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SERIES OF LETTERS

ON THE

Mode and Subjects of Baptism,

ADDRESSED TO THE

CHRISTIAN PUBLIC.

To which is prefixed,

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE COMMENCEMENT AND PROGRESS
OF THE AUTHOR'S TRIAL ON THOSE POINTS WHICH
TERMINATED IN HIS EMBRACING BELIEVERS'
BAPTISM, IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

Second Edition.

With an

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

STRICTURES ON MR. MOORE'S REPLY.



BY STEPHEN CHAPIN,

Late Pastor of the Congregational Church in Mont Vernon, N.H.



Boston :

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY LINCOLN & EDMANDS,

No. 53 Cornhill.

1820.

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, *to wit* :

District Clerk's Office.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the twelfth of February, A. D. 1819, and in the forty-third year of the Independence of the United States of America, Lincoln & Edmands of the said district have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as Proprietors, in the words following, *to wit* :

“A Series of Letters on the Mode and Subjects of Baptism, Addressed to the Christian Public. To which is prefixed, A brief account of the Commencement and Progress of the Author's Trial on those Points which terminated in his embracing Believers' Baptism, in a Letter to a Friend. By Stephen Chapin, late Pastor of the Congregational Church in Mont Vernon, N. H.”

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JOHN W. DAVIS,
Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.

LETTERS ON BAPTISM.

INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

Beloved Brethren and Friends,

THE subjects, discussed in the ensuing Letters, are confessedly of very serious and high moment. Respecting them, a diversity of opinions has been cherished, and a controversy has been protracted, which in no inconsiderable degree has agitated the church of God, and divided the professed followers of Christ. That the debate may speedily close in the triumphs of truth, is a consummation most devoutly to be wished. All the darkness that now rests on these and other topics will, we trust, be chased away by the splendours of the millennial sun; and then christians of every name and country will coalesce in one immense and holy kingdom, in which there shall be nothing to hurt or destroy. While the debate must continue, it is hoped that it will be conducted with ability, and in a spirit truly christian and benevolent. I have not, my brethren, in taking up my pen, been prompted by the vanity that I could shed much original light on the subject at issue. On both sides of the question the field of controversy has been traversed by mighty champions, who have put forth all their energies, and have laid the word of God and the records of the church under tribute, to bring to their aid the whole of their united strength. Still, however, the writer believes that there are adequate motives to justify this appeal to the public. His recent change of opinion is so great in itself, is attended with consequences so deeply interesting, and is so liable to misconstruction, that it has become an imperious duty to assign to the world, fully and explicitly, the reasons which have produced this change of sentiment and practice. After you shall have duly examined the arguments, submitted to your consideration, you will be the

lied with much satisfaction on this antiquity and general prevalence of infant baptism, as proof, that it must be apostolic. But now, on more particular examination, I found that this mode of reasoning would prove too much: It would prove the divine right of infant communion. For this was as ancient and as general, as infant baptism. The fathers I found placed both on the same ground, and supported both by the same process of argument. Saint Austin tells us that the church held, that both ordinances were saving and necessary to eternal life; and on the ground of this supposed saving quality, he informs, that the church viewed them both, as traditions from the apostles. In the same way of arguing I could prove the divine origin of the use of the cross in baptism; worshipping with the face towards the east, and that baptism was regeneration, &c.

My attempt now was to meet and refute this argument, in favour of infant communion, without invalidating at the same time the arguments in support of infant baptism. But on trial I found that my attack on the former was in fact an indiscriminate warfare on both. If I succeeded in laying to rest the arguments in favour of infant communion, I perceived that, if after this, a Taylor or a Pierce had said, sir, where now are your proofs for infant baptism? The question, I confess, would have been to me perfectly confounding. If I attempted to support infant sprinkling, I must try to reanimate those very arguments, which I had but just slain. By this time I found myself pretty deeply involved, and for relief resorted to the word of God. This I believed was an infallible guide. This I read and read with fastings, and I hope with daily prayers to the Father of light, that he would mercifully send me the illuminating and guiding power of his holy Spirit. I first confined myself

principally to the New Testament. Here I found neither precept nor example for infant baptism. If the apostles and primitive teachers were all Pedobaptists, they must have baptized many thousands of children and infants before the closing of the canon of scripture. And it struck me with peculiar force, that all the inspired penmen should have passed over all those countless instances of infant baptism in the most profound silence. Circumstances often existed peculiarly calculated to elicit a declaration on infant baptism, if it then existed. Paul and Barnabas might have said to those Jews, who wished to impose circumcision on the christians at Antioch, you know very well, that all these believers and their children have been baptized, and baptism we all know is come in lieu of this bloody rite, why then are you not satisfied with the substitute? On another occasion Paul was accused of denying infant circumcision. See Acts xxi. 21. Now to me it appeared truly strange, that the Apostle did not repel this charge by saying, though I have not circumcised your children, yet you know that I have baptized them as a substitution for circumcision. In my view the only reason why the Apostle did not exonerate himself from this charge by pleading infant baptism in place of circumcision is, because he was not in the habit of baptizing infants. I read with particular attention the Acts of the Apostles, and resorted to all those passages with which I used to defend my practice. But upon more minute investigation of them, they seemed to fail me. How or by what process of argument these passages were invalidated, I will not now relate.

I then repaired to the Old Testament, and endeavoured to support myself by arguments, drawn from the law of circumcision. But if this law were

in full force, I thought that consistency required me to observe it throughout. If I obeyed a part, and rejected a part, I ought to be able to shew explicitly, when and where the rejected clauses were repealed, and thus assign the reasons why I omitted some clauses in this statute and obeyed others. But this I could not well do. In short, the argument from circumcision ruined itself by proving too much. It established the membership of servants and of unbelieving wives, as well the church membership of infants. For the law of circumcision required, that all in the professor's house, capable of receiving that rite, should be circumcised. Now an unbelieving wife, and the unbelieving maid-servants of a christian professor, are just as capable of receiving the rite of baptism, as males. Hence by this law a believing man must not only have his children baptized, but all his servants, and even his unbelieving companion, must all be baptized and made members of the church. All this was in my view the legitimate consequence of adhering to the law of circumcision, as the rule to determine the subjects of baptism.

I then tried the law of proselyte baptism. This law, if it existed in the days of the Apostles, I found was but human, and that it would conclude against the perpetuity of christian baptism. Because it was administered only upon those of the family, who were in existence, when they passed from paganism to judaism. All, who were born after this transit, were not baptized. Hence if this law were to be our rule, then as soon as a nation or a family become christian, baptism must cease. All that are born after this event must not submit to this rite. On this principle we shall ultimately all become Quakers, and maintain that there is nothing but spiritual baptism.

Thus the grounds, on which I had been accustomed to lean, gave way. I began to fear, that my inquiries would inevitably terminate in the relinquishment of Pædo-baptism. The prospect of a change of denomination rose full in view, and the greatness of the change, and the deeply interesting consequences, which must attend it, threw me into a state of distress which I can command no language to describe. The thought of leaving a beloved church and people, and of losing all that endearing religious connection, which I had long enjoyed, filled me with deep anguish of soul, and wrung from me many sighs and tears. When I viewed the subject in a temporal point of light, it was easy to see that I had nothing to gain, but much to lose. Though my mode of reasoning seemed correct and conclusive, yet I suspected that there was some undetected fallacy in the argument. I therefore resolved not to be precipitate. I concluded however that I would suspend infant baptism, till I could gain farther light.

Not long after this, it pleased the Lord to pour out his Spirit upon my people in a very remarkable manner. In about one year, more than one hundred were made the hopeful subjects of grace. Seventy seven joined the church. This season has laid me under new and everlasting obligations to the God of all mercy. At once I dropped my studies, believing the conversion of sinners to be of infinitely greater moment than the externals of religion. During the attention, my mind gradually settled back, till at length I thought it my duty to resume my former practice. After the revival had subsided, I resumed my inquiries, because I did not feel all that solid ground to support myself, which I wished to feel in administering the ordinance. With calmness and leisure I pushed my

investigations farther than ever. I endeavoured to rally all the arguments on both sides of the question, and then with carefulness and candor, to compare them, that I might see on which side the scale preponderated. The result, my dear brother, you very well know; and the reasons which have led to this my change of denomination you may learn, if you will take the trouble of perusing my Series of Letters about to be addressed to the christian public.

I am yours, &c.

S. CHAPIN.

Mont Vernon, Jan. 15, 1819.

LETTER TO A FRIEND.

Beloved Brother,

IN one of our late interviews you expressed a desire that I should give you a brief history of the origin and progress of those conflicts and trials of mind, which have terminated in a public change of denomination. In compliance with this request I confess I feel some difficulty. I could easily tell you, that my trials on the points in debate were long and extremely painful. But should I enter minutely into all my conflicts, this letter would be swelled into a little volume. I will therefore seize and remark upon a few of the most prominent circumstances.

A little more than two years ago I resolved on a revision of ecclesiastical history. In the progress of my reading, my attention was arrested, respecting the validity of the argument in favour of infant baptism, drawn from ancient history. I well knew that the practice was ancient. The authors of the appendices to Moshier's history tell us* that just at the close of the second century, infant baptism and sponsors existed in the church among the new and remarkable occurrences. Formerly I had re-

* See vol. vi. p. 194.

better able to judge whether this change is to be attributed to sinister views, or to the conquering power of truth. Those who are acquainted with my temporal circumstances, and with my religious connections, will be slow to ascribe my change to a love of fame or wealth. They will be more likely to view it, as the fruit of a pitiable delusion, or of mental imbecility.

Should you, my brethren, conclude to examine these sheets, I hope you will bring to their perusal a large share of the spirit of the noble Bereans. Investigate with much care and candor, and accompany your whole inquiries with frequent and fervent prayer to the Father of light, that he would grant you the illuminating and guiding influence of his Holy Spirit. Whatever you find in these Letters, that will not endure the test of God's word, you are bound to expunge. But that which is supported by divine truth, you cannot reject with impunity.

Yours, &c.

LETTER II.

ON THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF POSITIVE INSTITUTIONS.

Beloved Friends,

Before I proceed to the main objects in view, it will be proper at this stage, to make some remarks on the nature and importance of positive institutions.

Positive institutions are not discoverable by the light of nature; but are purely matters of revelation. All that we can know of them must be gained exclusively from the revealed will of God. These institutions, under the ancient economy, were numerous and burdensome, and the exact observance of them was enforced by the most tremendous sanctions. Neglect to sprinkle the posts of the door with the blood of the paschal lamb was to be visited with the death of the first born of every such presumptuous family. Uzzah broke a positive law when, with seemingly pious concern, he attempted to steady the tottering ark of God, and for this temerity he fell a victim to the jealousy of Heaven. If such exemplary vengeance were inflicted on those, who omitted or corrupted any of those numerous, difficult and complicated

ceremonies under the Mosaic law, can we then innocently drop, or change, or corrupt any of the few and simple and easy institutions of the new dispensation? Among the ceremonies of the gospel church, baptism and the Lord's supper hold the first rank. These symbols are pre-eminently calculated to refresh our memories, to move our affections, and to teach us that from Christ we derive pardon and spiritual life, and that with him we have fellowship in his sufferings, burial and resurrection. Since Christ designed that these rites should thus act on our passions, and convey to us this important instruction, we may be quite sure that he instructed his disciples by precept and example how these institutions should be observed. Of this opinion was bishop Hoadly, who says, "All *positive duties* depend entirely upon the will and declaration of the person who institutes or ordains them, with respect to the *real design* and *end* of them, and consequently to the *due manner* of performing them." Speaking of the Lord's supper, he says, "It cannot be doubted Jesus Christ sufficiently declared to his first and immediate followers the *whole* of what he designed should be understood by, or implied in, this duty; for this being a positive institution, depending entirely upon his will, and not designed to contain *any thing* in it, but he himself should please to *affix* to it, it must follow that he *declared* his mind about it *fully* and *plainly*; because, otherwise, he must be supposed to institute a duty, of which no one could have *any* notion without his instruction, and at the same time not to instruct his followers *sufficiently* what that duty was to be."*

His lordship has here expressed truths which are equally applicable to baptism, and which no one can easily refute.

Bishop Taylor is of the same opinion. His words are, "All institutions, sacramental and positive laws, depend wholly on the will of the law-giver, and the will of the supreme, being actually limited to this specification, this manner, this matter, this institution: whatsoever comes besides, it hath no foundation in the will of the legislator, and therefore can have no warrant or authority. That it be obeyed or not obeyed is all the question and all the variety. If it can be obeyed, it must; if it cannot, it must

* See his True Account, &c.

be let alone. He that does any thing of his own head, either must be a despiser of God's will, or must suppose himself the author of a grace, or else to do nothing at all, in what he does, because all his obedience, and all the blessings of his obedience, depend upon the will of God, which ought always to be obeyed when it can, and when it cannot, nothing can supply it," because the will of the lawgiver is all the reason for obedience.*

Positive institutions were designed to furnish a more sure test of love and implicit obedience to God, than moral precepts, because, in observing the latter, our obedience is enforced by a discovery of the fitness and relation of things; but in keeping the former, the great motive is the arbitrary will of God.

