer, deſigned to ſhew with what Faith he might expect any ſaving advantages from it. If Philip was not ſatisfied with his being a proper ſubject for baptiſm before, and meant to lay down ſaving Faith as an indiſpenſible pre-requiſite to baptiſm and his adminiſtration of it, it is not credible, a mere *verbal declaration*, falling ſhort too of that which he inſiſted on, *believing with all the heart*, could make his path of duty clear. However he commanded the Chariot to ſtand ſtill : and they went down into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him.—It is in my apprehenſion, a palpable miſtake to conſider true Faith here required otherwiſe, than as a perſonal thing eſſential to Salvation.—It is one thing to require it in this view, as it relates to the SUBJECT of an Ordinance. It is another, to require it as a Rule of adminiſtering it. Every Ordinance requires true Faith with reſpect to its ſaving uſe, yet not for its adminiſtration.

Acts, xxii. 16. *And now why tarrieſt thou? ariſe and be baptized, and waſh away thy ſins, calling on the name of the Lord.* So ſpake Ananias to

Paul immediately upon his receiving sight in the house of Judas. It is to be remembered here, as in other historical accounts, that what is extraordinary in the Apostle's case, either as confined to those early times, or peculiar in some respects to Paul himself, should be distinguished from that which is ordinary. Paul's conversion is marked with strong and singular proofs. Ananias could not possibly consider him in any other light, but on a denial of the heavenly vision he had seen, and the express intimations he then received in favor of Paul. Paul, accompanied with peculiar proofs of a converted state can not be drawn into a precedent, in relation to the question, who is a proper subject of Baptism? There was no room to be dubious as to the genuineness of the change. Ordinary profession among us is the only criterion for us to judge a person by, and far from being an *infallible one*.—Our judgment can rise no further than a judgment of charity. It will not do to make a person concerning whom, as in Paul's case, Ananias might judge of with certainty, a precedent to one, whom at most you can only form a judgment of charity about. Now that which makes the difference between Paul and others as to the ordinary course of things, forbids our making him a Precedent *entirely*. He was certainly a converted man, but was *unbaptized*. In the self-same hour (such was the haste) that he

he receives his sight by the hands of Ananias, he says to him, *arise and be baptized, &c.* The *washing away sin*, can, I conceive, be properly understood only as it is connected in this case with baptism, and as that Ordinance may be considered as a mean to it. Ananias does not aim to insinuate, Paul to be in an un sanctified and unpardoned state, for how could he with such superabundant evidence to the contrary. It is far from being a just inference from this address, that only such as Paul, including all circumstances of his case, is to be baptized. The nature of the case therefore, requires us to consider Ananias's address, as it respects Paul as a *converted* person, and the Ordinance of Baptism enjoined and represented in it. The inference from the former is, that a person unbaptized, and in a converted state as Paul was, should be baptized. The matter of this inference is denied by none who allow of Baptism at all. The address is next to be considered respecting the *Ordinance of Baptism itself*. Arise and be baptized, and *wash away thy sins*,—i. e. by Baptism, and here being evidently *exegetical*. The prominent idea of Baptism taken from this account, is of its being a mean to the purpose mentioned. Paul doubtless was viewed as one truly penitent, and pardoned; this however, does not supersede the propriety of his being baptized, under the ordinary

ordinary and standing idea of its *sacramentally* washing away sin. So far then, or in whatever sense, Baptism is held forth as an Ordinance in which there may be a washing of sin, and its answering this purpose, is given as a reason for its administration, it will apply to a mixture of characters, penitent and impenitent. The idea entirely congruous to this use of Baptism is, that, jointly with preaching, of its exhibiting Repentance, laying under obligations to it where it is not, and to persisting in it where it is begun. Arise and be baptized, &c. says Ananias, *calling on the name of the Lord*, i. e. suitably to the nature, and obligations of a baptized state. The adjuncts and properties of this calling, enjoined on Paul, are those of sincerity and truth, of which as a converted person he was capable ; but if this be made a pre-requisite to Baptism in that sense which every truly converted person, alone, can perform it, it is plain, a Minister cannot upon this principle administer an Ordinance but upon an infallible knowledge of a person's capacity coming up to this standard. Alas, to admit this principle would be actually to annihilate the Ordinance itself as to practice. To conclude: if we separate from this case of Paul's what should be separated, and wherein alone it can be a rule or precedent to the ordinary administration of Baptism, it in no wise discountenances what
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is contended for in this work, but coincides with all the rest in giving its sanction to it.

In Acts, x. we have Peter opening his mouth at the house of Cornelius, and while he yet spake, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word; and they of the circumcision which believed, were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then answered Peter, *Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?* This address compared with Acts, viii. 16. *As yet he (i. e. the Holy Ghost) was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of Jesus,* leads us to observe—that if the Holy Ghost had not fallen upon these persons, they would, notwithstanding, have been proper Subjects of Baptismal Administration—that persons may be baptized on other more radical ground than that apparently mentioned in some accounts. That it may with as much justice be inferred from this account, that receiving the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner is essential to Baptism as some pretend to make believing essential to Baptism from its being said, they that believed were baptized.—But of this more particularly under the next subdivision.

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(3) The subjects of Baptism appear to have been numerous in some cases—Houſholds, &c. In ſome accounts, likewise, confeſſing of ſin, believing, receiving the word gladly, are attributed to the party baptized.

Mr. B. animadverting on Dr. W—'s representation of the numbers baptized by John, thus exclaims. “ *How numerous!* Not quite ſo “ numerous, perhaps, as he thinks proper to “ inſinuate in this place.” With equal eaſe may it be retorted in reference to Mr. B. who inclines to the oppoſite way of thinking.—Not near ſo *few* perhaps as Mr. B. thinks proper to inſinuate. Curious is the reaſoning which the laſt mentioned author adopts to diminiſh the numbers baptized by John. “ If (ſays he) ſuch multitudes as Dr. W. ſeems to think, had been “ baptized by that venerable man, it would be “ impoſſible to conceive of our Lord baptizing “ *ſtill more*, except we were to ſuppoſe either “ that a great majority of the whole nation partly “ by John, and partly by Chriſt was baptized, or “ that many of John's diſciples were by the order of Chriſt re-baptized, but of theſe things, “ there is not the *leaſt appearance*, that I perceive “ in the New Teſtament.” With reſpect to the laſt ſuppoſition that “many of John's diſciples were by the order of Chriſt re-baptized,” what is there to forbid the idea? So far from
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something to forbid, Acts, xix. 5. offers much to countenance it. While Apollos, (of whom it is said in the preceding chapter, he knew only the Baptism of John), was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts and finding certain Disciples, said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. Upon this, the Apostle immediately asks.—Unto what then were ye baptized? *No such thing as any being disciplined without Baptism.* The answer returned, was, Unto John's Baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the Baptism of Repentance, saying unto the people (*agreeable to the nature, design and obligations of his Ministry*) that they SHOULD (*truly and unfeignedly*) believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were *baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.* Having furnished Mr. B. with this passage, will he be at a loss to perceive the New Testament favourable to the idea of *re-baptizing* John's Disciples? Can it be pretended, or urged, that what happened *now*, was not done *before*? *He (Christ) must increase, and I must decrease,* is John's own account of our Lord's Ministry—and does it not comport, to say the least of it, with the above sentiment? Mr. B. proceeds: "The Apostolic Pen is very far
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“ from teaching us that the Disciples of Christ,
 “ before his ascension, were very numerous. Not
 “ is there any just foundation for us to conclude,
 “ that the generality of those nominal Disciples
 “ who forsook the Ministry of our Lord (John
 “ vi. 66.) had been baptized.” The general
 history of the New Testament will not support
 these observations. The clause, Acts, i. 15.
 plainly respects the number gathered in one place,
 upon that occasion. On the evidence already
 given, there is no ground to conceive there
 was any *discipling*, but *baptizing* made part of it.
 And unless those, whom Mr. B. calls nominal
 Disciples were baptized, how is it possible to con-
 ceive, that Jesus did what is related of him—
make, and, or even baptize MORE DISCIPLES than
John.

Be the party baptized by John more or less,
 they were evidently so MANY, that if their number,
 the time, place, and design of John’s Ministry be
 duly considered, it will be an arduous **task** indeed
 to shew that John proceeded upon a similar prin-
 ciple to Antipædobaptists. Not **forgetting** that
 a credible profession of Repentance is their prin-
 ciple, and taking along with us, “*sober reason*” Mr.
 B—’s. approved **companion**, let us examine the
account. *Then went out to him Jerusalem and all*
Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, Matth.
 iii. 5. Consequently a vast many. Mr. B.
accedes

accedes to the high probability that John was *sole* Administrator. On him, therefore, it of course devolved, if their Baptism depended upon it, to receive their confession. As the common circumstances of time, place, and manner, must be allowed in this case, it is a natural inquiry, *when, where, and how* was this confessing performed. In the historical passages where it is recorded, there is a junction of it with the Baptismal Ordinance. *Baptized in Jordan, confessing their sins.* This, however, (especially if the mode of administration was immersion) was very unlikely to be the case; yet, supposing it a fact, it cannot afford a competent Argument in support of a *credible profession* being required. Was a verbal confession received by John in the instant of administering the Ordinance, when both the Baptizer and Candidate are supposed to be in the water? Is it not absolutely inadmissible, that a confession taken under such circumstances, and from such numbers could be deemed CREDIBLE by John? A previous knowledge of all the parties must be at least admitted to suppose an instantaneous confession plausible: he should have demanded more time, further acquaintance, but of these things or any thing like them, we perceive not the smallest appearance in the history. Did this momentous circumstance of confessing happen any length of time *before*

administration? How comes it to be so closely joined to the Ordinance, and if the order of the words have any stress laid on it, to follow it? Or where could the Baptist engaged as he was, have an opportunity of obtaining that knowledge of their persons, conduct, as well as confession, to give it the air of being credible; and so free him from the charge of acting *hastily* and *without judgment*? Had this venerable man waited, with respect to the multitude he baptized, a length of time to have seen the fruits meet for repentance brought forth, the time of his ministry must have elapsed. Though he came to manifest Messiah to Israel by baptizing, he must have administered the Ordinance to next to none comparatively with the number he *did*, and it is natural to suppose, he *would* baptize, considering his errand. I KNEW HIM (CHRIST) NOT, BUT THAT HE SHOULD BE MADE MANIFEST UNTO ISRAEL, THEREFORE AM I COME BAPTIZING WITH WATER. It is very improbable that this being the avowed design of John's baptizing, the ministrations should have rested on such a credible profession of Repentance, that even Mr. B. being judge and consistent with himself, requires much more time and evidence, than John had of *one*, or could allow for the *other*.

Be the confession what it may, it is neither said, *how* it was made, nor *to whom*. Neither is *credibility* mentioned

mentioned as appertaining to, or required in it, and circumstances considered, there is no reason to think that either one or the other was the case in respect of the multitude baptized. The requisition in John's preaching was nothing less than Repentance. The ground on which some would represent them baptized, is confession of sin. How will these agree, unless as before observed, it can be shewn that confession of Sin and Repentance is the SAME THING. If John meant to require real Repentance in order to Baptism, he deviated from his own principle, by baptizing on that which does not come up to it. The inference from Jerusalem, &c. confessing, if it be referred to and judged by John's preaching real Repentance, is, that it is a circumstance, at most suitable, not essential; for that only which is *demonstrative* of the thing required can be justly deemed *essential*: but if true Repentance was absolutely required, then for want of a certain infallible rule of judgment, no one with certainty or safety could be baptized, much less such a number as this history records.

Again: It is worthy of remark, that John's Baptism being a Baptism OF, or UNTO a state of Repentance the very act of administration must be *virtually* a confession of sin. Baptism itself is *virtually* a confession of sin.

The circumstance of confessing sin, if the very
nature

nature of the Ordinance be taken into account, renders the passage under consideration, no more inapplicable to Infants and Adults, than what the Apostle observes of Israel, when he says, They were baptized unto ; or virtually, both Infants and Adults, confessed Moses in the cloud and the sea. Of the persons baptized by John we have only an account in the aggregate. The great number resorting to him, was one reason for his station near Jordan. Is it possible to exclude the idea of children making part of this vast company ? It is true, if confession of sin be considered as universally implying a *verbal* declaration of it, no argument can be drawn from it in favor of Infant Baptism whatever number might be present. But before this can be admitted, it must be shewn to be *antisciptural* to annex the idea of *constructive speaking* to every Ordinance according to its nature and design when administered ; or that in *general* confessions, such as this was, we are not warranted to consider all virtually confessing, though not individually making it with their tongues. It is plain, that the passage alluded to, of the Israelites passing through the red sea, must respect more the design of the passage itself, than the capacity or intention of those AS A BODY, who trod this intermarine path. It is natural to join with the Ordinance in question, whenever it is performed

ed, some idea of confessing from the VERY NATURE of it; and HENCE it becomes EXHIBITORY OF, and OBLIGATORY TO, a correspondent state of Repentance. What hinders our viewing the history as it relates to John's baptizing in this point of view? Is there any thing contradictory, absurd, unnatural, or antisciptural in so doing? It is presumed, neither. And if so, it well comports with the idea of the promiscuous administration of Baptism as it relates to penitents or impenitents, children and adults.

Before I can accede to the opinion of our differing brethren from any thing that a passage of this nature may allow, not only the remarks already made must be shewn to be futile, but some further questions and matters must be resolved. If it is admissible, that of the great number John baptized, there was a mixture of impenitents and penitents in respect of their internal state, is it not natural to conclude this confession comports with such a difference of state? If virtual, then it suits all ages. If verbal, then it suits all characters, and it follows from the general expression in the text, that it is a circumstance suitable, not essential. To assume it as evidence for establishing a credible profession of Repentance, when not a word is said about its credibility, and other circumstances, is a sort of sacrilege committed upon Scripture. Is Dr.

Williams's

Williams's axiom approved by Mr. B. ? "As
 " nothing should be considered as an established
 " principle of Faith, which is not in some part of
 " Scripture, delivered with perspicuity : so that
 " perspicuity should be sought for principally
 " where the point in question is most professed-
 " ly handled." Admitting this axiom, if the
 question be asked in relation to John's Baptism
 whether A CREDIBLE PROFESSION OF REPEN-
 TANCE was an essential pre-requisite in the bap-
 tized ? I answer, No, unless we are at liberty to
 say, *that is essential* which is not mentioned ; to
 interpolate Scripture by ideas of our own ; and
 to infer, that to be a pre-requisite, which from the
 history there is no room to think, was, or could
 be had. The passage so far as perspicuous leads
 to this conclusion ; it becomes ambiguous and
 encumbered with difficulties only as it is used to
 support the cause of our opponents. Now inas-
 much as where the point is professedly handled,
 perspicuity should be sought for principally, that
 sentiment which renders the passage, circum-
 stances considered, most natural, easy and per-
 spicuous, is deducible from it.

In vain, therefore, is *a plain example* of a CRE-
 DIBLE PROFESSION, even such as the author of Pædobaptism examined would lead us to consider
 necessary to a positive right, sought here. The
 formal institution of John's Baptism, we have
 not

not ; only a general account of its being from Heaven. The part of the narrative most likely to give us an insight respecting the point in question, is where the Historian relates the substance of John's preaching. This has been considered. The historical summary of Jerusalem, - Judea, &c. being baptized supposes a *prior rule* to which it may be referred. Now John's requiring *true repentance*, (on the supposition he did it as an *indispensible prerequisite* to Baptismal Administration) and the historical account of the baptized *confessing their sins*, being laid together, what is the Inference ? I answer, One, which though naturally drawn from the premises, can never be admitted. ALL whom John baptized were TRUE PENITENTS, FOR they confessed their sins. With the utmost stretch of charity, the former part of the conclusion will not, I conceive, obtain credit ; and the latter is equally objectionable in proof of true Repentance. Mr. B. would introduce to our notice Mr. Baxter's reasoning on this part of the subject. " If any should say, that it is only confession that is required, which is no sign of true Repentance : I answer, when John saith, *if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins*, he took that confession to be a sign of true Repentance." How could the Apostle do otherwise than consider a confession of

fin to be a sign of true Repentance, with which he connects the actual remission of sin? But before the mouth can make confession unto Salvation, man must believe with the heart unto righteousness, Rom. x. 10. Mr. Baxter's account of himself as an author, will prevent the reader's surprize at finding inadvertency and incoherency in this part, and much more of the quotation produced by Mr. Booth. The good man makes this honest declaration: "I scarce ever wrote one sheet twice over, or stayed to make any blots or interlinings, but was fain to let it go, as it was first conceived." Choosing, from respect to so worthy and learned a person to make him a critic upon himself, let us advert to the idea of taking confession to be a sign of true Repentance.