Let us, then, my brethren, repair to the word of God, and gather all our motives, and all our measures for obedience from that infallible source. With the due observance of the few and simple institutes of the new dispensation, the peace, the purity, and the prosperity of Zion are inseparably connected. Says Dr. Emmons, "Though the instituted forms of religion may be maintained without maintaining religion itself; yet religion itself cannot be maintained without maintaining its instituted forms. The enemies of the Jewish church gained their greatest advantage against it, by attacking its sacred rites and ceremonies; and those who have corrupted christian institutions have done the greatest injury to the christian church. Christ has been most deeply wounded in the house of his friends, who have either neglected, perverted, or corrupted his holy ordinances. The whole history of the church of God teaches us, that if we suffer the sabbath, the sacraments, and the positive duties of religion, to be neglected, perverted or corrupted, we shall certainly find that christianity will die in our hands. This is a solemn consideration which ought to awaken the warmest zeal in the breasts of all christians to maintain the purity of all divine institutions."†

I am, dear Friends, yours, &c.

*Ductor Dubitantium. Book 2. ch. iii.

† See his Sermons on various and important subjects, pp. 247, 248.

LETTER III.

THE SEVERAL CLASSES OF PEDOBAPTISTS, AND THE POINTS OF DEBATE RESPECTING THE MODE SPECIFIED.

Beloved Brethren,

Among those who hold to water baptism there is a diversity of opinion respecting its outward administration. The Pedobaptists may be divided into three general classes. 1. A very considerable portion of them, and that too of the most enlightened and candid, and who are the most deeply read in this controversy, grant that the word *baptizo*, principally used to express the action of baptism, means, in its primary and most obvious sense, immersion. They admit that John immersed, that Christ was immersed, and that his disciples before and after his death immersed. Yea, they grant that all the primitive christians, and the whole church of God, for more than thirteen hundred years, practised immersion, and that too without exception of countries, whether hot or cold. They tell us, however, that sprinkling was allowed in cases of necessity. It is true, that in the third and fourth centuries the church began to maintain the necessity of baptism, and that all who received it were sure of salvation, while those who were not baptized were inevitably lost. When they had embraced this error, they began in cases of imminent danger of death, to apply water by pouring it from head to foot upon the sick and dying, who were too weak to bear immersion. This application, they confessed, was not the instituted baptism, yet they hoped that it would answer the purpose of salvation, though they viewed it as imperfect, and not entitling to all the privileges of the church. Had it not been for this superstitious notion, that baptism was saving, it is believed we should have found no solitary instances of sprinkling or pouring throughout the whole history of the ancient church.

Though this portion of Pedobaptists concede to this statement, yet they administer this rite by sprinkling. For this practice, they plead that the law of baptism was not designed to be inflexible, but may be accommodated to different customs and climates. The dispute then between them and us, is not whether the Baptists are wrong in

their mode. They grant that we in this are right; that we adhere to the true meaning of the word, which designates baptism, and that when we administer this ordinance, we imitate the example of Christ, of the apostles, and the example of all antiquity. But the question between us is simply this; whether they are right in sprinkling; or in other words, whether they have a right to vary the original law of baptism, till it is quite another thing. In support of their practice, it behoves them to exhibit clear evidence, that Christ has lodged in their hands the power of altering his positive institutions, to suit the present state of the church and world. It will not answer for them to fancy that this power is necessary for the peace and comfort of the church, and from this infer, that it is the will of Christ that the church should possess this power, though he has no where revealed this will. Let this lax sentiment be once pretty generally adopted in the Protestant churches, and they would fast retrace their steps back to the man of sin, where this power of legislation once reigned without control.

It is not now my object to state the arguments, which are offered in proof of this supposed right to vary the laws of Christ. In some future Letter we shall state the arguments, and remark upon them. But our present object is to show that the debate on the mode of baptism between us and this class of Pedobaptists, is reduced down to this simple question; whether they are right in deviating from what they confess was the original institution. Here the labouring oar is in their hands. As they have ventured to depart from acknowledged primitive practice, it lies with them to make good such departure.

There is a second class of Pedobaptists, who maintain that Christ instituted baptism. But they say, that the word which he employed to express this ceremony, is so various and obscure in its meaning, that nothing more can be learned from it, than that water is to be applied in the name of the Trinity to a proper subject, and by a proper administrator. But where, or how, or how much, or how little water is to be used, no one can tell. No one can say whether it is to be applied to the face, or hands, or feet, or head, or to the whole body; or whether the ordinance is to be administered by plunging, or pouring, or washing, or sprinkling. It is on the ground of this impenetrable obscurity, that they suppose each man's own

conscience and sense of propriety must form the law, by which the mode of baptism is to be regulated. One chooses to have his feet washed, and pleads the example of Christ in washing the disciples' feet.* A second prefers to have his hands washed, and refers to the example of David and others, who washed their hands as an act of purification. A third wishes to have his face sprinkled for baptism; but for this he can find no example in the whole word of God. No precept or example can be found in the Bible, to sanction the sprinkling of water on the face, for religious purification. And a fourth pleads for the immersion of his whole body. Now they must admit the validity of all these forms, because each in his turn pleads that his mode is the answer of a good conscience toward God. Perhaps they would say that one has been more successful in their opinion than the rest in *guessing* at what was the primitive mode of baptism.

This second class of Pedobaptists are ready to admit, that if Christ had clearly revealed one specific mode of baptism, then we should all be sacredly bound to observe this definite form. They make no pretensions to legislative power to vary the laws of Christ. But they say that the language, employed to express baptism, and all the circumstances attending its first observance, are so perfectly unintelligible, that it is impossible to tell what was the appointed mode among the earliest christians. The dispute between us and this class of Pedobaptists is not, whether immersion be right. They admit that it is. And we too must admit that sprinkling is valid, if they are correct in their belief that the law of baptism is so obscure, that no one can ascertain its mode. You see then that the question between us is simply this: Is the law of baptism thus impenetrably obscure, or is it plain? They affirm, and we deny. Does this obscurity exist, or does it not? It seems that the Psalmist did not anticipate such an

* Some say that this example of Christ in washing Peter's feet supports a partial application of water in baptism. But in these words, "He that is washed needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit," Christ refers to two separate washings. Of this opinion were Gill, Dodd, Mc'Knight, and others. Says Mc'Knight on this text, "One who has bathed himself, need not after that wash any part of his body, except his feet, which in coming out of the bath may have been dirtied." See him on the place.

obscure law when he said, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." Nor did Mr. Beecher believe in this supposed obscurity, when he said, "the law in all its parts must be intelligible, otherwise it is no law." He tells us that on the ground of supposed inevitable uncertainty, is founded the plea of universal charity. But, says he, "who is this that libels his Maker as the author of an obscure and useless system of legislation, which no subject can understand?"

"This indeed is a kind-hearted system in its aspect on man; but how tremendous its re-action upon the character of God? Why are his revealed statutes with their sanctions so obscure? Because he *could not* make them intelligible? You impeach his wisdom. Why then are they obscure? Because he *would not* make them plain? You impeach his justice. For he commands his truth to be loved and obeyed;—an unjust demand, if its obscurity prevent the possibility of understanding it."*

There is a third class of Pedobaptists who maintain that *baptizo* means to sprinkle, and that Christ, and the apostles, and all the primitive churches, generally baptized by sprinkling. This class is now small, and it is believed continually lessening. The question between them and the Baptists is this: Whether they or we are right in giving a definition to the word employed to designate baptism.

Having specified the points of controversy, I shall in my future Letters exhibit what I have to say respecting them. In the mean time I remain, Yours, &c.

LETTER IV.

REMARKS ON THE SUPPOSED OBSCURITY OF THE LAW OF BAPTISM.

Beloved Friends,

If Christ did not specify any mode of applying water in baptism, then he must have foreborne to fix the mode for one of two reasons.

First, necessity; or, second, choice.

* See his ordination sermon at Park Street, pp. 5, 9, 10.

If the language in which Christ spoke, and in which the sacred penmen wrote, were so barren, that it contained no words nor phrases, which would express the idea of sprinkling, or pouring, or bathing, or plunging, then it is plain that necessity would have obliged him to be silent on all these modes of using water. The language would not define either of them. But the language of the New Testament is not thus poor in words and phrases. It is rich and copious. So that Dr. Reed is very correct in saying: "If it had been the intention of Christ, and of his apostles, to have specified the mode, or to have restricted all christians to one and the same mode of baptizing, they might, for this purpose, have selected from the Greek language words of the most unequivocal and definite signification. If it had been their intention to have specified the mode of sprinkling, they might have used the word *ραντίζω*, (*rantizo*;) if the mode of pouring, they might have used the word *εκχεω*, (*ekcheo*;) if that mode of washing or bathing, which was performed by the application of water with friction or rubbing, they might have used the word *λουω*, (*louo*.)"* No want of appropriate and definite words then made it necessary for Christ and his apostles to be silent on the mode of baptism.

2. If then Christ was perfectly indefinite on the mode of baptism, he chose to be so. He saw it to be the wisest and best to express himself on this subject with such cautious obscurity, that no one can possibly tell how water is to be applied in the administration of baptism. If he meant that the mode should have been wholly concealed, would he not have chosen the word *αγνίζω*, (*agnizo*) to purify? or *καθαίρω*, (*kathairo*) to cleanse? neither of which defines any mode of application. By choosing the word *baptizo*, he certainly gave his subjects very good ground to believe that he meant to settle the mode of baptism, because this word most certainly means to dip or to immerse, in its first and most common acceptation. Dr. Reed says, (though we do not admit that this word was so vague originally, but we here reason on his ground) that the best lexicographers and criticks, which he has consulted, have rendered the Greek word *baptizo* into ten different Latin words. The five first are *baptizo*, *mergo*, *im-*

* See his apology.

*mergo, tingo, intingo.** All these first five mean to immerse, or dip. Two of the remaining five, mean to wash, one to wet, and two to cleanse. Now to say nothing about this washing, and wetting, and cleansing, as taking place in consequence of immersion, still we maintain, that the fair and common mode of explaining statute laws, will lead us to conclude that Christ by the use of this word meant to settle the mode to be *immersion*. A subject of Christ's kingdom may say, that in explaining the statutes of my supreme Law-giver, I am not to be guided by the eighth or tenth meaning of the word, which expresses the principal action of my duty, if it have so many senses; nor am I to be guided by its figurative or mystical use, but I am to explain this word in the statute according to its first and most common acceptation. This is the language of common sense, and is confirmed by the best of human judges. Says Sir William Blackstone, who lays it down as a rule of legal interpretation: "That the words of a law are generally to be understood in their usual and most known signification, not so much regarding the propriety of grammar, as their general and popular use."†

Says Dr. Doddridge, "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 most every where the true and the general sense of the passage. I choose to follow the plainest and the most obvious and common interpretation, which indeed I generally think the best."‡

Thus, my brethren, I have endeavoured to shew that no poverty of language made it necessary for Christ to be silent on the mode of baptism. And that if it had been his intention to express himself with such studied obscurity, that the mode should be perfectly concealed, he would not have chosen *baptizo*, because this word would have defeated his object of concealment.

I now leave it for you to say, my brethren, whether the mode of baptism is hid beyond the possibility of detection.

I am, &c.

* *Tingo*, and *intingo*, were used by the Romans to express the act of dyeing cloth, which was done by immersion.

† Commentary, vol. 1. Introduction, sect. 2.

‡ Note on Matt. xviii. 17, and 2 Cor. viii. 1.

LETTER V.

SCRIPTURES IN PROOF OF THE MODE.

Beloved Friends,

We are all agreed that the Scriptures, not tradition, not canon law, are to be our only rule of faith and practice. As baptism is a christian institute, and never existed as a rite of admission into the church, and as expressive of our communion with Christ, till after his advent, it is certainly reasonable to say, that we must look to the New Testament to gain all necessary instruction, respecting its origin, its mode, its nature, its design, and its practical uses. We will therefore proceed to collect and lay before you all the most instructive passages, which relate to this Christian ordinance. These scriptures, when rightly understood, you may be certain, will give a definite view of the primitive practice in the administration of this ordinance.

Matt. iii. 5, 6, 7, Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him *in Jordan*, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the pharisees and sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, &c. Verse 11, I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, &c. Verses 13—16, Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water. Matt. xxi. 25—27, The baptism of John, whence was it? From heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, if we shall say from heaven, &c. Mark i. 4, 5, John did baptize in the wilderness and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. Ver. 8, 9, 10, I indeed baptize you with water. And it came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan, and straightway coming up out of the water, &c. Mark xi, 38, The baptism of

John, was it from heaven, or of men? Luke iii. 3, And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Verses 7, 8, Then saith he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, &c. Verse 12, Then came also publicans to be baptized. Verse 16, I indeed baptize you with water. Verse 21, Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized, &c. Luke vii. 29, 30, All the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John; but the pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God, being not baptized of him. Luke xx. 4, The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? John i. 25, 26, Why baptizest thou then if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water. Verse 28, Beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. Verse 31, That he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. Verse 33, He that sent me to baptize with water. 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. John iv. 1, The pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John. Chap. x. 40, Beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized. Acts i. 5, John truly baptized with water. Verse 22, Beginning from the baptism of John. Acts x. 37, After the baptism which John preached. Chap. xi. 16, John indeed baptized with water. Chap. xiii. 24, When John had first preached before his coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people. Chap. xviii. 25, He (Apollon) spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. Chap. xix. 3, 4, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

Passages of Scripture concerning Christ's baptism. Matthew xxviii. 19, Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, &c. Mark xvi. 15, 16, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. John iii. 22, After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried

with them and baptized. Verse 26, Behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. Chap. iv. 1, 2, When therefore the Lord knew how that the pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples. Acts ii. 38, Then said Peter unto them, repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ. Verse 41, Then they that gladly received his word were baptized. Chap. viii. 12, 13, When they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also, and when he was baptized, &c. Verse 16, Only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Verses 36—39, And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water. And the eunuch said, see here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, if thou believest, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still. And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, &c. Chap. ix. 18, And (Saul) arose and was baptized. Chap. x. 47, 48, Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Chap. xvi. 15, And when she, Lydia, was baptized, and her household, &c. Verse 33, And was baptized, he and all his straightway. Chap. xviii. 8, And many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized. Chap. xix. 5, When they heard this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Chap. xxii. 16, And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins. Romans vi. 3, 4, Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism; that, &c. 1 Cor. i. 13—17, Were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that I baptized in mine own name. I baptized also the household of Stephanas; besides I know not whether I baptized any other; for Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel. Chap. xv. 19, Else what shall they do, which are baptized for the dead? If the dead rise not, why are they then baptized for the dead? Gal,

iii. 17, For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Eph. iv. 5, One baptism. Col. ii. 12, Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him. 1 Peter iii. 21, The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

These, my brethren, are nearly all the passages in the New Testament, in which this ordinance is mentioned. They are certainly among the most plain and instructive. If you can gain the true and primitive meaning of the principal words in them, you will unquestionably learn the manner in which Christ meant this ceremony should be performed. In the above quotations, the words which the sacred penmen employed to express the action of baptism, are *baptizo*, and its participle, and the noun *baptisma*. These words, when employed in describing this ordinance, were not translated into English. All that the translators did to them was to change their Greek letters for Roman ones, and then transferred them into our language, without rendering them into appropriate English words. That these words were not translated into our language is a fact, which no learned Pede-baptist is disposed to question. However, in proof of this fact, I will give the opinion of the celebrated Dr. Campbell. He observes, that "in several modern languages we have, in what regards Jewish and Christian rites, generally followed the usage of the old Latin version, though the authors of that version have not been entirely uniform in their method. Some words they have *transferred* from the original into their language; others they have *translated*. But it would not always be easy to find their reason for making this difference. Thus the word *περιτομη*, (*peritome*,) they have translated *circumcisio*, which exactly corresponds in etymology; but the word *βαπτισμα*, (*baptisma*,) they retained, changing only the letters from Greek into Roman. Yet the latter was just as susceptible of a literal version into Latin as the former. *Immersio*, *inctio*, answer as exactly in the one case, as *circumcisio*, in the other." He further adds, "We have deserted the Greek names where the Latins have deserted them. Hence we say *circumcision*, and not *peritomy*; and we do not say *immersion*, but *baptism*. Yet when the lan-

guage furnishes us with materials for a version so exact and analogical, such a version conveys the sense more perspicuously than a foreign name. For this reason I should think the word *immersion* (which, though of Latin origin, is an English noun, regularly formed from the verb to *immerse*) a better name than baptism, were we now at liberty to make a choice.* In his Four Gospels, (Note on Matt. iii. 11,) he says, "The word βαπτίζειν, (*baptizein*,) both in sacred authors, and in classical, signifies to dip, to plunge, to immerse; and was rendered by Tertullian, the oldest of the Latin fathers, *tingere*, the term used for dyeing, which was by immersion. It is always constructed suitably to this meaning. Thus it is, εν υδατι εν τω Ιορδανη, (*en udati en to Jordane.*) But I should not lay much stress on the preposition εν (*en*) which may denote *with*, as well as *in*, did not the whole phraseology in regard to this ceremony, concur in evincing the same thing. Accordingly, the baptized are said to αναβαινειν (*anabainein*,) to arise, to emerge, or ascend, from or out of the water. Had the word *baptizo* been here employed in the same sense of ραινω (*raino*,) I sprinkle, (which as far as I know, it never is, in any use, sacred or classical) the expression would doubtless have been 'I sprinkle thee with water,' &c. When therefore the Greek word *baptizo* is adopted, I may say rather than translated, into modern languages, the mode of construction ought to be preserved, so far as may conduce to suggest its original import. It is to be regretted, that we have so much evidence, that even good and learned men allow their judgments to be warped by the sentiments and customs of the sect, which they prefer. The true partizan, of whatever denomination, always inclines to correct the diction of the spirit by that of the party."†

Thus you see, that these words were not rendered into English. And had they been correctly translated, according to their first and most common meaning, they would have been rendered into the words *immerse*, *immersing*, and *immersion*. And then you would have been accustomed from your childhood to read your Bible in the following manner: Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and

* See his Prelim. Disser. pp. 22, 23, 24.

† See 4th vol. p. 23, 24.

were *immersed* of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John to be *immersed* of him. And Jesus when he was *immersed* went up straightway out of the water. Go ye, therefore, teach all nations, *immersing* them in, &c. And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he *immersed* him. And so you would have read all the other passages in the New Testament, which relate to this institution.* Now had you always read the Scriptures in this manner, I would ask you to say, my brethren, and to say with candour, whether you or any other person would have ever supposed, that sprinkling was that mode of baptism which Christ and his Apostles administered? Would you have ever thought that the mode of baptism was left so perfectly undefined, that no honest inquirer, however extensively and ably he might push his inquiries on this subject, could, after all his labour, possibly determine whether Christ meant to institute sprinkling, or pouring, or bathing, or plunging? I speak as to wise men, judge ye of what I say.

I am, brethren, yours, &c.

LETTER VI.

ARGUMENTS FROM THE PLACES SELECTED FOR BAPTISM, AND
FROM THE LANGUAGE EMPLOYED IN ITS DESCRIPTION.

Beloved Brethren,

In the preceding Letter we cited nearly all the passages of Scripture in which the ordinance of baptism is mentioned. The words employed to express the name and the action of baptism were *baptisma*, *baptizo*, and its participle. These words, we observed, in their most obvious and generally received sense, mean *immersion*, *immerse* and *immersing*. Perhaps, my brethren, you will say that my definition of these words is incorrect. The dispute between us here, respects the meaning of those Greek terms, which are employed in

* In the texts above quoted, these words occur about seventy eight times. Now if Christ meant to appoint sprinkling, is it not truly surprising that he should so uniformly have chosen a word which, in its first, classical and sacred sense, means immersion!

expressing the action of baptism. It is of very high moment, that the truth respecting their signification may be clearly ascertained and universally known. Because if the sense of these words can be obtained, as they were understood by the Apostles and primitive Christians, this long and unhappy controversy will come to a close. Pedobaptists, I believe, very generally agree, that the whole controversy, respecting the mode, rests very materially on the meaning of these words. How desirable, then, that some course should be taken, which shall bring us to their true and primitive sense! Is there no way by which we may learn definitely what was that ceremony or action which Christ required of his disciples, when he commanded them to baptize those whom they had taught? Is there no umpire to which we may all appeal, and by whose decisions we may safely abide? It is not requisite to prove that these words are always used literally. Without doubt they have a figurative sense. But it is not correct to reason from the figurative against the literal application of a word. The word *baptizo*, some say, doth not mean immersion, because it is employed to express the sufferings of Christ. Here, without doubt, it is used figuratively. His sufferings were so great, that they were justly compared to a flood. Great afflictions are often compared to floods and waves. See Psal. lxxix. 1, 2. and xlii. 7. "Save me, O God, for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire—I am come into deep waters where the floods overflow me. All the waves and the billows are gone over me." Some of these words are expressly applied to Christ. His sufferings were so great and numerous, that, like the numberless drops of rain, they formed a sea in which he was overwhelmed. Between the sufferings of Christ and his baptism there were some points of resemblance, or the comparison would never have been made. His soul was covered in the waves of pain and sorrow, like as his body was buried by baptism. But the propriety and the force of this comparison is at once lost, if sprinkling were the mode. If Christ were sprinkled, and if this were the mode of baptism, would he then say, that my approaching sufferings will be so great and distressing, that their overwhelming nature may be very fitly compared to a baptism, in which a few drops of water are scattered on the face? All that we shall attempt to prove, is, that

we have defined these words, according to their most fair and obvious sense, and as Christ, the Apostles, and primitive Christians understood them. In support of our definition we appeal to the best arguments and to the most unexceptionable judges.

We derive an argument of no inconsiderable weight in favour of immersion from the places chosen for its administration, and from the concomitant language employed in its description. The places chosen were rivers and large collections of water, and places where there was much water. But why speak of rivers and places of much water to baptize in, if sprinkling were the mode? a mode in which a few gills of water would have sufficed for many thousands. Why speak of going down into the water, of baptizing in Jordan, and then of coming up straightway out of the water, if the application was by sprinkling? If this were the case, then the administrator with a little vessel of water in his hand, could have sprinkled his subjects much more conveniently and comfortably on dry ground than in streams. Why speak of being buried by baptism, if all that was done, was the scattering of a few drops of water on, or the touch of wet fingers to, the face? Why speak of having the whole *body washed* with pure water in baptism, if the face only was sprinkled? Why speak of being buried and of rising in baptism with Christ, if there were nothing in the ceremony which shadowed forth a burial and resurrection? In sprinkling, what distant resemblance is there of the burial and resurrection of Christ?

If sprinkling were the ancient mode, why were baptisteries built all over the Christian world, and for centuries employed for places for baptism? These were large buildings. A description of them you may read in Rees' Cyclopaedia, and in Robinson's History of Baptism. By a baptistery is to be understood a large octagon building, with a cupola roof, resembling the dome of a cathedral, adjacent to a church, but no part of it. All the middle part of this building was one large hall, capable of containing a multitude of people. The sides were parted off and divided into rooms; and in some, rooms were added withoutside, in the fashion of cloisters. In the middle of the great hall was an octagon bath of water about thirty-seven and a half inches deep. This bath was called the pool, the pond, and the place to swim in.

The administrator and the subject descended to the water by stairs, and when they had reached it, the ordinance was performed by immersion. If sprinkling were the ancient mode, we cannot account for the existence of these large buildings over deep fountains of water. Nor would they have been built, had infant baptism been the general practice. Accordingly we find, that as Pedobaptism advanced, baptisteries were found to be more and more useless, till at length they were deserted, and little fonts for infants occupied their place.

Before we leave the argument drawn from the places and descriptive language of baptism, we submit for your consideration the following journal of a missionary, whose name and denomination are both suppressed.

He observes, that "On Lord's-day I preached at —, to a large assembly; that I pressed upon my hearers the great duties of repentance and faith; and all those, who gave good evidence of possessing these graces, I baptized in the river Hudson, confessing their sins, and then came up straightway out of the water. The next day while on my way, I overtook a man, who, after much conversation on the word of life, professed his faith in Christ, as the Son of God. We soon arrived at the church and society of —, when he requested to be baptized, and admitted to their communion; and I, having no doubt but he possessed faith, the requisite grace, at once complied, and like Philip and the Eunuch, we both went down into the water, and I baptized him. And when we had come up out of the water, he went on his way rejoicing. The next Lord's-day I baptized a large number who brought forth fruits meet for repentance, in a certain place previously chosen, because there was much water there. After this I exhorted them all to remember that they had put on Christ; that in their baptism they had been symbolically buried and raised with him, and therefore they ought to be careful to walk in newness of life."

When you had finished this journal, would you not all say, this missionary without doubt was a Baptist, for this narrative exactly describes the practice of that denomination? Whose practice then did this same Bible language describe more than eighteen hundred years ago? If the Apostles and primitive Christians were Pedobaptists, and practised adult and infant sprinkling, it seems they were very unfortunate in selecting language to paint their

practice, which their posterity at this day cannot employ, in describing their mode, without involving themselves in strong suspicions, that they have turned to the opposite persuasion. But the mode of the Baptists is the best described by this language of scripture. Is not this some proof that they in this are right? Which is safest, to follow a mode evidently described in the word of God, or to follow one which is not?

I am, &c.

LETTER VII.

OBJECTIONS TO THE REASONING IN THE PRECEDING LETTER
STATED AND ANSWERED.

Beloved Brethren,

I am aware that some say the prepositions in the places mentioned and alluded to in my last Letter, may mean *with*, or *at*, or *to*, and *from*. It is true that the preposition *εν* (*en*) may mean *with*; and the preposition *εις* (*eis*) may mean *to*, and the preposition *απο*, (*apo*) may mean *from*. And the general construction of the period, in which they are used, must determine their signification. It would sound very singularly to say that John baptized *with* the whole river of Jordan, or *with* the whole town or city of Enon, because there was much water there. If the prepositions, which are rendered *into* and *out of* the water, were intended to express motion *to* and *from*, then they would probably have been constructed with different verbs, from those, with which they are now connected. If the evangelist had intended to have described simple motion from the water, would he not have chosen *βαινω*, (*baino*) which means *to go*, *to walk*; and in this connection the preposition *απο*, (*apo*) would naturally mean *from* the water. But now it is joined with *αναβαινω*, (*anabaino*) which means *to ascend*, *to climb*, *to get*, or *come up*. As this verb describes a rising and not a horizontal motion, it is natural to give the preposition, *απο*, (*apo*) a corresponding sense, namely, he ascended *out of* the water. So on the other hand, if Luke had intended to tell us, that Philip and the Eunuch simply went *to* the water, and not *into* it, would he not have taken *βαινω* (*baino*)? But now he has chosen *καταβαινω*, (*katabaino*) which is a compound verb, and means, *to go downward*. How natural then to render the phrase, imme-

diately connected with this verb, into the following words; *they went down both into the water!* But the sense which some would affix to these prepositions in these passages, makes the whole account of baptism appear extremely unnatural. Is it rational to suppose that John and the disciples of Christ would from time to time lead their subjects to and from some river, pond or large collection of water, merely for the purpose of sprinkling? Since sprinkling has prevailed, have not Pedobaptists found it most convenient to bring water in a bason to their subjects, rather than to lead them out of the assembly to some distant stream, and there to sprinkle them at the river's side? It is true that the phrases, *into* and *out of* the water, will not of themselves prove immersion. But they are strong, corroborating evidence. It is not simply said that Philip and the Eunuch went into the water, but that, while in the water, he immersed or baptized him.