One thing is granted, that confession of sin, be it made, how, when, or to whom it will, is a sign of true Repentance as requisite for a sinful creature, and under the gospel *possible*, and *demanded*. Any confession is a sign of this, but not of true Repentance possessed. Wherefore, after all that has been advanced, tending to prove the want of evidence in support of a credible profession of Repentance in the baptized multitude—since the confessing of sin is conjoined with the act or undergoing of baptism—I ask, is it not a natural and legitimate idea that
 a vit-

a *virtual* confession is partly and primarily intended? A virtual confession involved in the very nature of the Ordinance itself, derived partly from the act of administering and under-going it, and accordingly so represented in the detail of the whole past transaction. Analagous to this, is the account in John, iii. 23. *And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there : AND THEY CAME, AND WERE BAPTIZED.* It is impossible to separate from the Baptismal act itself, the idea of a virtual confession, and inasmuch as we have seen John's preaching was a call to a state of Repentance; his Baptism unto that state as an end; and a confession of sin any how, is becoming a fallen creature, contained in the Baptismal act itself, here is a reason why *all* should indiscriminately be baptized, and a way to account, consistently and scripturally, how, *Jerusalem and all Judea, and the Region round about Jordan were baptized; confessing their sins.* Baptism, as a positive rite and administered by John, so far as its nature and manner are determined, appears to include in it a state of Repentance as the designed end, a confession of sin involved in the act itself; and thus the circumstance recorded, confessing their sins, as it follows the verb *baptized*, seems naturally connected with, and to arise from, the persons under a baptized state. Very far therefore

it from being a pre-requisite, or giving a sanction to the distinguishing sentiment or practice of our opponents in regard of credible profession.

We are informed in the history of the Acts, *Then they that gladly received his word were baptized.* Acts ii. 41.—*When they (the Samaritans) believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.* Acts, viii. 12.—*Many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized.* Acts, xviii. 8. That these passages determine something about the Baptismal Ordinance is un-questionable, but the question for consideration is, WHAT? Is the language here used concerning the baptized party, *merely descriptive* of persons who were *de facto*, in point of fact, baptized? Or, is it *definitive and decisive* of characters who have a sole exclusive right to its administration? It is easy to perceive these questions to be very different, and that nearly the same stile of expression might be adopted, where one and not the other, of these ideas is intended. The following reasons, along with the arguments in general urged on this subject, incline me to embrace the opinion, that these passages are descriptive of persons who *were* baptized. So far as they appear to draw the line between the baptized

tized and unbaptized, is there not Scripture-Authority for regarding the characters in opposition to those baptized, to be such who 'absolutely rejected the ministrations of the Gospel? Is not the contrast given us after this manner, Acts, xvii. 4? *Some believed and conversed with Paul, and Silas, &c. But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company and set the city on an uproar.* Other instances might be produced to the same effect. In the passage just mentioned, is not the disaffection of the UNBELIEVERS, to the Gospel-ministry at large, evident? They had an equal right to it in respect of Christ's commission with others, but they wilfully disclaimed it. By BELIEVERS, on the other hand to whom they are opposed, that description of persons who might believe with the heart, and those who only professed faith, is promiscuously intended. Simon Magus was an instance of the last class; and though the historian was about to record, that Peter pronounced him in the gall of bitterness, and the bonds of iniquity, yet he previously tells us, *Then did Simon believe also.* Whatever internal difference appears between these two classes, there was one thing in which they *visibly* agreed, namely a profession of faith. One thing further, they resembled each other in, *mentally*, and that was willingness or consent.

However

However profession of faith could not be received as demonstrative of true faith in possession, it might be justly admitted in full proof of consent. That this is the leading circumstance to be regarded in the history of believers-Baptism is plain to me, because wherein these two sorts of them may be supposed to agree, there the difference of unbelievers contrasted with them begins. The line of distinction lies between *consenting and non-consenting*. While there can be no reasonable doubt entertained of the existence of these three classes mentioned, two of believers and one of unbelievers, the two first are involved in one description. And, it is as true, as it is remarkable, that New Testament history affords no case in contradiction to the above remarks. There is no account of persons who appear to have consented to an attendance on the Gospel-ministry, whom we have reason to consider remaining in an unbaptized state. In the passages, then, cited at the head of this paragraph, it should appear, we have language not characteristic of baptized persons in reference to a ground of right, but of such who were in point of fact baptized, professing and manifesting that consent, which, unless the law of nature has violence offered to it, must be obtained, before Christ's Ministers can execute their commission. No impediment lies in the way of a more extensive

Baptifinal

Baptifmal Administration than Antipædobaptifts practice from texts of this fort. Their contents weigh in the fcale as merely hiftorical facts. Their phrafeology does not neceffarily or naturally convey the idea that would confine Baptifm to what is called a credible profefion. It is therefore made to have a meaning foreign to the form and defign of the language ufed. And a credible profefion, as the diftinguifhing fentiment of a party, ufurps a place which does not belong to it.

Of *houfehold Baptifms*, there are feveral inftances exprefly mentioned in the New Teftament hiftory. Mr. B. examining thefe from Acts, xvi. 15. xvi. 33. 1 Cor. i. 16. remarks: “ It is not uncommon for the facred writers to
 “ affert this or the other concerning a houfe-
 “ hold, without any exprefs limitation, which is
 “ manifefly meant of only the greater part : and
 “ in other places the fame form of fpeaking is
 “ ufed, where none but Adults can be intended.
 “ A few examples may fuffice. Thus it is
 “ writen, ALL THE HOUSE of *Joseph*, and his
 “ *Brethren*, and his *Father’s houfe*, went up to bury
 “ *Jacob*; only their little Ones they left in the land of
 “ *Gofhen*. *Elkonah* and ALL HIS HOUSE went up
 “ to offer unto the Lord, the yearly facrifice, yet
 “ we are told in the following verfe, that *Han-*
 “ *nah* and the child *Samuel*, went not up.”

Strange

Strange ! that instances so ill-adapted to the Author's wants and views, should make their appearance. Have we not an EXPRESS EXCEPTION of Infants and Children in these passages ? Is not this express exception made—not upon a principle that will render them of use to Mr. B—not because these children were incompetent to the act specified, or the design thereof ? Are we not TOLD that they were left at home ? Otherwise, the phrase, *all the house*, so naturally includes the idea of a family as such, that so far as these passages manifest, were it not for an express exception, we had no business to presume on the common topic of Antipædobaptists in other parts of Scripture ; and conclude, they were not involved in these acts ?

“ In the New Testament, says Mr. B. the
 “ word *house* or *household* is repeatedly used in
 “ such a manner as to exclude Infants. Thus, for
 “ instance, we are informed, that a man's foes
 “ shall be they of his own household ; that a no-
 “ bleman at Capernaum believed and his whole
 “ house ; that Cornelius feared God with all
 “ his house ; that unruly talkers subvert whole
 “ houses ; that Paul and his companion spake
 “ the word of the Lord to the Philippian Jai-
 “ lor and to all that were in his house ; that he
 “ rejoiced, believing in God with all his house,
 “ and that the house of Stephanas addicted them-
 “ selves

“ selves to the ministry of the Saints, in all which
 “ examples Infants must be excepted.” The pur-
 port, for which these accounts are urged, is by no
 means satisfactory; because there is ground to con-
 ceive THE DESIGN, and therefore the MEANING
 of them, to be foreign to the use they are applied
 to by Mr. B— Can it be imagined, that what is
 here related, of a man’s foes being those of his
 own household: of a nobleman believing with
 all his house, and of the rest mentioned in the
 quotation, was ever meant to insinuate, Infants
 made no part of their households? If such was
 not the design of the history, is it not bold, (to
 express myself moderately) to interpret them as
 if every idea of Infants was to be excluded
 from these families, when it is unnatural to con-
 ceive of them without such members? Is it not
 far more consistent and proper to consider the
 line of distinction in reference to those who be-
 lieved, to be drawn, not between the different
 ages and capacities in the same family, but be-
 tween them and others? Pursuing this clue,
 may they not be understood to the following
 effect? When Christ observes, a man’s foes
 shall be those of his own household, he would
 represent his household in such an hostile state,
 that from the actual conduct of its adult members,
 and the infatiable state of the rest, he cannot
 consider himself as having a friend in his own
 house,

house. Answerable to this, is the view given us, in my apprehension, of the Nobleman and his house, Cornelius, and his house, &c. There were none who, in the judgment of charity, ought to be regarded, as unbelieving irreligious persons. The language of these passages is not descriptive of families, as divided among themselves into Infancy and riper age, but in reference to others promiscuously considered. There is no ground, I apprehend, to consider in the sacred writings, the believing character, ever opposed to Infancy, but to maturer age. As the circumstance of believers composing a greater or smaller part of a household, is no proof, there are not Infants in it; so, as far as Infants are noticed in Scripture, it is totally unwarrantable to put them on a level with unbelievers. Again: when we read of unruly talkers subverting whole houses; if it is not to be supposed, there were no Infants among them, query, are they not involved in the subversion? Will the plea be urged, these houses were subverted by talking? What is that to the purpose, while a blow at the root may change the state, not of the stock only, but also of the branches.