I know also that some have endeavoured to evade the force of the argument, drawn from the places chosen for the administration of this rite, by saying, that they were selected not for baptism, but merely for the purpose of furnishing the multitudes of men and beasts with a sufficiency of drink. And in confirmation of this opinion, they say that the Greek *πολλα υδατα*, (*polla udata*), translated *much water*, means many waters, that is, many little springs or brooks, scattered about, at no great distance from each other, and containing water enough to supply many thousands of men and animals with drink, but not a depth sufficient for immersion. If these words, *πολλα υδατα*, (*polla udata*), mean many little separate streams, and not much water collected, why did Jeremiah call the great river Euphrates *υδασι πολλοις*, (*udasi pollois*) many waters? Did he mean many little brooks? Jer. li. 13. Why did the Psalmist call the sea, and the great waters of the ocean *υδατων πολλων*, (*udaton pollon*) if these words mean many little springs or streams, and not much collected water? If *πολλα υδατα* (*polla udata*) mean many rivulets, then will not the singular *πολυ υδωρ*, (*polu udor*) mean one such stream? But did Ezekiel mean one small stream when he said, "I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters, *υδωρ πολυ*, (*udor polu*), shall cover thee?"* chap. xxvi. 19. The fact is, as critics tell us,

* See the Septuagint on the above passages.

the Hebrew word for water has no plural form. Hence the Greek translators sometimes rendered it into the singular *ὕδωρ*, (*udōr*) and sometimes into the plural *ὕδατα*, (*udata*.) Therefore the phrases *πολυ ὕδωρ*, (*polu udōr*) and *πολλα ὕδατα*, (*polla udata*) sometimes mean the same, and both mean *much water*.

Besides, if Jerusalem would not supply the numbers, who followed John, with water for this purpose, then it would not supply the vastly greater multitudes, who resorted thither thrice every year, to keep their great festivals. If Jerusalem were such a scanty place for water, then why were not these festivals celebrated on the banks of Jordan, where all the many thousands of Israel might be supplied with drink? But in opposition to all this, the inspired penman tells us that in Enon John was baptizing, because there was much water there. It is plain that the much water was chosen for the convenience of immersion, while there is not the least intimation that it was selected for a drinking place for men and animals. Calvin, Aretius, Piscator, Grotius, and Mc' Knight, on this passage, tell us that in this place there was a sufficiency of water to immerse the whole body. They never supposed that this spot was chosen for any other purpose than for baptism. It is seriously doubted whether any, who plead for sprinkling, are satisfied with this forced construction of the passage.

Yours, &c.

LETTER VIII.

PROOF FROM THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

Beloved Brethren,

In our two last Letters we exhibited proof that in the days of Christ and his Apostles baptism was performed by immersion. This proof was taken from the meaning of the word in the institute, and from the places and descriptive language of baptism. We will now proceed to examine the history of the primitive church, to learn whether their manner of administering this ordinance agrees with the apostolic practice.

Tertullian, the oldest of the Latin fathers, says: "We die symbolically in baptism." Upon these words, Rigaltius remarks: "We are immersed as if we suffered death, and rise up out of the water, as reviving again."

Chrysostom says: "To be dipped and plunged into the water, and then to rise out of it again, is a symbol of our descent into the grave, and of our ascent out of it. And therefore Paul calls baptism a burial, when he says we are therefore buried with him by baptism into death."

St. Barnabas says, "we go down into the water full of sins and pollution, but come up again, bringing forth fruit in our hearts, &c."

Tertullian, in his Treatise on Baptism, says: "It is all one, whether we are washed in the sea or in a pond; in a fountain, or in a river; in a standing, or in a running water: nor is there any difference between those that John baptized in Jordan, and those that Peter baptized in the Tiber."*

Justin Martyr in his apology before the Roman emperor, says: "I shall now lay before you the manner of dedicating ourselves to God, through Christ, upon our conversion. As many therefore as are persuaded and believe that the things taught and said by us are true, and moreover take upon them to live accordingly, are taught to pray, and to ask of God with fasting, the forgiveness of their former sins; and then, and not till then, they are brought to a place of water, and are washed in the name of God the Father. Moreover the person baptized and illuminated is baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in the name of the Holy Ghost." (Booth's *Pædo.* vol. ii. p. 110, 111.)

Basil, archbishop of Cæsarea, puts the following questions in his Lent sermons, to the catechumens before their baptism:—"How can we be placed in a condition of likeness to his death? Answer. By being buried with him in baptism. How are we to go down with him into the grave? By imitating the burial of Christ in baptism; for the bodies of the baptized are in a sense buried in water. By three immersions we administer this important ceremony of baptism, that death may be represented in a figure." (See Robinson's *History of Baptism*, p. 76, 77.)

Grotius, in his Annotation on Matt. iii. 6, says, "That this rite was to be performed by immersion, and not by perfusion, appears both by the propriety of the word and the places chosen for its administration. John iii. 23. Acts viii. 38. And by the many allusions of the Apostles

* See Gale's *Reflections*, pp. 190, 191.

which cannot be referred to sprinkling, (Rom. vi. 3, 4. Col. ii. 12,) the custom of perfusion or aspersion seems to have obtained some time after, in favour of such who, lying dangerously ill, were desirous to dedicate themselves to Christ. These were called *Clenics* by other christians."

To these testimonies we will add that of several writers, who have given us the history of the primitive church.

Eusebius, (Eccles. Hist. lib. vi. chap. 43, p. 113,) speaking of Novatian, says: "He received baptism, being besprinkled with water on the bed where he lay, if that can be called baptism." This author then strongly doubted whether besprinkling could be properly called baptism.

Du Pin says, "In the three first centuries, they plunged those three times in the water whom they baptized." (vol. ii. p. 77.) The history of the church, written by an impartial hand, says, speaking of the three first centuries, "To me it seems evident that their usual custom was to immerse, or to dip the whole body." (p. 73, 2nd part.)

Gregory, in his Ecclesiastical History, informs us, that baptism, in the primitive times, was administered by immersion. (See vol. i. pages 53 and 89.)

Says Mosheim, "Those who had formed the resolution of amending their lives were initiated" by John "into the kingdom of the Redeemer by immersion."—"The sacrament of baptism was administered in the second century without the public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by immersion. Those adult persons, that desired to be baptized, received the sacrament of baptism according to the ancient and primitive manner of celebrating that institution, even by immersion." (See his Eccles. Hist. Cent. i. part i. Chap. iii. § iii. and Cent. xvii. § ii. part. ii. and Chap. vii. and § i.)

Dr. Cave, in his Primitive Christianity, says, "The action having proceeded, thus far, the party to be baptized was wholly immersed or put under water, which was the almost universal custom of those times." (See Part i. Chap. x. p. 203. Edit. 7th.)

Eusebius, in his Life of Constantine the Great, records the following speech of the dying Emperor. "This is the hour (that is, the hour of his baptism) wherein even

we may also enjoy that seal, which confers immortality. I had heretofore taken a resolution of doing this in the stream of the river Jordan, where our Saviour himself in likeness to us is recorded to have partaken of the laver." (Lib. iv. chap. 62.) Sickness prevented this design, and the Emperor was baptized in the usual way, by Eusebius, in the suburbs of Nicomedia. (See Du Pin, vol. ii. p. 90.)

This account is confirmed by Gregory, who, speaking of the fourth century, says, "Many were so desirous of receiving this initiatory rite in the same place with Christ, that they delayed baptism till they could travel into Judea. The emperor Constantine was among the number, and earnestly desired to receive the baptismal rite in the waters of Jordan." (Vol. i. p. 191, 192.)

These facts carry with them much weight. They show that this great man and many others wished not only to follow Christ in the mode, but into the very river where their Lord was buried and raised from his watery grave. These quotations show us how baptism was performed in the four first centuries.

Robinson, in his *History of Baptism*, informs us that all the eastern churches, which are independent of the Roman hierarchy, always have, and do even to this day, practise immersion. These churches are numerous, and embrace many professors. This learned and laborious author exhibits proof that the Nestorian church, the christians of St. Thomas,* Asian Jacobites, who took their name from Jacob Barædeus, the African Jacobites, the Armenian church, the Georgian church, the disciples of St. John, and the Manichæans, all through their whole history, administer this ordinance by immersion. (See his *Hist.* Boston edit. pp. 439—450.)

Nor did these ancient churches think that any thing short of immersion was baptism, only in given cases of necessity. This might be proved by numerous quotations. But we will be brief. "Novatian was besprink-

* The Christians of St. Thomas often defer the baptism of their children several years. Learned men have not been able to ascertain whether these christians were denominated from Thomas the Apostle, who, it is said, preached the gospel in India, or from Thomas, a Manichean, or from an Armenian merchant, named Thomas, or from some Nestorian bishop of the same name. The first of the two last is the most probable. See Robinson's *Hist.* p. 442.

led in his bed in the year two hundred and fifty, because they thought he would immediately die, and could not be immersed." But this mode was deemed so imperfect, that those who were besprinkled on their bed in the immediate prospect of death, and because they were not able to be dipped, were not allowed any office in the church. Valesius notes, "that this baptism was thought imperfect for several reasons." Patavius says, "such were thought irregularly baptized, and were never admitted into holy orders, attributing it to their perfusion." Cornelius speaks thus doubtfully of Novatian's sprinkling: "If such a one may be said to be baptized."—After this he says, "It was not thought lawful for any, who was baptized in his bed, by perfusion, to be admitted to any charge in the church." The bishop of Oxford says, "Novatian was obnoxious on two accounts; first, because he had made a schism on account of the lapsi, and second, because though he had water poured upon him in bed, yet he was not baptized." (See Gale's Reflections, p. 208.)

To the above, I will add the testimony of four others. "The first is that learned and elegant antiquary, Paul Maria Paciaudi. In the fourth chapter of the second dissertation, he speaks of the two baptisteries at Ravenna, and finds fault with the artists for representing John the Baptist pouring water on the head of Jesus. "Nothing, exclaims he, can be more monstrous than these emblems! Was our Lord Christ baptized by aspersion? This is so far from being true, that nothing can be more opposite to truth, and it is to be attributed to the ignorance and rashness of workmen."

"The second is that excellent judge, Dr. Joseph De Vicecomes of Milan. In the sixth chapter of the fourth book on the ceremonies of baptism, he says, "I will never cease to profess and teach that only immersion in water, except in cases of necessity, is lawful baptism in the church. I will refute that false notion that baptism was administered in the primitive church by pouring or sprinkling."

"The third is Father Mabillon. He says, that although there is mention made in the Life of S. Liudger of baptizing a little infant by pouring on holy water, yet it was *contrary* to an express canon of the ninth century: *contrary* to the canon given by Stephen, which allowed

pouring only in cases of necessity : *contrary* to the general practice in France, where trine immersion was used : *contrary* to the practice of the Spaniards, who used single immersion : *contrary* to the opinion of Alwin, who contended for trine immersion : and *contrary* to the practice of many, who continued to dip till the fifteenth century. For all this he quotes his authorities."

"The fourth* is the celebrated Lewis Anthony Muratori, a man to be had in everlasting remembrance for the extent of his knowledge, the indefatigableness of his application, the refinement of his understanding, and the accuracy of his taste ; the ornament of his country, and an honour to humanity itself. This perfect master of the subject, in the fourth volume of his Antiquities of the middle ages of Italy, in the fifty-seventh dissertation, treats of the rites of the church of Milan, called the Ambrosian from Saint Ambrose, the first compiler of the ritual of that church. As usual, he confirms every word by original authentic papers. Speaking of baptism by trine immersion, which was the Ambrosian method, he says : "Observe the Ambrosian manner of baptizing. Now-a-days the priests preserve a shadow of the *ancient* Ambrosian form of baptizing, for they do not baptize by pouring as Romans do : but, taking the infant in their hands, they dip the hinder part of his head three times in the baptismal water in the form of a cross : which is a vestige yet remaining of the most ancient and universal practice of immersion." See Rob. Hist. of Bap. pp. 385, 386, 387.

Thus, my brethren, the proof is abundant that the ancient church did not admit the validity of sprinkling only in cases of imperious necessity.

I know that it is easy to collect scattering instances of sprinkling or pouring in the third century and onward, in cases of necessity. As the fathers believed in the absolute necessity of baptism for salvation, they admin-

* "These four will be exceedingly multiplied, if that fiery trial, through which books are obliged to pass before they can receive an imprimatur, be noticed, for it is understood, that the book is the voice of a whole order, the doctrine of the whole church, and therefore it is carefully read in manuscript by several officers appointed on purpose both by the orders in particular and the church in general, before it is put to press." See Rob. p. 385.

istered it to the sick and dying, who were too weak to bear dipping, the best way they could. But these very fathers would not allow sprinkling when no such necessity existed. It is not fair for a writer to collect these few cases of sprinkling in the primitive church, and then to say generally, without specifying the necessity, that sprinkling was the practice of the first centuries. What if these ancient men did say that sprinkling was valid in given circumstances? Were they not led to say thus because they superstitiously attached a saving quality to baptism? The question is not what these fallible men say will answer for baptism in the immediate prospect of death, but what the scriptures have appointed.

I am, &c.

LETTER IX.

FURTHER PROOF THAT OUR DEFINITIONS ARE CORRECT,
DRAWN FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

Beloved Brethren,

The first that we shall here mention, is to be taken from the practice of the Greek church. This is a large collection of professed believers, comprising a large portion of the Christian world. This church embraces a great portion of the Empire of Russia, over which the illustrious Alexander presides. The New-Testament was originally written in Greek. Now the members of the ancient Greek church must have been the best interpreters of their mother tongue. How then did they understand the meaning of this term? Their practice will furnish the best answer to this question. If they believed that the word *baptizo* meant to sprinkle, they would have practised in this mode. But instead of this, they have, from their earliest history down to the present day, uniformly baptized by immersion, and that too in all the diversified climates over which their church is spread. Even the Muscovites practise in this mode, who, if coldness of region will excuse, might throw in the strongest claims to dispense with immersion, and to adopt, in its lieu, sprinkling. Now their steady and uniform adherence to this way, through so many ages, and that

too in the coldest sections of their church, forms an irrefragable proof, that they believe immersion is the baptism which Christ appointed. We cannot account for this adherence, without admitting, that they believe they have no liberty to depart from the original meaning of the word.*

In farther proof, we appeal to translators. Those men who undertook to translate the New-Testament into other languages, ought to be good judges of Greek. The New-Testament has been translated into the language of the Syrians, Armenians, Persians, Romans, Germans, Danes, Swedes, and Dutch. Now linguists tell us, that in all these languages the word βαπτίζω, (*baptizo*) is translated by one, which means to immerse. If they had understood this word to mean to sprinkle, why did they not choose a word that would have expressed that idea? If they wished to establish sprinkling, they were certainly very unhappy in selecting a word to express this ordinance, which would naturally lead their readers to adopt a different practice.

* Says Vossius, going to dip an infant, "that the word *baptize* signifies to pour as well as to dip. In virtue of this he takes the infant, and neither pours nor dips, but sprinkles, and then says to a congregation of English peasants, the Greek will bear me out."

"Suppose an honest Baptist peasant should stand up and say to such a man, sir, I have understood that Jesus lived and died in the east. That four of his disciples wrote his history in the Greek language, that his apostles preached in Greek to the inhabitants of Greece, that the Greeks believed and were baptized. Every nation understands its own language best; and no doubt the Greeks understand Greek better than we do. Now I have been informed, set me right if I be wrong, that from the first preaching of the apostles to this day, the Greeks have always understood that to baptize, was to dip. I do not understand Greek, but I think the Grecians themselves do. If therefore I were not to dip for other reasons, and if I were obliged to determine my practice by the sense of the single word *baptism*, and if I were driven to the necessity of trusting to some body, my reason would command me to take the sense from the natives of Greece, rather than from you, a foreigner." That this honest man would suppose a true fact is beyond all contradiction. In determining the precise meaning of a Greek word, used to signify a Greek ceremony, what possible chance hath a session of lexicographers against whole empires of native Greeks? Let the illiterate then enjoy themselves, and recollect, when they baptize by dipping, they understand Greek exactly as the Greeks themselves understood it." See Robinson's Researches, pp. 91, 92.

In the Helvetic confession of faith for the Protestant churches of Switzerland, drawn up by the direction of Bucer in 1536, and ten years before the death of Luther, and re-published in 1566 by the Pastors of Zurich, we have the following declaration in favour of immersion: "Baptism was instituted and consecrated by God; and the first that baptized was John, who dipped Christ in the water in Jordan. From him it came to the Apostles, who also did baptize with water."

The confession of faith adopted by the Saxon churches, and written by Melancthon in 1551, perfectly agrees with the above. It says, "baptism is an entire action, to wit, a dipping and a pronouncing of these words, I baptize thee, &c." See Dr. Baldwin's Letters to N. Worcester, p. 87.

These two confessions are not to be considered as the testimony of two men, nor of two churches, but as the united belief of a number of churches in two large districts.

The Assembly of Divines, that body of men who composed the catechism, in their Annotations on Col. ii. 12, "buried with him in baptism," say, "In this phrase the apostle seemeth to allude to the ancient manner of baptism, which was to dip the parties baptized; and, as it were, to bury them under the water awhile, and then to draw them out of it, and lift them up, to represent the burial of our old man, and our resurrection to newness of life."

The concessions of many Pedobaptists afford decisive proof in favour of immersion. If those of them who make these concessions knew that this word, in its natural and most common and obvious sense, meant to sprinkle, if they knew that it had been so understood all along in the ancient church, and that sprinkling was the primitive mode, they certainly would have been quick to see, and loud to proclaim all these facts, as so many unanswerable arguments in favour of their own practice. But if they concede that this word in its primary signification means to immerse, and that it was so understood, and that immersion was universally observed in the earliest ages of christianity, we are sure that they would not make this concession, unless urged to it by the force of truth and candour. They were certainly interested to give in a different judgment. Of all men in the world, we should

suppose that they would be the last to yield so much, when consistency and the reputation of their own practice would naturally prompt them to speak otherwise, if they could see how an opposite statement could be made in fairness. But let us hear what they say on this subject. Says Luther, "The term *baptism* is a Greek word, and may be rendered *immersion*, as when we plunge something in water, that it may be entirely covered with water." See Judson, p. 7, Edit. 1st. He says further, that the etymology of the word evidently requires immersion. Calvin says, "the very word *baptize*, however, signifies to immerse, and it is *certain* that immersion was the practice of the ancient church." (Cal. Inst. B. iv. Ch. 15. Sect. 19. Allen's translation.)

Rogers says, "None of old were wont to be sprinkled; and I confess myself unconvinced by demonstration from scripture for infants' sprinkling. It ought to be the churches' part to cleave to the institution, which is dipping; and he betrays the church, whose officer he is, to a disorderly error, if he cleave not to the institution, which is to dip. That the minister is to dip in water, is the meetest act—the word *baptizo* notes it. For the Greeks wanted not other words to express any other act besides dipping, if the institution could bear it. What resemblance of the burial or of the resurrection of Christ is there in sprinkling? All antiquity and scripture confirm that way (to immerse.) To dip, therefore, is exceedingly material to the ordinance, which was the usage of old, without exception of countries, hot or cold." (Booth abridged, p. 24.)

"That immersion was the practice of the ancient church is so plain, says Dr. Wall, and clear by an infinite number of passages, that as one cannot but pity the weak endeavours of such Pedobaptists as would maintain the negative of it, so also we ought to disown and show a dislike of the profane scoffs which some people give to the English Antipedobaptists, merely for their use of dipping. It was in all probability the way in which our blessed Saviour, and for certain was the most usual and ordinary way, by which the ancient christians did receive their baptism. It is a great want of prudence as well as of honesty, to refuse to grant to an adversary, what is certainly true, and may be proved so. It creates a jealousy of all the rest that one says. As for sprinkling,

I say as Mr. Blake at its first coming up in England, let them defend it, who use it. They who are inclined to Presbyterianism are hardly prevailed on to leave off that scandalous custom of having their children, though never so well, baptized out of a basin or porringer, in a bed chamber: hardly persuaded to bring them to church; much farther from having them dipped, though never so able to bear it." (Hist. of Infant Baptism, Part ii. Chap. ix. p. 462. first edit.)

I might swell this list, and bring forward Pool, Mc' Knight, Doddridge, and a host of others, all testifying to the same truth. To these I might add the names of several divines now living, and who are the most distinguished for a critical knowledge of the Bible and of the history of the church; all conceding the fact, that *baptizo* means to immerse in its most obvious sense, and that this was practised universally for more than thirteen hundred years in the ancient church, saving a few cases of necessity. In proof that immersion prevailed during this period, I will cite the testimony of a few witnesses.

Says Stackhouse, "Several authors have shown that we no where read in scripture of any one's being baptized but by immersion, and from acts of councils and ancient rituals (they) have proved that this manner of immersion continued as much as possible to be used for thirteen hundred years after Christ." (His Hist. of the Bible, Book 8, Chap. i. pp. 291, 292.)

Says Dr. Whitby: "It being so expressly declared here, (Rom. vi. 4, Col. ii. 12,) that we are buried with Christ in baptism, by being buried under water, and the argument to oblige us to a conformity to his death, by dying to sin, being taken hence; and this immersion being *religiously observed by all churches for thirteen centuries*, and approved by our church, (church of England) and the change of it into sprinkling, even without any allowance from the author of the institution, or any license from any council of the church, being that which the Romanist still urgeth to justify his refusal of the cup to the laity; it were to be wished that this custom might be again of general use, and aspersion only permitted, as of old, in cases of the clinici, or in present danger of death."

Nor was Dr. Whitby alone in his desire for the return of immersion. Many of the most learned, pious and eminent divines, yea, the clergy of England in general, expressed a desire for the return of this ancient practice.

These eminent men, in arguing for the restoration of immersion, plead the sense of this word; they plead the ancient usage of the church, and even the practice of the church in their own time. To the advocates of sprinkling they said: "Divide the christian world into three parts, and you will find that all Asia, all Africa, and one third part of Europe, do at this day baptize by immersion." (See Stackhouse's Body of Divinity.)

Says Wall—"France seems to have been the first country in the world where baptism by affusion was used ordinarily to persons in health, and in the public way of administering it. It being allowed to weak children (in the reign of Elizabeth) to be baptized by aspersion, many fond ladies and gentlewomen first, and then by degrees, the common people would obtain the favour of the priest to have their children pass for weak children, too tender to endure dipping in the water. As for sprinkling, properly so called, it seems it was at sixteen hundred and forty-five, just then beginning and used by very few. It must have begun in the disorderly times after forty-one. They (the assembly of divines in Westminster) reformed the font into a basin. This learned assembly could not remember that fonts to baptize in had been always used by the primitive christians, long before the beginning of popery, and ever since churches were built; but that sprinkling, for the common use of baptizing, was really introduced (in France first, and then in other popish countries) in times of popery. And that accordingly all those countries in which the usurped power of the pope is or has been formerly owned, have left off dipping of children in the font; but that all other countries in the world, which had never regarded his authority, do still use it, and that basins, except in cases of necessity, were never used by Papists or any other christians whatever, till by themselves." "The way that is now ordinarily used we cannot deny to have been a novelty, brought into this church by those that had learned it in Germany, or at Geneva. And they were not content to follow the example of pouring a quantity of water, (which had there been introduced, instead of sprinkling) but improved it, if I may so abuse that word, from pouring to sprinkling, that it might have as little resemblance of the ancient way of baptizing as possible."*

* Hist. of Inf. Part 2nd, Chap. 9.

By this quotation you see that the assembly of divines were the first ecclesiastical body in England, that authorized sprinkling for general use in lieu of immersion. When the mode of baptism was debated in that body, the question was called, whether they would retain immersion, or adopt sprinkling—the assembly were nearly divided, 25 voted for sprinkling, and 24 voted against it. The vote for sprinkling, was finally carried through the influence of Dr. Lightfoot. Had it not been for the influence of this one man, immersion in all probability would have been retained. Had it not been for him, the question in their catechism, What is baptism? would most likely have been answered thus,* “baptism is a sacrament, in which the subject is immersed in water in the name of the Father,” &c. so, for ought we can say, this practice would have been continued to this very day.

Thus, my brethren, in favour of immersion you have many arguments. In support of it you have the first and most obvious meaning of the word, employed to express this rite; you have the places chosen for its administration, in Jordan, in rivers, in places where there was much water, and in baptisteries; you have the language employed in its description, going down *into* the water, and coming up *out* of it, being buried and raised with Christ in baptism, having our *bodies* washed in pure water; you have the testimony and concessions of the ablest Pedobaptist writers in favour of this practice; yea, you have the united voice of the whole church, whether Greek or Roman, in favour of immersion, for more than thirteen hundred years. When we take into consideration, that the Greek, the Armenian, the Georgian and Nestorian churches, and all the oriental churches, which have never acknowledged the papal power, have throughout their whole history practised in this way; and when we farther reflect on the number of the Baptists, now scattered through the christian world, we are sure that a great portion, if not half the professed followers of Christ, do at this very hour adhere to immersion.

If, my friends, you can adduce proofs in favour of sprinkling that will fairly outweigh all these arguments, you will without doubt practise accordingly.

I am, &c.

* See note in Neal's Hist. of Pur. p. 169.

LETTER X.

OBJECTIONS TO THE FOREGOING REASONS STATED AND ANSWERED.

Beloved Brethren,

To the preceding arguments it may be objected, that the words *bapto* and *baptizo*, do not in scripture in their literal application mean an entire wetting by immersion. In support of this objection, several passages are adduced. Lev. xiv. 6. "As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall *dip βαψει*, (*bapsei*) them in the blood of the bird, that was killed over the running water." Here the word *βαψει* (*bapsei*) dip, Dr. Wall and some others say cannot mean immersion. "For," says Wall, "the blood of the bird in the basin could not be enough to receive the living bird and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop all into it." See his History of Infant Baptism, part 2nd, p. 221.

This objection is grounded on a mistake. It supposes, that the blood of the slain bird was preserved by itself, and therefore could not receive the bulky sprinkler, formed of the several prescribed articles. But the fact was, the bird was slain in an earthen vessel, containing a considerable quantity of running or living water. Into this water the blood fell and mixed, so that the quantity of this sanguineous liquid was abundantly sufficient to admit the sponge by dipping. See verse 5—"And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running, or living water, which it contained." See also the 51st verse of this chapter. Indeed a little reflection will teach us that the blood of the slain bird, not being more than a spoonful or two, could not alone wet a large sponge sufficiently to sprinkle a person and a whole house seven times over. The word *βαψει*, (*bapsei*) therefore, in the above text most certainly means to *dip*, but not to *pour* or *sprinkle*.