As to Lydia, whether she was a married woman or single, (and Mr. B. imagines the latter most likely from the phrase, *her household*) it is not very material. "But supposing her to have had
a husband

“ a husband, as Philippi where she was merchant-
 “ dizing, does not seem to have been the place
 “ of her stated residence, but Thyatira. Acts
 “ xvi. 14. it is the more unlikely if she had any
 “ children, that Infants made a part of the house-
 “ hold at the time to which the text refers.”

Thus Mr. B; and is there not something extraordinary in this paragraph? On the supposition that she was a married woman, and Thyatira was her place of stated residence, the phrase, *her household*, leads us to consider her at this time apart from her husband. Of whom, then, is it probable that her household consisted? Supposing that as a married woman she might have children, and that Philippi, for a season at least, was a place of her abode, is it not far more likely, that these were with the mother at this city, than with the father, at Thyatira? Custom, if heard, will reply in the affirmative.—Leaving these things as minutiae which would have been unnoticed, had not the work I am examining required it, let us attend to Lydia's case.—When the Lord had opened her heart, that she attended to the things spoken of by Paul, the next thing related is, the Baptism of **HERSELF AND HER HOUSEHOLD**. A total silence is observed concerning their number, age, or character. The bare fact of their Baptism is recorded. Here then, is a **PRECEDENT**; and it is that of a **HOUSEHOLD**

not as a family of credible believers, for there is not one word whence we may conclude they were so: no, not from v. 40. where Paul and Silas, being liberated from prison, are said to enter into the house of Lydia, *and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them and departed.* “ Perhaps these
 “ Brethren were not of the household. It might
 “ be so. I find however, none but brethren in
 “ the house. When you are able to prove that
 “ Lydia had any children, I will pay uncommon
 “ attention to the offspring of that amiable wo-
 “ man.” So writes Mr. Martin in his letters to Mr. Horsey. According to this mode of reasoning, Lydia may as well be supposed to have no females in her household, for says Mr. M. very sagacioufly, “I find none but brethren in the house.” Whether we consider her as a single woman or married, a housekeeper, or in business, this was very unlikely, and too improper to be true. Besides: are we at liberty to infer, that Paul and Silas had no brethren in the city beyond the limits of Lydia’s family? There is strong reason to believe the contrary, as the perusal of the chapter, and of the Epistle addressed by Paul and bearing the name of Philippians, will evince. The passage cited so far from meaning to determine who were the members of Lydia’s household, plainly points out Lydia’s house, where she had constrained Paul and Silas to abide, to be
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the place where the brethren met for the purpose of an interview with Paul and Silas before they departed.

In the same chapter that we read of Lydia, an account is given us of the Jailor. Several things in his case require some attention. One is, the Apostle's reply on his asking, what shall I do to be saved? *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* Here, if I mistake not, is a confirmation and instance, how Paul, did, and ministers ought, to declare the Gospel as it respects persons promiscuously, whether Adults or Children. He informs him of the way of Salvation for himself, and his house, of whomsoever they might consist. And is it not the doctrine contained in the bosom of his answer, that none can be eternally saved under the Gospel-dispensation, without faith in the habit or the act?—It is next observed of Paul, and Silas, that *they spoke the word to him, (the Jailor) and all that were in his house.* If, what is common upon much smaller occasions may be supposed to take place here, the alarm which so great an earthquake as then happened, must occasion, would, when it was over, cause some to resort to that spot. This idea is offered, not without some evidence in its favour from v. 35. *And when it was day, the Magistrates sent the Sergeants, saying, Let these men go.* They appear to have been acquainted with what had happened, and to have assembled

assembled for consultation, and early to have dispatched messengers to the prison to have Paul and Silas discharged. The *All* in the Jailor's house, it is highly probable, were a *mixed* number, consisting of those whom the circumstance of the earthquake had brought there, besides the Jailor's family. All, whatever difference of age might be among them, had, on this occasion of Paul's preaching, the *given* right to be preached unto, recognized.—THE JAILOR AND ALL HIS *were baptized straightway*. “It is certain to a JEW, “ (says Dr. Priestley, whom Mr. B. occasionally quotes) such phrases would convey the “ idea of the Children, at least, if not of “ domestic slaves, having been baptized as “ well as the head of a family. From the “ very first promulgation of CHRISTIANITY, it “ could not but be manifest that persons were interested in IT, as individuals, and not as members of families or societies. I make no doubt “ but that in general, if there were Adults, Children or Slaves in a family, at the time that the “ Master professed himself a christian, they were “ not baptized without their own consent, but “ no consideration that can be supposed to have “ occurred to Jews, could have led them to make “ the same exception in favor of Infants.” Here then is ANOTHER PRECEDENT OF HOUSEHOLD BAPTISM. Mr. Blake did not write inconsiderately

ately when he says, "We have examples not to be
 " contemned of baptizing WHOLE HOUSEHOLDS,
 " and whether Infants were there or no, as it is
 " not certain, though probable, so IT IS NOT
 " MATERIAL. The precedent is an HOUSEHOLD.
 " He that followeth the precedent, must baptize
 " households. It appears not that *any wife* was
 " there ; yet he that followeth the precedent,
 " must baptize *wives*, and so I may say, *ser-*
 " *vants*, if they be of the household."—It is
 added, according to our English translation : *when*
he had brought them into his house, he set meat before
them, and rejoiced believing in God with all his
house. The original answering to the words *with*
all his house, is but *one*, and that word AN AD-
 VERB, immediately following the verb, *rejoiced*.
 " Adverbs are added to verbs to denote some
 " modification or circumstance of an action."
 LOWTH—Was the Greek rendered *literally* and
adverbially, the English would run thus, HE
 (the Jailor) *rejoiced* HOUSELY. Certain it is,
 that in the passage, of which this is a clause, the
 Jailor himself is immediately brought forward.
He set meat before them and rejoiced—then fol-
 lows the *adverb*, to denote some modification or
 circumstance, of his rejoicing. So the Seventy
 seem to have understood the same word, by their
 translating that passage in the Old Testament,
Now these are the names of the children of Israel,
which

which came into Egypt, every man (panoki) with his household, or according to the Greek housely, came with Jacob. Every man housely came! Infants and all together. The verb, came, expresses the mental disposition, and local movement of the Head of the family—not to the exclusion of Adults who were willing and able to move—not to the exception of Infants, who must from their age be passive in this removal. In like manner, when it is related of the jailor, that he rejoiced housely, will not the same mode of interpretation apply? Is it not evident, there was occasion for joy throughout the family? The Jailor, therefore rejoiced housely—in relation to himself and his. The Adults of his household rejoiced also. This admitted; yet the history tells us he rejoiced housely—not to the exclusion of Infants if any; though as was observed on the verb, came, in the other passage, it requires a difference of application to a state of age and infancy. The general ideas are, conformable to what is common, when a man with his family, and as the head of it is said to rejoice housely, after a housely manner, — all have occasion for joy—the Adults in it are joyous—Infants as interested in every matter of rejoicing to a family, are involved with the rest. This construction obtains a sanction from common sense, and common custom, as well as from the Scripture

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ture-instance produced before, and cited by Mr. B. though for a different purpose.—Not *One* word is said of the Faith of any of the Jailor's household, but of *his own*. The literal translation of the passage according to the *order* of the words, is, he rejoiced housely, *having believed in God*. Whether Infants or Adults, or both, composed the Jailor's family, they were all baptized. To infer, that true Faith is required in order to Baptism from such an historical case as this, when it is immediately and only made indispensable to Salvation—That the Jailor was baptized, *because* he believed, when if the *order* of the history be regarded, he is not characterized as a believer, till we are informed of his being a baptized person—that his family were baptized on a credible profession of faith, when not a word is said about their believing—would be strange Logic indeed. Let only this kind of arguing be abandoned, and the case stands plainly a natural precedent to household-baptism as such; and Paul a BAPTIZER of them INDISCRIMINATELY.