Another text in support of the above objection is taken from Ezek. xxiii. 15. "Girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed-attire upon their heads." Here the word *dyed* in the septuagint is *παρὰβαπτα* (*parabapta*;) hence some say, that this word means to dye, as well as

to dip. But this objection will lose all its force, when we reflect that the ancient "Greeks very frequently applied the word, in all its various forms, to the dyer's art, so as to imply and refer only to its true natural signification, to dip." Besides, the "Grecians made a difference between dye and other colouring matter. Thus Plutarch distinguishes between χρωμαλα, (*chrōmata*) and βαμμαλα, (*banmata*). The latter word signifies only that sort of colouring, into which any thing is dipped, according to the sense of the word." See Gale's Reflections, pp. 101, and 103. In the Hebrew of this verse the word translated *dye*, is לַבַּ, which Parkhurst says means to dip, immerse, to plunge, and to dye with a certain color, which is usually performed by dipping. See his Lexicon. The LXX translated this word into the Greek word παραβαπτα, (*parabapta*) which also signifies *dipped*. Hence if this word had been rendered in our English bibles, *dipped garment*, the translation would have been literal and correct. In this case no one would have thought that the passage countenances sprinkling, or pouring. I do not object to the present version. For the phrase *dyed garments*, involves the idea of dipping, because cloth is dyed, not by sprinkling or pouring, but by dipping. This text, then, most certainly makes in our favour, but gives no support to those of a different practice.

Should any one quote Daniel iv. 33, and v. 21, as proof that the word βαπτω (*bapto*) means to sprinkle, we reply, that the word here is without doubt used figuratively, and designed to express more emphatically the entire wetting, which Nebuchadnezzar should receive from the great dews of Chaldea, by saying, that he should lie in dew, and be covered with it all over, as if he had been dipped.

That this word means to dip, is evident from the following passages: Exo. xii. 22. "And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it, &c. Lev. iv. 6. And the priest shall dip his finger, &c. verse 17. And the priest shall dip his finger in some of the blood. Chapter ix. 9. And he dipped his finger in the blood. Chap. xi. 32. Whatsoever vessel it be, it must be put into water. Chap. xiv. 6, 16, 51. Num. xix. 18. And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, &c. Deut. xxxiii. 24. Let him dip his foot in oil, &c. Josh. iii. 15. And the feet of the priests were dipped in the brim of the water, &c. Ruth ii. 14,

Dip thy morsel in the vinegar. 1 Sam. xiv. 27. And dipped it in an honey-comb. 2 Kings v. 14. Then went he down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan. Chap. viii. 15. He took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water. Job ix. 31. Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch. Psalm lxxviii. 23. That thy foot may be dipped in the blood, &c." These words *bapto* and *baptizo* occur in the septuagint about twenty-one times. Having attended to the most considerable texts in the Old Testament on this subject, and having shewn that these words in their literal sense mean to dip or immerse, and not to sprinkle or pour, we will now advance to the New.

Here one of the most plausible passages, brought against us, is found in Heb. ix. 10. "Which stood only in meats and drink, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances." Here the Greek is *βαπτισμοῖς*, (*baptismois*;) the correct translation of the phrase is, *divers immersions*. So Grotius, Whitby and Mc'Knight, understand the passage. Had it been so rendered, no one would have thought that this text favoured sprinkling. But as the Levitical law enjoined divers immersions, how do we know but that Paul had exclusive reference to these? He might include the various sprinklings in the clause, "carnal ordinances." In the seventh chapter of this epistle, he calls the law, which prescribed the ceremony of induction into the priest's office, a carnal commandment. See verse 16. This law we know required sprinkling, shaving, washing the clothes, and cleansing the body. Still it was called a carnal commandment. As the Apostle here certainly meant to comprise sprinkling, and washing clothes, and cleansing the flesh, in the phrase *carnal commandment*, why is it not true to say, that by carnal ordinances, he might refer to the various sprinklings and sacrifices of the Jewish ritual?

But let us proceed to mention some of the numerous and divers immersions required by the law. When defiled by the touch of a dead body, all manner of wooden vessels, all kinds of raiment, all skins, all sacks, and whatsoever vessel it be, in which any work was done, all must be baptized, or put into water. See Leviticus xi. 32. Birds, cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop, were to be dipped in blood and water, See Lev. xiv. 6. Various things taken in war with Gentile nations, and which would not abide the fire, were to be put in, or made to pass through

the water. See Num. xxxi. 23. Priests, lepers, and persons who were defiled by the touch of a bone, or a dead body, were to bathe or immerse their bodies in water. See Lev. xiv. 8. Num. xix. 7 and 19. Gill, Gale, Dr. Reed and many others, say that these bathings were performed by immersion.

Now these divers immersions must occur very frequently. If the dead body of a weasel, or mouse, or tortoise, or ferret, or chameleon, or lizard, or snail, or mole, touched any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, and whatsoever vessel in which work was done, were all to be immersed. When a person died in a tent, every thing and person in it were rendered unclean. Whoever in the confusion of battle touched one that was slain with the sword, or a dead body of a man or beast, or even a bone or a grave, was unclean, and must bathe in water. In every conquest a very large portion of their spoils must be made to pass through the water, or be dipped. See Lev. xi. 30, 31, 32, and Num. xxxi. 21, 22, 23.

Thus you see, my brethren, that under the law, divers immersions must have happened very frequently, and they were administered for divers purposes. Well might the apostle say, that the ancient economy stood in divers immersions, and yet in this phrase have no reference to sprinkling. If, as our opponents say, the apostle meant to express the various sprinklings of the law by the words, *διαφοροῖς βαπτισμοῖς*, (*diaphorois baptismois*) translated *divers washings*, why did he not in the subsequent parts of the chapter continue to employ the same word, when he spake of sprinkling? If this term would naturally express the idea of sprinkling in one place, it would in another. But let us look over the chapter and see if he retained this word. See verse 13. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling, *ραντιζουσα* (*rantizousa*), not *βαπτισμοῖς* (*baptismois*). Ver. 19. Moses—sprinkled *εραντισε* (*errantise*) both the book, &c. Verse 21, "Moreover he sprinkled, *εραντισε*, (*errantise*) likewise with blood both the tabernacle," &c. His steady use of the word *ραντιζω*, (*rantizo*) to express sprinkling in this chapter, is strong proof that he well knew the word *baptizo* meant something quite different, viz. to immerse. This latter word, Campbell says never means to sprinkle, either in sacred or classical writers.

In support of the above objection, the passage in Luke xi. 38, is cited, "And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled, that he had not first washed before dinner." The original word is *εβαπτισθη*, (*ebaptisthē*). It is not said in these words, what was baptized, whether the hand or the entire body. It is supposed, however, by some, that the inspired penman had particular reference to the washing of hands, and that this passage is parallel to the one in Mark vii. 3, "For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not." The original is *ἐὰν μὴ πύγμα ἢ νεφῶνται τὰς χεῖρας, οὐκ ἐσθίουσι*: that is, except they wash their hands up to the wrist, or elbow, they eat not.* This mode of washing was performed most likely by first dipping their hands into the water. Of this opinion was Dr. Pocock. His words are these: "The greatest and most notorious uncleanness of the hands reached but to the *perek*, or the wrist, and was cleansed by immersing or dipping them up so high." Dr. Hammond is of the same opinion, and determines this to be the sense of this passage. Says he, "Washing of any part, as the hands here, by way of immersion in water, as that is opposed to affusion or pouring water on them." See Gale, pp. 158, 159.

Again, it is said that the washing, performed by the Jews when they returned from market, was not a cleansing of the whole body, but only a partial application of water. See Mark vii. 4.

In reply to this, we observe, that the law of God required the Priests, when defiled, to bathe in water before they eat of the holy things. See Lev. xxii. 6. "The soul which hath touched any such, shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water." Now is it not rational to suppose, that the common people in cleansing their bodies would follow the example of their religious teachers, and bathe their flesh in water? That the more superstitious Jews did immerse their whole bodies when they returned from the market, is confirmed by the best critics. Vatablus, on this text, remarks, "They (the Jews) washed themselves all over." See Gale, p. 164. Grotius, in commenting on this place, says, "They were more solicitous to cleanse themselves from the defilement they had con-

* See Gill on this passage.

tracted in the market, and therefore they not only washed their hands, but immersed their whole bodies." See him in loco.

Some suppose that the baptism of pots, cups, tables and brazen vessels, was not performed by immersion, but by pouring and rubbing. In reply, we remark, that all wooden vessels which were defiled, were, by the law of God, to be put into water. See Lev. xi. 32. Earthen vessels, when defiled, were to be broken, and brazen ones were to be purified by fire, and then made to pass through the water. Both the law of God and the tradition of the elders required that defiled vessels should be put into water. Their tables were not three nor four footed, like ours at this day, but they were couches, on which they leaned at their meals. And these couches, or tables as they are called, were not washed by having water sprinkled or poured upon them, but by being put into water, as other clothes were washed.* Some have maintained, that the text in Isaiah liij. 15, "so shall he sprinkle many nations," gives countenance to that mode of applying water. But the scholar, who will consult the original text, will at once discard this passage as affording any support to sprinkling.

The Hebrew word in this verse is רָבַיַם, which is rendered *sprinkle*. But it literally means to increase, and by consequence, to make to rejoice, or to exult. See Simonis' Heb. Lex. The LXX translated this word into θαυμάσονται, (*thaumasontai*) which signifies either to astonish, or to cause to exult or rejoice. But in no instance is it equivalent to *sprinkle*, as is known by all who understand the Greek language.

Christ, by the greatness of his suffering, would astonish many nations, or, when they saw the design of his vicarious death, would rejoice or exult in hope of eternal life. This seems to be the sense of the passage. Our translators, perhaps, rendered this word as they did, because they well knew that to sprinkle fragrant waters on visitors, was the customary mode of doing respectful and kind honours to guests, through the east. See Burder's Orient. Cust. p. 199.

It is also objected, that the three thousand could not be baptized by immersion, for the want of time. It is said

* The Jewish canon ran thus: "A bed that is wholly defiled, if he dip it part by part, is pure." See Gill on the text.

that the day was considerably advanced before Peter began his famous sermon, and that after public services, the time was too far spent to admit on that day the baptism of such a vast number.

In reply, we observe, that on supposition there were only 12 administrators, (you will recollect that before this event, Matthias filled the place of Judas) allowing them 250 each, the twelfth part of 3000, and six hours to perform the ceremony, they would have to baptize about 41 an hour. But on supposition the seventy-two disciples were present, whom Christ had before commissioned to baptize, as in all probability they were, then the portion of each would not be quite 43; and allowing them three hours time, they would have only about 14 to immerse, only one in 13 minutes.

But setting aside the above calculation, we will engage to answer this objection as soon as any one will inform us how Abraham could, in the short space of one day, circumcise, after this rite was performed upon himself, between three and four hundred males. See Gen. xvii, 26. "And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their fore-skin, *the self-same day.*" Before this we are informed that he had 318 trained servants *born* in his house. Now should we add to those 318 all the males, who were *bought* with money, and all, who were either too old or too young to bear arms, the number of males in his household would be much enlarged. When therefore we are told how Abraham in one day could perform this rite on so large a number, we shall be prepared to tell how the 12, or 72 disciples, in six, or three hours, could baptize 3000.

It is also said that in Jerusalem the disciples could not have found conveniences for the purpose of dipping. It is argued that the angry Jews would not allow them admission to any of their places of worship.

In answer, we remark, that the primitive christians were not excluded the temple, nor from the public places of bathing. See Acts v. 20, 25, and 42. "And daily in the temple and in every place, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."—"Go stand and speak in the *temple* all the words of this life.—Then came one and told

them, saying, behold the men whom ye put in prison, are standing in the temple, and teaching the people."

May we not rationally suppose, that the apostles could easily find accommodations for immersion in this great city, and among a people who, by their sacred laws, were subjected to various bathings?

Says Dr. Gill, "In the city of Jerusalem, in private houses, they had their baths for purifications, by immersion, as in the case of defilements, by touching unclean persons and things, which were very frequent; so that a digger of cisterns, for such uses, and others, was a business in Jerusalem. And in the temple there was an apartment, called the *dipping place* or *room*, where the high priest dipped himself on the day of atonement. And besides these there were ten lavers of brass, made by Solomon; and every laver held forty baths of water, and each was four cubits broad and long, sufficient for immersion of the whole body of a man. Add to this, that there was the molten sea also for the priests to wash in, (2 Chron. iv. 6,) which was done by immersion; on which one of the Jewish commentators has these words: "The sea was *for the dipping* of the priests; for in the midst of it they dipped themselves from their uncleanness; but in the Jerusalem Talmud, there is an objection, is it not a vessel? as if it was said, how can they *dip* in it, for is it not a vessel? and there is no *dipping* in vessels: R. Joshua ben Levi replied, a pipe of water was laid to it from the fountain of Etam, and the feet of the oxen, which were under the molten sea, were open at the pomegranates; so that it was as if it was from under the earth, and the waters came to it, and entered, and ascended, by the way of the feet of the oxen, which were open beneath them and bored."—And it may be observed, that there was also in Jerusalem the pool of Bethesda, into which persons went down at certain times, (John v. i,) and the pool of Siloam, where persons bathed and dipped themselves, on certain occasions. So that there were conveniences enough for baptism by immersion in this place." Gill on Acts ii. 41.

"We who are so little used to washing the whole body, either in a common or religious way, are apt to wonder where, and how, such prodigious numbers, as are mentioned in the *New Testament* to be baptized, could be *accommodated* if they were immersed in water? But it needs

only to be considered, the principal scene of baptism lay in a country, where *immersion* was quite *familiar*, and *must*, by the very laws of their religion, come into *daily* use through all parts of the land; and then the wonder will cease. For, as Bishop *Patrick* observes, "there are so many washings prescribed [in the law of *Moses*] that it is reasonable to believe, there were not only at *Jerusalem*, and in all other *cities*, but in every *village*, several *bathing places* contrived for these legal purifications, that men might, without much labour, be capable to fulfil these precepts." *Comment. on Lev. xv. 12.**

It is said that John's baptism was legal; and therefore never was designed for an example to regulate gospel baptism.

In proof that John's baptism belonged to the gospel dispensation, we shall offer only two arguments, viz.—

1. We believe John's ministry was the beginning of the gospel of the Son of God, because it is declared so to be by the mouth of inspiration. See Mark i. 1, 2, 3, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets, behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

On these words, Mr. Scott observes thus:—"This was in fact the *beginning of the gospel*, the *introduction of the New-Testament dispensation*, the opening of the glad tidings, relating to Jesus Christ, the anointed Saviour, the incarnate Son of God."

"The history of John the Baptist," says Whitby, "is styled the beginning of the gospel, because he began his office by preaching repentance, as the preparation to receive it, and faith in the Messiah as the subjects of it." See Scott's Note on the passage.

Observe, my brethren, that the inspired penman doth not here say, that John's ministry was the protraction of the Levitical economy, nor the commencement of an intermediate and temporary dispensation, but the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Would the evangelist characterize the ministry of John, by saying, that it was the voice which proclaimed glad tidings, when in fact he meant to say, that it was the same voice which had long been heard from Sinai, enforcing the law with all its tremendous sanctions?

* Foot's Let. p. 29.

Why is it, my brethren, that there is such an effort made to confine John in the dark dispensation of the law? Is it because his ministry frowns so heavily on modern practices? Had he sprinkled parents and their infants, do you imagine that his conduct would never have been drawn into a precedent, or example, to sanction the ceremonies of Pedobaptists? Would they have said to all writers on their ground, you must not avail yourselves of the conduct of John in baptism, because he was a Levitical priest, and not a minister of the gospel?

If John belonged to the Levitical priesthood, and if Christ was baptized by him to fulfil the Levitical law, as many say, then it will follow that Christ was a priest after the Aaronic order, and not after the order of Melchisedec. But, my brethren, this reasoning carries us abreast to the arguments of Paul, in the 7th of Heb. He there tells us that Christ was made a priest, not after the *law* of a *carnal commandment*, but after the *order of Melchisedec*. See verses 16 and 17.

My second argument, in proof that John's ministry belonged to the gospel dispensation, is taken from the calculations of Dr. Prideaux. In explaining the prophecy of Daniel's seven weeks, and the three score and two weeks,* or the 483 years from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto Messiah, the Prince, he says, "This will lead us down to the year of the Julian period, 4739, which was the very year in which the ministry of the gospel first began. This Christ executed at first, and therein made his appearance as the Messiah, by his forerunner, John the Baptist, for the space of three years and an half, and after that, by himself in his own person, for three years and an half more. And these two being put together, make up the last week of this prophecy, which began exactly at the ending of the said sixty-two weeks. And therefore here the prophecy concerning the coming of the Messiah had its completion. St. Luke tells us, † "The word of God first came to John, in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar," emperor of Rome. And from the coming of that word to John, and his preaching of it to the Jews, ‡ was the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the first appearance of his kingdom here on

* Dan. ix. 25.

† Chap. iii. 1, 2.

‡ Mark i. 1.

earth. And this Christ himself tells us : for his words are, (Luke xvi. 16,) "The law and the prophets were until John ; since that, the kingdom of God is preached." That is, the Jewish economy, under the law and the prophets, lasted until the coming of John, and his preaching of the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. But from the time of his coming on this ministry, which was the ministry of the gospel, the kingdom of the Messiah began. For, as in the gospel of St. Matthew, by the kingdom of heaven, so here by the kingdom of God,* is meant the kingdom of the Messiah, the church of Christ, which he hath here established among us. And therefore this kingdom thus beginning with the preaching of John, there must we necessarily place the first coming of that King, Christ our Lord, who founded this his kingdom here among us." *Prideaux's Connections*, vol. 2. pp. 53, 54.

Thus, according to the calculations of this laborious divine, this prophecy of Daniel cannot be explained only by admitting that John's ministry was the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

I am, brethren, yours, &c.

LETTER XI.

REMARKS ON THE REASONS ASSIGNED TO JUSTIFY THE CHANGE
OF IMMERSION INTO SPRINKLING.

Beloved Brethren,

In attending to the subject of this Letter, I cannot do better than to submit for your consideration, the opinions of several distinguished writers. If I should discuss the subject anew, I should exhibit the same arguments, dressed in my own language. I will also premise, that in this Letter I have reference to that class of Pedobaptists who admit that immersion was the instituted mode, but say that the original law was not inflexible, but was to vary so as to accommodate itself to changing customs and climates.

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* Vide Grotii Annotationes in secundum caput Matthæi, et Lightfooti. Horas Hebraicas ad eundem locum.

Says Mr. Foot, in his Letters to Bishop Hoadly, "I come now, my lord, to what was promised in the last Letter, viz. to consider the *excuse* of those who, though they confess the *scriptural baptism* to be *immersion*, yet apologize for a departure from it: and of two quite different distinct laws and institutions, put one in the room of the other. In consequence thereof, it is come to that pass, that what at first was done *but seldom*, and in supposed cases of urgent necessity, is now become the universal, constant practice; and the *one baptism*, the *acknowledged one baptism of scripture*, is *entirely cast out*, in favour of ANOTHER RITE; except among a handful of people, who still preserve the primitive form. Mr. Baxter, we have already seen, excuses the matter by the *coldness* of our climate. Calvin, the celebrated reformer at Geneva, observes, in his exposition of Acts viii. 38—"We see here what was the baptismal rite among the ancients; for they *plunged the whole body in the water*. Now 'tis the custom for the minister to *sprinkle only the body or head*." And he too excuses this *sprinkling* by saying,—"It is certain that we want nothing which maketh to the substance of baptism. Wherefore the church did grant liberty to herself, *since the beginning*, to change the rites somewhat, excepting the substance." See Calvin's Com. on Acts viii. 38.

Bishop Burnet, though he thus describes the primitive baptism, "With no other garments but what might serve to cover nature; they at first *laid them down in the water*, as a man is laid in a *grave*, and then they said these words, *I baptize, or wash thee in the name, &c.* Then they raised them up again, and clean garments were put on them: from whence came the phrases of being *baptized into Christ's death*, of being *buried with him by baptism into death*: of our being *risen with Christ*, and of our *putting on the Lord Jesus Christ*, of *putting off the old man*, and *putting on the new*:" And though he justly observes, sacraments are *positive precepts* which are to be measured only by the *institution*, in which there is *not room left* for us to carry them any further;" yet forgetting his own measure of the institution, viz. *the party baptized was laid down in the water, as a man is laid in the grave*, "He says, the danger of *dipping in cold climates* may be a very good reason for *changing the form of baptism to sprinkling*." Expos. xxxix Articles, pages 226, 300, 346, Edit. 1st.

“But as the good Bishop observes, in the page last cited, on the other sacrament, and the *change* made therein by the church of Rome, “All reasoning upon this head is an arguing *against the institution*; as if Christ and his apostles had not well *considered* it; but that 1200. years after them, a consequence should be observed, that till then had not been *thought of*, which made it reasonable *to alter the manner of it*. He who instituted it knew best what was most fitting and most reasonable; and we must choose rather to *acquiesce in his commands*, than in our own *reasonings*.” Page 347.

“It is evident to your Lordship, that when our blessed Saviour said unto the apostles, *Go, teach all nations, baptizing them, they understood him to mean dipping*. Here then is *one only rule and law for all nations*. No provision for making a difference between *warm climates and cold*. Not the least hint of *two rites*, of which the administrator may take his *choice*, according to his own prudence and discretion; but there is *one law, one institution*, for all nations upon the face of the earth; *Go teach and dip them*. Why then, my lord, do we not acquiesce in this command, but change it by our own reasoning?

“But I beg leave to say two or three things in particular to the plea for this *confessed alteration*.

“First, coldness of climate is an excuse which, make the best of it, can serve but for some part of the year, and for some weakly constitutions; and yet the practice of *sprinkling* is universal and constant, in the hot season as well as cold, and on the most robust and healthy as well as the weak. The reason offered in justification of the *new way* implies, that were it not for *necessity*, the *primitive baptism* should be observed; nevertheless, it is not observed, where no shadow of necessity is pretended. Such commonly is the end and effect of departing from our rule: Human nature falls in with what is least troublesome. We first plead a necessity of relaxing in certain cases; these cases continually multiply in favour of *ease and indulgence*, and then *custom* carries all before it. Dr. Wall, giving the reasons why in queen Elizabeth’s reign the custom of *dipping* was laid aside, observes, “It being allowed to weak children to be baptized by *affusion*, many fond ladies and gentlewomen first, and then by degrees the common people, would obtain the favour of the priest to have *their children* pass for weak children, too tender to endure *dipping in the water*.” Vol. 2. p. 301, edit. 1st.

“Secondly, *Immersion* was the constant practice in this same *cold* climate for many hundred years, (the change into *sprinkling*, as a general practice, being scarce two hundred years old) and yet I believe no history can be produced of its having been of ill consequence even to infants. Take the affair only in a medical view, and cold bathing is not only safe, but very useful, many times, to tender babes, which made the late Dr. Cheyne say, “I cannot sufficiently admire how it [cold bathing] should ever have come into such disuse, especially among christians, when commanded by the greatest Lawgiver that ever was, under the direction of God’s holy Spirit, to his chosen people, and perpetuated to us in the immersion at baptism by the same Spirit, who, with infinite wisdom, in this, as in every thing else, that regards the temporal and eternal felicity of his creatures, combines their duty with their happiness.” Essay on Health, &c. chap. 4. sect. 7.

“Thirdly, The rule [God will have mercy and not sacrifice] may justly be applied to excuse from *baptism itself*, [that is, as I understand it, from *immersion*] those who cannot receive it without manifest *danger*; but, I think, will by no means justify a change of *baptism* into *another quite different* rite. For illustration sake, my Lord, I beg leave to mention the case of an old-testament rite, *circumcision*. It was a divine appointment, that this rite should be observed with respect to every *Jewish* male at eight days old. Yet during the *Israelites’* travel through the wilderness, for the space of forty years, it was omitted. The reason of which was the danger and great inconvenience that must arise from it, in their travelling, unsettled condition. Vide Patrick and other expositors on Joshua v. But suppose the Jews, from the undoubted inconvenience of circumcising the part appointed, had reasoned themselves into the practice of circumcising a finger or toe, would not this have been an unwarrantable departure from the institution of God? Unquestionably it would. Who required this at their hand? And especially would they not be chargable with a notorious perversion of a plain positive precept, if from this plea of necessity in the wilderness they should take occasion to make the change total and perpetual, upon all persons, and in all times? And how long soever this alteration had prevailed, would it not be justifiable, and matter of commendation, nay, even duty, in those persons who saw the deviation from

the declared will of the Institutor, to reject this circumcision of human device, and restore it to its first institution? We must think so, unless the antiquity of error excuse it, and make that right, which at first was wrong. If therefore baptism was originally immersion, let it be immersion still; for, as your most learned friend, Dr. S. Clarke, has observed, "In things of external appointment, and mere positive institution, where we cannot, as in matters of natural and moral duty, argue concerning the natural reason and ground of the obligation, and the original necessity of the thing itself; we have nothing to do but to obey the positive command. God is infinitely better able than we to judge of the propriety and usefulness of the things he institutes; and it becomes us to obey with humility and reverence." *Expos. Church Cat.* page 305, &c. edit. 2d.

"Your Lordship will suffer me to add, there is not so great a difference between circumcising a finger, and the foreskin, as between covering the whole body in water, and sprinkling the face. It would be circumcision still, only of a different part; but bathing and sprinkling, the book of God always considers as two institutions quite distinct." *Foot,* pp. 20—34.

Those congregational divines who plead for this right to vary an acknowledged institute of Christ, disarm themselves in their debates with Episcopalians and Catholics, respecting traditions and legislative power.

"In the time of king Charles the second, lived Mr. Jeremiah Ives, a Baptist minister, famous for his talent at disputation, of whom the king having heard, sent for him to dispute with a Romish priest; the which he did before the king and many others, in the habit of a *clergyman*. Mr. Ives pressed the priest closely, shewing that whatever antiquity they pretended to, their doctrine and practices could by no means be proved apostolic; since they are not to be found in any writings which remain of the apostolic age; the priest after much wrangling, in the end, replied, that this argument of Mr. Ives, was of as much force against infant baptism as against the doctrines and ceremonies of the church of Rome; to which Mr. Ives answered, that he readily granted what he said to be true; the priest upon this broke up the dispute, saying; he had been cheated, and that he would proceed no further; for he came to dispute with a clergyman of the es-

established church, and it was now evident, that this was an Anabaptist preacher. This behaviour of the priest afforded his majesty and all present not a little diversion :”* And as Protestant Pedobaptists are urged by this argument to admit the unwritten traditions of the Papists : so dissenters of the Pedobaptist persuasion are pressed upon the same footing by those of the church of England to comply with the ceremonies of that church, retained from the church of Rome, particularly by Dr. Whitby,† who having pleaded for some condescension to be made to dissenters, in order to reconcile them to the church, adds, “ and on the other hand, says he, if, notwithstanding the evidence produced, that baptism by immersion is suitable both to the institution of our Lord and his apostles; and was by them ordained to represent our burial with Christ, and so our dying unto sin, and our conformity to his resurrection by newness of life; as the apostle doth clearly maintain the meaning of that rite : I say, if, notwithstanding this, all our dissenters (i. e. who are Pedobaptists, he must mean) do agree to sprinkle the baptized infant; why may they not as well submit to the significant ceremonies imposed by our church? for, since it is as lawful to *add* unto Christ’s institutions a significant ceremony, as to diminish a significant ceremony, which he or his apostles instituted, and use *another* in its stead, which they never did *institute*; what reason can they have to do the *latter*, and yet refuse submission to the *former*? and why should not the peace and union of the church be as prevailing with them, to perform the one, as is their mercy to the *infant’s body* to neglect the other? Thus infant baptism is used as the grand plea for compliance with the ceremonies both of the church of Rome and of the church of England.”