What has been advanced, unless the reasoning can be overthrown, goes to prove the injustice and futility of the usual plea, *silence of scripture—No precedent*—against Pædobaptists. What! Scripture *silent* concerning children, when our Lord

has so graciously and expressly pronounced them of the kingdom of heaven, included them under the gospel-state. *Silent!* when they are as naturally understood by the term *nations*, the objects of the commission, as Adults. *Silent*, when they are distinctly and expressly mentioned in the promise urged by Peter, on the famous day of Pentecost, and that in connection with Baptism. *Silent*, when households are said to have been baptized, in some of whom there is no account of the faith but of an individual; and when there is such reason to consider *believing* among Adults in a family not opposed to the *Infants* thereof, but to the *family-state* of others. If we are not satisfied with these things, what greater precision have we a right to expect?

It is certainly a mistake, if there is weight in the preceding representations, to consider Faith in reference to the Baptismal Ordinance, in any other light, than as a *mean* whereby the subject of it becomes, not *intituled*, but rather *dispossed*, to let the Apostles, according to the commission, disciple them by baptizing. Perfectly consistent with this idea, are those historical passages, Acts ii. 41.—xvi 34.—xviii. 8.

I am greatly mistaken if the usual plea of *no precedent*, as well as no precept, may not be retorted on the opposite party. Be it observed, it is an easy thing to fancy ourselves in possession of a
precedent

precedent from *some* resemblance. Precedents can only be viewed as a sort of *second Rules*; they involve in themselves, both *principles* and *actions*; and unless there is a conformity to both, it is only a partial deceiving imitation. This appears to me to be the case with Antipædobaptists, when they engross to themselves Scripture-precedents, as they respect Adults. Allowing their Baptism of persons on what is deemed a credible profession, to be valid, yet, ERROR is inseparable from it. Examined by the principles and practices of New Testament baptizers, both which must be taken into account under the term *precedent*, they have none for their *distinguishing* sentiments and practice. There is good reason to believe, that all who consented and all who did not dissent, were baptized. There is no instance to the contrary; but much otherwise. Where do we find persons attending on the ministry in an unbaptized state, from any objection to administer the Ordinance on the part of the officiating minister? Judging of *principles* by conduct, is it not likely, that the Baptizers recorded in the New Testament, acted upon very different ones from Antipædobaptists? Hence their dispatch, their numerous Administrations. Judge of their *conduct* by their principles and from the tenor of their preaching, it is not to be wondered at, that they acted with more speed, and

baptized greater numbers, than our differing friends, consistently with their principles could have done.

The utmost after all, which Mr. B. seems to rest his cause upon, is—the plea of its being implied in the scripture. For, when Dr. Addington asks and answers, “Is there no express command of Christ to baptize believers?” “*Not one* in all the New Testament,” Mr. B. subjoins, “If by an *express command*, he mean those very words, *baptize believers*, IT IS ALLOWED. “but what is that to the purpose, while the ideas “are as plainly and strongly expressed as if the “identical words had been repeatedly used.” No *express* command in *so many* words for baptizing believers! Even Mr. B. concedes. The basis on which the cause of Catholic Baptism depends, is, a divine order to disciple all nations, or baptize and teach them under our Lord’s commission. The identical words “baptize believers,” and the historical accounts wherein we read of Believers-baptism are very different things. The one is an order, the other relates to an historical fact.

Upon the strength of what has been advanced concerning Baptismal precedents, including principles and actions, I conclude, that the Apostles of Christ treated the nations as having a given right to an evangelically-instituted state, that
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Baptism was administered as appertaining to the general dispensation of the Gospel, and persons promiscuously made partakers of it.

IV. Those passages require some notice wherein persons are addressed as baptized. Of these, the following, by way of specimen, will be sufficient. Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by Baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the Glory of the Father, even so also we should walk in newness of life. Rom. vi. 3. 4. By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit. 1 Cor. xii. 13. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Gal. iii. 27. Buried with Him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him. Coloss. ii. 12.

The situation in which the persons addressed in these passages are immediately placed, is, that of persons baptized. The expressions found in them, are plainly taken from the nature, design, and use of the Ordinance itself. What is there in these representations, to contradict the idea of Baptism accessible by, as well as incumbent upon, all, indiscriminately? Should not every one put on Christ, so far as this can be done by the
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the administration of the Ordinance? Should they not be baptized in his death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead, they should walk in newness of life? Is Baptism expressive of the general incorporation of Jews and Gentiles, how suitable to such a design is the extensive administration of it contended for in this work?

That children and servants should not have their Baptism formally and expressly pleaded and urged as a ground of obligation in the Epistles, is a circumstance very strange to Mr. B. on the supposition they were to be baptized upon the Pædobaptist-plan. But where was the necessity for it in Epistles addressed to parents and masters directly? Does not a gardener by watering the root, water the branches of a tree also? It is sufficient to have children and servants noticed in such a manner, as bespeaks them regarded by the Apostles under an evangelically-instituted state.

Thus I close this chapter, pleading the variety and importance of its contents to the subject in view, for its length. It was begun with declaring the relative privileged state of the nations under the gospel, to contain a sufficient title to the Baptismal Ordinance, and to be a rule of direction in administering it. Objections to this idea have not been shunned, but sought for, in several quarters where most likely to be found. Nothing like an insuperable

insuperable difficulty arises on examining, the relative change and the Baptismal-ordinance itself—our Lord's great commission—accounts of Baptismal Administration—or passages addressed to persons as or about to be baptized. On the contrary, it is the Author's opinion, and submitted to the candid and impartial Reader for his judgment thereon, that every one of these four leading Divisions of this chapter, in various points of view, confirms the cause of Catholic Baptism on the ground of a general right to it.



CHAPTER III.

Brief Observations, serving to explain, enforce, and recommend Catholic Baptism.

HAVING in the preceding pages offered reasons for thinking that *baptizing* enters into the composition of a discipled state, *disciple* being accordingly to be understood in our Lord's commission, is, consequently, A GENERAL TERM. "The far greatest part of the words that make all languages are general terms, originating in reason and necessity." Doubtless our Lord's use of them is to be traced to such an origin. Any other mode of expressing himself would not have suited the extensive plan of his Grace, his high Authority. and therefore his Wisdom adopted it. To the former observation of Mr. Locke, the following may be added as a guide in the use of general terms. "Words, says he, become general [and therefore to be treated so] by separating from them the circumstances of Time and Place, and any other things that may determine them to this or that particular existence." Answerable to this account, some one
general

general idea is conveyed by this capital word in the Commission : the force and the spirit of the whole centers here.

Pertinent are Dr. Williams's observations on the same terms in reference to the word *baptize*, if subjected to certain alterations. His words altered to our purpose are : all *general terms* in the laws of God and man do not fix the mode as contra-distinguished from those of determinate Specification. Terms being reducible to this two-fold distribution, it is evident, that a wise Legislator will use one or the other sort according to the design he has in view. If he means to direct his Ministers to the performance of a duty in a certain specific manner, he will employ specific terms. Thus if our Lord's design had been, in the case before us, to enjoin *teaching* only or essentially, we should have a word conveying that idea, whereas it has been shewn that the original word properly rendered, *disciple*, does not. If the language in which the law is promulged, does not afford such a word as absolutely confines a Minister to one thing, the remedy lies easy in a circumlocution or an explanatory clause. This remedy, the Legislator has graciously bestowed upon us in the subsequent parts of the Commission, for thus it runs, "Go ye and disciple all nations." The general duty required in this legislative language is to *disciple* : the manner in which

it is to be performed, is to be sought in the sequel, *baptizing, teaching*. It is the Will of Christ, as here revealed, that all nations should be disciplined. He utters a gracious royal mandate, that all nations, jewish and gentile, should be *baptized, taught*, or in other words, be ministerially fixed and recognized in an evangelically-instituted, moral-positive state of Worship. The term, *disciple*, is open but express. Well might an order of such extensive grace and authority be introduced by the august declaration, ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME IN HEAVEN AND EARTH. It demands our most grateful admiration; and the Tongue of Zacharias exhibits a pattern for our praise. Luke, i. 67.

The true doctrine of *positive institutes* is, confessedly, a matter of moment in this controversy. Mr. B. therefore has very liberally supplied his Readers with twenty quotations from Pædobaptists, containing, as he is pleased to express himself, "the grand principles of legitimate reasoning" on the subject. On a deliberate perusal of them, and weighing them one with another, I am prepared to affirm, there is not one of them which is not perfectly consistent with what has been advanced relating to, and in support of, Catholic Baptism. The most leading principles in regard of positive institutes are the following:
 "As they derive their whole Being from the
 sovereign

" sovereign pleasure of God, to his revealed
 " Will must have given them their existence un-
 " der every dispensation of true religion. Con-
 " sequently, we cannot know any thing about
 " their precise nature, their true design, the pro-
 " per subjects of them, or the right mode of ad-
 " ministration, further than the Scriptures teach.
 " They are determined by divine institution as to
 " their matter, manner, signification.—The ob-
 " ligation to observe them, arises not from the
 " goodness of the things themselves but from
 " the authority of God.—Our obligation to ob-
 " serve them, does not result from our seeing the
 " reasons of them but from the command of
 " God." The admission of these principles is
 not hazardous to the cause vindicated in this
 work.—On the contrary, so far as divine Revela-
 tion is submitted to, as determining *the exact*
position, or situation, as well as the nature, man-
 ner and signification of Baptism, it is imagined,
 that the situation it has been represented to occu-
 py in regard to our Lord's commission, better
 suits a view of it so far as a *positive Ordinance*,
 than on the plan of Antipædobaptists.

While it is admitted, that a positive institution
 depends upon the divine authority, Caution be-
 comes us, that we do not make the BLESSED GOD
 act *arbitrarily* respecting it. For, as one of the
 writers whom Mr. B. quotes, observes, " the

“ idea of *arbitrary*, implies a weakness incom-
 “ patible to the divine nature ; whose perfection
 “ it is, to do nothing but for some wise reason,
 “ and for some good end.” A very laudable
 circumspection of the same kind appears in the
 worthy Author of *Anti-pædobaptism examined*,
 as the following paragraph evinces. “ When
 “ I say that the obligation of positive laws rests
 “ on the *mere authority* of the Legislator, let the
 “ Reader observe, that this is not to be confound-
 “ ed with an *arbitrary disposition* in the Deity.
 “ This distinction is well described by an elegant
 “ and philosophic pen : “ When some speak of
 “ the *Will of God*, as the *rule of duty*, they do not
 “ mean a blind arbitrary principle of action, but
 “ such a principle as is *directed* by reason, and
 “ *governed* by wisdom, or a regard to certain
 “ ends in *preference* to others. Unless we sup-
 “ pose some principle in the Deity analogous to
 “ our sense of obligation, some antecedent affec-
 “ tion, or determination of his nature, to prefer
 “ some ends before others, we cannot assign any
 “ sufficient, or indeed any possible reason, why
 “ he should will one thing more than another, or
 “ have any election at all. Whatever therefore,
 “ is the GROUND OF HIS CHOICE OR WILL must
 “ be the GROUND OF OBLIGATION, and not
 “ the choice or will itself.—That this is so, ap-
 “ pears further from the common distinction
 “ which

“ which Divines and Philosophers make between
 “ *moral* and *positive* commands and duties.
 “ The *former* they think *obligatory*, antecedent to
 “ will, or at least to any declaration of it; the
 “ *latter* obligatory only in consequence of a po-
 “ sitive appointment of the divine will. But
 “ what foundation can there be for this distinc-
 “ tion, if all duty and obligation be equally the
 “ result of *mere will* ?”

If there is no positive institute in the appoint-
 ment of which, it is not reasonable to suppose the
 Divine Being is swayed by *reasons*; if the *revealed*
ends of such an Ordinance may be numbered a-
 mong those *reasons*, which I think must be allow-
 ed, two things follow in the way of just conclu-
 sion. One is, what Dr. Williams contends
 for, that there is no entirely positive Ordinance.
 The other is, that the *application* or *use* of a po-
 sitive ordinance cannot *contradict* or *clash with*
 its *revealed* ends. To suppose a contradiction
 between the Nature and Ends of an ordinance
 and the Use or Application, would be in effect an
impeachment of the Wisdom of Deity. Whe-
 ther, therefore, Dr. W—s’s sentiment on Baptism
 as a *mixed ordinance, partly moral and partly positive*,
 be admitted, or whether we say with Mr. B.
 “ To constitute any branch of religious duty
 “ *purely positive*, it is enough that the Rite it-
 “ self, the manner of performing it, the quali-
 “ fications

“fications of the subject, the end to be answered
 “by it, and the term of its continuance, de-
 “pend entirely on the sovereign pleasure of
 “our divine Legislator,”—it appears to me, that
 in either case, a regard to the divine Character
 making known the *ends* of the baptismal Rite,
 justifies an extensive Latitude of administration
 on this topic of argument, which our opponents
 cannot object to without begging the question.*

External Holiness is a principle to which Mr.
 B. professes himself averse. Were such conse-
 quences, as this Writer intimates, necessarily ap-
 pertaining to it, every Reader who has a just
 idea

* It is natural to conceive, of A POSITIVE INSTITUTE after a two-
 fold manner. One is, to view and define it in the abstract, or apart from
 any one particular Ordinance of that nature. The other, as including not
 only a positive institute in the abstract, but some particular rite revealed
 in the Bible. Now, is it not plain and easy to perceive the difference
 of a positive institute will vary according to this distinction respecting it.
 Answerable to the FORMER, which may be called its PRIMARY view,
 it is naturally defined to be, an INSTITUTE, the reasons of which we do
 not see, PRIOR to the appointment and revelation of it, resting on the
 AUTHORITY of the Institutor. In the other, or SECONDARY view of it,
 in respect of any particular positive rite, the whole of what is revealed
 must be taken into account, and makes part of the definition. The con-
 sequence is, that according to its revealed uses and ends, it should be de-
 scribed; and therefore of a mixed nature. The quotations of Mr. B.'s
 first chapter from Pædobaptist Writers, containing their accounts and rea-
 sonings on the doctrine of positive institutes, appear to me to include this
 two-fold definition. However, then, the charge of novelty is affixed
 to Dr. W.'s representation of a positive institute by his opponent, I
 cannot help thinking, it obtains the sanction of these learned Authors, who
 involve in their accounts of positive institutions AT LARGE, the distinction
 above-mentioned.

idea of the Gospel-dispensation, must explode it from its incompatibility with the genius of it. But if I may offer my opinion, the whole force of Mr. B—'s objections depends upon *confounding* things which are distinguishable. To explain myself: the general idea conveyed by the term *holy*, in the Scriptures, is, a SEPARATION, as numerous Authors are at hand to testify, and several expressly in Mr. B—'s work. The Origin of this separation, is to be traced to THE WISE AND GRACIOUS WILL OF GOD. *Ye shall be to me a holy nation.* Exod. xix. 6. &c. Rites and Ordinances are but different *media* by which Holiness as external, shews itself. These vary according to different dispensations. It does not therefore follow as a clear consequence, that because *external Holiness* is maintained under the Gospel-dispensation, the Rites of the Jewish Economy are to be continued, in which idea, lie the bulk and weight of Mr. B—'s objection. Both as scriptural and natural; it is defensible to affirm, that external Holiness, in respect of the thing itself, is not a Jewish peculiarity, but common to all, who from God's *revealed Will*, may be considered as the objects of a standing exhibition of mercy. Ordained and suitable to the genius of the gospel is the Baptismal Rite, which, reasons and evidence have been offered in this work for considering as a mean jointly with
the

the Ordinance of preaching, and alike expressive of the relatively Holy State of mankind at large.

What has been advanced on that famous passage, 1 Cor. vii. 14. in my first chapter deserves particular regard. The *unbelieving* party is therein unquestionably represented in possession of a *sanctity*. I cannot forbear remarking, how improbable it is at any rate, that Mr. B. rightly understands that text, when the sense he puts upon it, extorts this confession, "There is not an instance in all the bible, that I recollect, of the word *sanctified* being used precisely as it is in this passage. For where, I demand, where is it employed in the whole sacred Code, to express that act or engagement between a man and a woman, which renders it lawful for them to cohabit as husband and wife?" Then, surely, *that* sense is not very likely to be the proper one, which this Author gives it, even upon his own confession. An *eligible* one, it certainly is not, unless he deviates from his own approved rule of interpretation. This we learn, when he quotes, in another part of his work with marked approbation, Dr. Doddridge as writing thus : " I chose to follow the *plainest* and *most obvious* and *common* interpretation, which indeed I generally think the *best*. As it is certain that *arke* [*the Greek word*] has not always that signification for which some contend, I judge it *safe* to give what is *more commonly* the sense of it."

Thus

Thus Mr. Booth may be left to settle the merit and pretensions of his interpretation of the term, *holy* on his own acknowledgment.—However, I would accompany him further, when he observes, “ It is highly probable, that the Apostle is here speaking of two Gentiles; one of them converted, the other an idolater, whom he forbids to separate on account of the Christian Faith: while, on the contrary, the Jews were commanded to put away their *heathenish* Wives, even after having had issue by such marriages. Then the unbelieving party was, consequently, not to be reckoned *heathenish*, but *holy*. Now this Holiness consisted in a separation to God which the Heathen were without, and on this ground the Israelites were called upon to put away a wife taken from among them. What, our Author advances as highly probable, *coincides*, upon his own illustration, for ought that I perceive, with the idea of a general sanctity among all nations under the Gospel, which did not exist before.

That the Apostle is performing the work of a Casuist, is plain, but in Mr. B—’s opinion, “ The *very doubt* which Paul resolves, affords a strong presumptive argument, that it was not the custom for Apostolic Ministers to baptize children; such, at least, whose parents were not both converted. The design of Paul was to evince,

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“ that

“ that such converts as were married to unbe-
 “ lievers should reject every thought of a separa-
 “ tion on account of the Christian faith; because
 “ that Faith was far from dissolving the matrimo-
 “ nial bond, and equally far from rendering their
 “ cohabitation unlawful : for it seems that a doubt
 “ of this kind was then entertained by some who
 “ were members of the Church at Corinth. But
 “ with what appearance of reason such a query
 “ could have arisen, if it had been usual in those
 “ times to baptize the Infants of parents in this
 “ predicament, we leave our opposers to shew.
 “ For had that been a prevailing practice, there
 “ would not have been the least shadow of reason
 “ for it; because on the principles adopted by ma-
 “ ny opposers, a practice of that kind would have
 “ been an open avowal of such a marriage as valid,
 “ and as obliging to all the tender duties of the
 “ conjugal state.” In answer to these remarks, it
 may be demanded, whether Mr. B—’s right to
 derive hence an argument against the practice of
 Infant-baptism in those times, may not be justly
 litigated and suspected, when the term *sanctified*,
 which he calls in one place the *governing* word of
 the sentence, obtains a sense in his representation
 of it, which is *peculiar* to this passage. Is it very
 consistent, to suppose the ground of the *doubt*
 to be something *common*, and the Apostle’s reso-
 lution of it to be in language *never* used to that
 same

Same *precise* purpose before as we read of in the Bible? The odds in favor of a different sense from Mr. B—'s, is at least SIX HUNDRED TO ONE. The reasons being so numerous and strong against his view of the passage, for which the reader is referred to Dr. Williams's work in reply, the presumptive argument sought for against Pædobaptism, comes to nothing that way. But if his sense and view of the passage be allowed, it seems to me, that his conclusion against Infant-Baptism hence is not natural, but strained: for when he asks, with what appearance of reason such a query could have arisen, if it had been usual to baptize in those times the infants of parents in this predicament? Need I inform our Inquirer, of what frequently happens among professors, namely, the existence of unreasonable scruples, even when they are in possession of circumstances sufficient to remove them. These, it becomes Ministers to attempt to obviate where-ever and whensoever they arise: and is it so very extraordinary, that *some* (supposing them recently-converted Gentiles) in the Church at Corinth, and we have no written account of any others, should have scruples of this sort, in respect of their unbelieving Partners, to employ the Apostle as a Casuist after this manner?—But if we advance a step further, and in turn, assume a presumptive argument in favor of Pædobaptism, it

may be done with as good and better a grace, than Mr. B. finds one against it. For it is left to our opposer to shew, what there is in the nature, drift and phraseology of the passage, that forbids our considering the clause, “ *else were your children unclean but now are they holy,*” as a Circumstance to which the Apostle appeals, to convince the by the believing party, how groundless was his or her scruple about dwelling with the unbelieving. The object of the doubt entertained, was the UNBELIEVING ADULT. The offspring seem to be noticed *collaterally* in the resolution of the scruple. If then any regard is due to what has been advanced on the connection between external holiness, and the Baptismal Rite in the former pages of this work, does not this clause concerning children afford a presumptive argument in favor of Infant-Baptism? The Apostle declares them *holy*, and it should appear he has recourse to what was, would, or might be readily acknowledged of the offspring, to shew the sanctity of the unbelieving parent, and the unreasonableness of the believer’s thinking to leave the opposite character on that account.—Though, for argument sake, the preceding remarks have been made conformable to our common order of the passage in English; yet it is proper to remind the reader, *the other rendering* proposed at the beginning of this work

work I see no reason to relinquish, from any inquiry made, or information obtained on the subject since.—Besides: some of Mr. B—'s observations on this controverted passage entirely coincide with the ideas I have suggested, and the use to which it has been applied. For instance: “The inspired Writer speaks in the preterperfect tense, *hath been sanctified*; expressing AN ACT COMPLETELY PAST.” Again: “it is frequently maintained by our opposers, on the authority of this passage, that the unbelieving husband is in a relative sense holy, in virtue of his converted wife, and it is plain, from the text, *that as is the holiness of the children, such is the sanctification of the unbelieving parent*. How comes it, then, that the latter does not qualify the subject of it for Baptism, as well as the former?” How indeed! Let Pædobaptists to whom this remark will apply, ward off the blow, as they are able; suffice it to observe, it is favourable to the idea avowed in this work, and *with other remarks*, inclines me to be of opinion, that should Mr. B. ever dismiss his present distinguishing sentiment, it will be exchanged for one not less extensive, than that of Catholic Baptism.—Till something further is said to disprove what has been urged, for Mr. B. in his defence waves a particular examination of what Dr. Williams says on the texts produced, leaving them as they are found in the second volume

volume of Pædobaptism examined, neither this passage before us, nor others already noticed, can be relinquished as untenable posts. For, respecting “ the course of argument on particular “ passages of the New Testament” to use Mr. B—’s language, there is nothing in the way of objection but what has been or will be “ directly “ answered, or implicitly obviated.”

When insisting on *Infant-Baptism*, and *Infant-Communion* at the Lord’s supper, Mr. B. makes this declaration. “ Were we, “ he says,” to “ behold Pædobaptism *fairly* and *entirely* divorced from its old associate, Infant-communion ; “ that being confirmed, while this is confuted ; “ *one great impediment* would be removed out of “ the way of our commencing Pædobaptists.” Pædobaptism is included in Catholic Baptism, and it is submitted, whether on the great principles and arguments urged in the course of our examination in favor of Infant and Adult Baptism, this divorce is not *fairly* and *entirely* effected.— It cannot reasonably admit of a doubt, that no positive institute, as it respects the administrator and subject, has been so enjoined, as to be done by the former at the expence of infringing the natural liberty of the latter. It is to be remembered, there is a material difference between the two Ordinances in question as to their nature, situation, and way of admission. A difference,

is sufficiently, for our present purpose, pointed out in the following words, the greater part of which is the language of an eminent Pædobaptist.

“ The *eucharistic* rite is applicable to *those only*
 “ who may be deemed proper subjects of a *par-*
 “ *ticular church*, or christian congregation.
 “ They ought to be *first* baptized, it is true;
 “ but this alone is not a sufficient qualification.
 “ For as Dr. GILL well observes: “ Baptism
 “ is *not* a church-ordinance; I mean it is *not* an
 “ ordinance administered *in the church*, but *out of*
 “ *it*, and *in order* to admission into it, and com-
 “ munion with it; it is *preparatory* to it, and a
 “ *qualification* for it; it *does not make* a person a
 “ *member of a church*, or admit him into a visi-
 “ ble church; persons must first be baptized,
 “ and then added to the church, as the three
 “ thousand converts were; a church has nothing
 “ to do with the baptism of any, but to be sa-
 “ tisfied they are to be baptized before they are
 “ admitted into communion with it. Admission
 “ to baptism lies *solely* in the breast of the ad-
 “ ministrator, who is the *only* judge of qualifica-
 “ tions for it, and has the sole power of re-
 “ ceiving to it, and of rejecting from it; if not
 “ satisfied, he may reject a person thought fit by a
 “ church, and admit a person to baptism not
 “ thought fit by a church.—Saul, when convert-
 “ ed was immediately baptized by Ananias
 without

“ without any previous knowledge and consent of the Church, and it was many days after this, that he proposed to join himself to the disciples, and was received. Acts ix. 18, 19, 23, 26—28.”

Is it, then, admissible, that Baptism is not a church-ordinance? Is it maintained, that admission to it lies solely in the breast of the administrator, that if not satisfied, he may reject a person thought fit by the church, and admit a person to baptism not thought fit by a church? Enough is granted in the above account to shew that a participation of the Baptismal Rite, and of the Lord's supper, are very distinct things; and that those who are recorded, Acts ii. 41. as baptized and are said to have believed, might not have been added to the church, though believers in the judgment of Peter, and actually baptized by him. What in this case would hinder? I answer the CONSENT WITHOLDEN of the Members of that particular church, as not deeming the baptized party a proper candidate for their church-membership. Baptism is a personal matter, in truth, whereas the Lord's supper being an Ordinance more directly social, the administration of it depending on an actual incorporation with a particular church, it would be infringing the law of nature and all order, not to allow a choice to the confederated body, as to
the

the reception of its members.—Here it will be perhaps asked by way of objection—Are particular churches to act as they please, to exclude from their societies or admit into them whom they will? To this it may be answered—The word is **THEIR RULE**, but then, where does it appear that it is the Will of **CHRIST**, that Infants and Adults promiscuously should be admitted to the **LORD'S TABLE**? There is such a distinction observable in the Scripture-account of the *two* Ordinances, that to proceed to the same extent in the *one*, as what we contend for in the *other*, would be indeed, to act, in regard of the Lord's Supper, *without* precept or precedent. That procedure, which in respect of admission to the Lord's Supper, is requisite to secure to a professing Christian society, the exercise of their right in the choice of their members, is both rational and scriptural: hence recourse is to be had to *profession* on the part of the candidate. The church is guided by a judgment of charity, in forming which, as the medium of admission, they have respect to two things—the *general ends* of Church-membership,—and the *answerable capacity* and *promising appearances* of the candidate in respect of them. A relation commences on the favourable judgment of those who have a given right to admit, but it is after all conditional; if occasion for a different opinion of the person admitted

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mitted is given, the Church has an acknowledged right to cut him off.—A person once baptized cannot be thrown back into an *unbaptized state*. To avoid prolixity : I observe that on just the *same grounds* on which Infants are admitted to the Baptismal Ordinance under the wing of Catholic Baptism, they are to be debarred from the Lord's Supper. Here then, Infant-communion is *confuted* on those very principles, by which Infant-Baptism is *confirmed*.

Further, it is deserving of our notice, that what has been said in support of Catholic Baptism does not militate against the real necessity of DIVINE, PRECIOUS FAITH, as to the *saving use* of every Ordinance. Instead of making it void, this Plan abundantly establishes it, for Catholic Baptism is brought forward as a joint-mean with preaching, immediately tending to this, as the Star guided to Bethlehem.—The believing Parent in the baptizing of his household, has here room to exercise faith in that glorious promise, “ I WILL BE A GOD TO THEE AND THY SEED “ AFTER THEE.” Adults derive from the extensive administration of this right, an additional exhibition of, and obligations to, the blessings and ends connected with it. Whence I am led to remark,

That our Lord's Commission favouring Catholic Baptism as we have seen, is *directive* to Ministers, promulgating the Gospel among a People unacquainted

unacquainted with it. Ye, to whom this high commission is given ! permit me to engage your attention to the view taken of it in this work. It is YOUR GREAT PASSPORT ALL THE WORLD OVER. Ye may proclaim in the ears of all that are afar off, your Redeemer's grant, by which they have a right to be disciplined, or in other words, baptized and taught, the actual enjoyment of which nothing can deprive them of, but their own wilful and unreasonable dissent. How wide your sphere of action ! Earth, where-ever tenanted by Man, makes part of that vast Diocese in which you are warranted to move. HAIL, YE HONOURED ITINERANTS OF THE MOST HIGH, by whatever distinctions known among men ! As ye resemble the Angel flying in the midst of heaven in respect of your movements, let it be manifest, that like Him, you have the Redeemer's glorious commission, the everlasting gospel in your hand. Shew, that you have it ever *before* you, that you would direct *every eye* to it, and gather the WHOLE EARTH under its banner.—How perseveringly should the Ministers of Christ remind the *discipled* according to his commission, of the advantages and obligations thence arising. Was the general administration of Baptism followed with that instruction in private and public on the part of administrators answerable to the opportunities they have for it, the Redeemer's commission would

be more faithfully executed, persons receive greater benefit, and an additional argument, consequently be derivable from its experienced and acknowledged utility.

Once more : all that is requisite to support Catholic Baptism, is the use of allowed principles and rules of interpreting the sacred Scriptures. It will pass the Ordeal of the following—
 “ The Bible only is the Religion of Protestants.”
 CHILLINGWORTH. “ It is a manifest mistake, in
 “ regard to Faith, and a clear evidence of pride,
 “ either to reject any of these things which the
 “ Scripture contains; or to introduce any thing
 “ that is not written in the Sacred page.” BASIL.
 “ Where the Scripture is silent, who shall
 “ speak ?” AMBROSE.—There is but one gen-
 “ uine sense of a text.” CHAMIER. “ If it [the
 “ Scripture] have not every where one proper
 “ determinate sense, it has none at all.” OWEN.
 “ The true meaning of Scripture, is not every
 “ ry sense the words will bear, and perhaps may
 “ excite in the Reader’s mind; nor yet every sense
 “ that is true in itself; but that which was really
 “ intended by the holy Writer.” WERENFEL-
 “ SIUS.—“ It is a principle with me, that the true
 “ sense of any phrase in the New Testament, is
 “ what may be called its standing sense; that
 “ which will be the *first* to occur to common peo-
 ple of every country and every age.” DR.
 HORSLEY.—

HORSLEY.—“ I am more and more convinced,
 “ that the vulgar sense of the New Testament,
 “ that is, the sense in which an honest man of
 “ plain sense would take it on his *first* reading THE
 “ ORIGINAL, OR ANY GOOD TRANSLATION, is al-
 “ most every-where the true general sense of any
 “ passage.” DR. DODDRIDGE. These and such
 like principles and rules of interpreting Scripture,
 borrowed from the hand of our copious and la-
 borious collector, Mr. B, have not been deserted
 in the prosecution of this work, neither are they
 dreaded, for, it is conceived, the Cause asserted
 will stand their severest scrutiny, and come off
 with honour.

In respect of Catholic Baptism, as here defend-
 ed, I have attempted to bear in mind the senti-
 ments contained in that excellent paragraph of
 Dr. Williams’s in his letter to Dr. Priestley.
 “ MY *data*, then, are DIVINE REVELATION,
 “ and that *only*, and the *whole* of it. And it
 “ appears to me, on the maturest reflection, that
 “ if *Divine revelation self-compared* doth not an-
 “ swer that purpose, nothing else will ; and that
 “ whatever else is set up for that purpose, is
 “ demonstrably fallacious. The *positive evidence*
 “ of scripture (as I have observed elsewhere)
 “ holds the same rank in theology, as *experimen-*
 “ *ted evidence* does in reference to any hypo-
 “ thesis in philosophy. As, in the latter case,
 “ there

" there is no disputing in favour of a system
 " *against facts*, phenomena, and experiments; so,
 " in the former case, no reasoning can be valid in
 " opposition to positive evidence, or express dis-
 " cernible authority. Common sense, right rea-
 " son, the opinions of the good and great,
 " &c. have their use and an important use,
 " in their proper places, but they are no *data*
 " in Christianity. As to the order of in-
 " vestigation, *preceding* revelations, and Divine-
 " ly authenticated facts, are the only safe *rule*
 " by which we ought to examine any *particular*
 " *part* of scripture. Every *foregoing* dispensa-
 " tion of religion, and indeed, every revealed
 " fact is, I may say, a torch lighted in heaven,
 " to illuminate those that follow, until we
 " come to the sealing of prophecy, or the end
 " of the canon; and every succeeding one, to
 " the last, reflects a still more abundant light
 " on all that went before. Wherefore, let all
 " that revere the authority of Heaven, all the
 " friends of revelation and rational inquiry,
 " attend more to *this light*, that shineth in a
 " dark place, and not (I mean as the principal,
 " and only safe means) not to the false lights
 " of human opinions (early or late) in the
 " church, by following which we expose our-
 " selves to wandering and danger every step
 " of our road, while in pursuit of truth and
 " happiness.

Having

Having suggested these observations, it will, I trust, be attributed to personal conviction *only*, if I put a close to this volume, by observing—That as a given Point whereon to stand, was ALL Archimedes required to move the World ; so, ON THE BASIS OF THE PRIVILEGED STATE UNDER THE GOSPEL, THE MINISTERS OF CHRIST MAY GO, DISCIPLE, BAPTIZE AND TEACH ALL THE NATIONS OF IT.

FINIS.

INDEX to the QUOTATIONS.

N. B. The Numbers enclosed, refer to the Pages of this Volume, the other to the Works quoted. V. stands for Volume, P. for Page.

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Beside a few trifling errors in orthography and punctuation, the following require correction. Page 10, line 24, before *relatively* read *radically* and p 11, l. 29, after *learned*, read *continuator of* p. 43, l. 3, after *adopt*, read *partly*, p. 151, l. 4, for *pædobaptij* read *antipædobaptist*.