Suppose a Protestant, who maintains the right to vary the law of baptism, should say to a Catholic priest—Sir, by what authority do you refuse the cup to the laity? Why do you not communicate in both kinds? Did not Christ and the primitive teachers administer the bread and the wine to all the communicants? But now you withhold the cup from private brethren. Your service in this rite, therefore, is but a half communion. Tell me, will you, by what power you have ventured to vary so materially from this sacramental law?

* Crosby’s History of the Baptists, vol. 4. p. 247, 248.

† Protestant Reconciler, p. 289,

The priest, in reply, admits the charge of innovation, and confesses, that in the beginning the elements were administered in both kinds to the whole brotherhood. But, says he, Christ left in his church the power to change his original laws, as she should think most conducive to the honour and prosperity of religion. And you, Protestants, whatever you say to the contrary, have assumed the same power to change the instituted forms of worship, as you deem best suited to the existing state of the church and world, and most conducive to the growth of Zion. You have ventured to change the original law for immersion, first into a rule for pouring, and then for sprinkling. The word of God has ever considered immersion and sprinkling as two distinct rites. But you have changed one for the other, or attempted to blend two ceremonies which the Scriptures have ever kept asunder. If our communion is but a half communion, your baptism is but a half baptism. If you have arguments to justify the great liberty you have taken with the law of baptism, these very arguments will answer just as well for us to vindicate our conduct in varying the pristine law of communion.

After sprinkling began to prevail in the church, strong opposition was made to it both by Episcopalians and Catholics.

Dr. Wall, after accounting for the change of immersion into sprinkling in Queen Elizabeth's day, says, "many learned men in several countries have endeavoured to retrieve the use of it, dipping."*

I am, &c.

LETTER XII.

ON THE APOSTOLIC COMMISSION.

Beloved Brethren,

Having gone through with our discussions on the *mode* of baptism, we will now proceed to the *subject*. This is confessedly the most material point of difference, be-

* He quotes Sotus, Mede, Bishop Taylor, Sir Norton, Knatchbull, Rogers, Walker, Dr. Towerson, Dr. Whitby and Sir John Floyer. See Wall, Part 2nd, Chap. ix. Second Edition.

cause it affects the whole system of church building. But after all my inquiries, I have been led to believe that infant baptism has no foundation in scripture. My reasons for this belief are now submitted for the candid consideration of the reader.

Infant baptism is not contained in the great commission given by Christ to the apostles, Matt. xxviii, 18, 19. "And Jesus came, and spake unto them, (his disciples) saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

This commission is the sacred statute, enacted and proclaimed by Christ, the great Lawgiver of Zion. By this divine canon all the ambassadors of Christ are to be regulated in their ministrations. As this law is the rule that Christ gave to guide his ministers, respecting the mode and the subject of baptism, we may presume that he would be plain and definite on these two important points. If then he meant that his apostles should baptize infants, he would without doubt have inserted a clause, that would have given them an unquestionable right to this ordinance. Would he not have said, "Go ye, &c. baptizing your disciples and their children in the name, &c.?" Without this explicit declaration in their favour, his apostles would have been extremely apt to suppose, that he did not intend to comprise them in their commission. Consider what they had been previously accustomed to witness, and to practise themselves, from the days of John, until the death of Christ. They, most or all of them, had been baptized by John without their families. In all the baptisms performed by this harbinger of Christ, they saw no households of children and servants baptized on the professed belief of their parents and masters. They had seen him rejecting those from baptism, who did not bring forth fruits meet for repentance. "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come!" "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." These apostles in the early part of Christ's ministry had been commissioned to go and preach the gospel to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And wherever they went they proclaimed the glad tidings of

the kingdom of God, and baptized none but adult believers. Few, if any, Pedobaptists pretend that the apostles, previous to the crucifixion of Christ, ever baptized any but professed believers. They did not then baptize believing parents with their unbelieving children and servants. Now since these apostles had never seen parents and their infants connected in baptism, neither in the ministry of John, nor in that of Christ; and since they had, for a considerable time before this, been teaching and immersing those only whom they taught, and that too under the eye and approbation of Christ, would they not most naturally suppose, that after his ascension he meant they should continue this same practice, so far as the mode and the subjects were concerned? In this renewed commission, it is true there were additions, but no changes. These were two: First, they were now authorized to pass the lines, that bounded Judea, and go into all nations, and preach the gospel to every creature; and second, the form of words, to be pronounced in the administration of this ordinance, was settled. With these additions, and under these circumstances, the apostles would naturally continue to use water in the same manner and upon the same subjects, as before. Is it rational to suppose, that these men, who all along had been accustomed to see infants omitted in this rite, as having no concern with it, and who themselves had been in the habit of excluding them, and that too under the eye and sanction of Christ, would, thus situated, suddenly embrace infants in baptism without some express command so to do from their Lord and Master?

This commission is not only silent on this subject, but its fair interpretation will lead us to exclude from this ordinance all, who do not exhibit to the eye of charity some evidence of faith and repentance. This commission enjoins two things,—1st, Teach all nations. 2nd, Baptize all the taught, or disciples. The command to teach, all agree, is limited to those, capable of instruction; because it would be making Christ a hard master indeed to say, that he required of his disciples impossibilities; namely, to teach babes and the insane. If then the command to teach, must be limited to those who are capable of instruction, must not the command to baptize, be limited also and confined to the taught? If this commission requires the baptism of ten, without faith and re-

penitance, why not ten thousand? If the commission be not limited as above, the command to baptize admits of no limitation. What could the apostles see in this commission, which would lead them to believe that Christ meant they should teach some to prepare them for baptism, and that they were at the same time to baptize some to prepare them for teaching? Should a recruiting officer, commissioned to enlist those, who were capable of bearing arms and of learning the science of war, on his return, inform the commander, that in some instances he enrolled those, who possessed the prescribed qualifications, while in most cases he enlisted babes and minors and whole households to bring them into the military school, and under the hope that they in some future period would become the subjects of all the requisite accomplishments;—would he not find some difficulty in defending this conduct when interrogated what he saw in his commission, which encouraged him to depart so materially from his instructions? Whatever this commission requires of some, as a prerequisite for baptism, it equally requires the same of all the candidates for this ordinance; consequently it excludes infants, because they are incapable of instruction, the essential qualification.

Some Pedobaptists say that the apostles would teach adults, and then baptize them and their children. This they say they would do, because they had all along been accustomed to household circumcision. But is not this saying that the apostles learned infant baptism, not from this commission, but from the law of circumcision? All such, as reason in this manner, abandon the commission, as affording any warrant for this practice. Others there are who say, as this commission enjoins the teaching and baptizing all nations, and as infants are component parts of all nations, therefore, this commission commands infant baptism. This mode of reasoning, you see, my brethren, places the right of infant baptism, not on the Abrahamic covenant, nor on the faith of parents, but on the membership in the great family of man. They are members of nations, they say, and therefore ought to be baptized. But the infelicity attending this argument is, that it proves too much, and therefore is good for nothing. It proves that we ought to baptize idiots, infidels, and the children of unbelievers, because all these are as truly parts, or members of all nations, as are the children of professors.

The Pedobaptists in general are at one time very sanguine, that this commission embraces infants, yet at another they seem to be equally sure, that it doth not embrace them. Thus when a Baptist objects to infant baptism, because they are incapable of the requisite qualification, and quotes this clause of the commission, viz. "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned," as proof that faith must be before baptism, his opponent promptly attempts to parry this objection, by saying, this clause respects adults and them only, and by no means has any respect to infants, because it would be reproachful to Christ, to say, that he threatens infants with final ruin, merely because they cannot believe and embrace his gospel. Here you see that his opponent joins with the Baptist, and maintains that this commission, as recorded by Mark, requires faith of all those, of whom it requires baptism. Now is not this granting all that we have attempted to prove, viz. that this commission does not embrace infants, and enforce their baptism? Would the Holy Ghost move the Evangelist Mark, to word this commission so as to exclude all infants, whilst this same Spirit moved St. Matthew to express it in such a manner, as to embrace all infants! If this be true, and if they both were guided by their respective commissions, then it must follow, that their practice would be correspondingly different: One would embrace and baptize infants, and the other would exclude them as not contained in his orders, and as incapable of the prerequisites for this ordinance.

We are sensible that Whitby, Peter Edwards, and many others, have said, that if the want of faith will exclude them from baptism, then the want of faith will exclude them from heaven, because, say they, faith is more strongly required for salvation, than for baptism. On all those who deny the right of infant communion this argument may be retorted thus: You exclude infants from the table, for want of faith to discern the Lord's body; but this reasoning will debar them from heaven—because Christ has more strongly required faith for salvation, than he has for communion. If, then, want of faith will shut infants from the Lord's supper, much more will it forbid their admission to future glory. But we trust that neither their reasoning nor ours will exclude them from the paradise of God.

I am, &c.

LETTER XIII.

INFANT BAPTISM NOT FOUND IN THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTLES,
NOR IN ANY PART OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Beloved Brethren,

In our last we endeavoured to show, that the great gospel commission demanded faith and repentance, as terms of admission into the church of Christ, and therefore did not comprise infants. Let us now proceed to examine the history of primitive times, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. If throughout this history, and every part of the New Testament, we find no solitary instance of the baptism of babes and children on the profession of their parents, and no allusion to such a ceremony, the presumptive argument is very strong, that no such practice then existed.

The inspired penmen often mention the baptism of adults, both men and women, and that too in great numbers; but they give no intimation of infant sprinkling. It is sometimes said, that it is unreasonable to look for any direction to baptize infants, because God had once given a command to circumcise them. But if this remark be correct, will it hence follow, that it would be equally unreasonable to expect to find some account that the apostles obeyed this ancient injunction, by applying to infants the same seal, as it is said to be, only in a milder form? If they thought there was a precept of this kind, it is not a little strange we are left without proof that it received their obedience. If this practice then prevailed, is it not passing strange, that all the sacred penmen should have passed over in profound silence all the many thousand cases of Pedobaptism, which must have occurred before their writings were brought to a close? Children, when they were parties in the narrated facts, were constantly mentioned. "Israel journied from Rameses to Succoth, about 600,000 on foot, that were men, besides *children*." "And they that had eaten were about 5000 men, besides women and children." Children sung hosannas to the Son of David. Children accompanied their parents on their way. Children are often mentioned in scripture, evidently for the purpose of swelling numbers, and for rendering the miracles of God the more illustrious. So-

when the inspired writers wished to magnify the power of the Gospel and its triumphant success, they were particular to specify sexes, and the multitudes, who embraced its offers. "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes, both men and women." If the apostles were in the habit of baptizing infants, and of adding them to the church, as some do now, then the children of those men and women might compose nearly half the number, who were added to the Lord. It is rather mysterious, that in their calculations they should have taken no notice of such a large accession, especially when we reflect that it was manifestly their design to exalt the power of grace, by showing the greatness of the numbers gathered into the kingdom of God. If on this occasion numberless children were brought within the pale of the church, how natural for the apostles to mention them, and to say, "believers and their households were added to the Lord, multitudes, both men, women, and children."

Let us proceed to recite to you, and remark on several passages of scripture, where the subject of baptism is introduced, to learn whether in any of them we can find support for Pedobaptism. "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." Acts ii. 38, 39. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." "Then they that gladly received the word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." Verse 41. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Verse 47. Here we see that Peter commanded the same persons to be baptized, whom he had previously exhorted to repent and believe; and there is not the least intimation, that he baptized any, except those who *gladly* received his word. The Lord added unto the church daily, such as should be saved. But if at the same time all the infants and unbelieving children, and servants of christian parents, and masters, were added to the church, would it have been safe to say of all those, who were then destitute of grace, that they were such as should be saved? Would it not have been hazardous for parents or masters to promise in behalf of all these infants and minors, that they should all repent and believe, when they knew not

but that some of them would grow up without rational powers, and others without any heart to embrace the Saviour?

I am aware, that the advocates of Pedobaptism employ the phrase, "For the promise is unto you and your children," as a strong proof of their system. They consider it as referring to the promise made to Abraham in the 17th Chap. of Genesis. Those whom the Apostle addressed were Jews and Gentiles, individuals out of divers nations. To these he says, "The promise is unto you and to your children." The definite article prefixed to this sentence, shows that the promise was great and well known. But in the covenant of circumcision there is no promise, that God would be a God to the Gentiles and to their seed, as well as to the Jews and to their seed. If the promise in the 17th of Gen. were as applicable to Gentiles as to Jews and to their children, then circumcision sealed the same blessings to Gentiles and to their seed, as it did to Jews and to their seed. How then could it become a mark of discrimination between Jews and Gentiles? On this plan, what advantage had the Jew above the Gentile? and what *peculiar profit* was there in circumcision? The promise, then, here mentioned, doth not, we believe, refer to the one mentioned in Genesis, but to the promise of the affusion of the Holy Ghost. That this is the promise, to which he alludes, will appear from an attentive perusal of the chapter.

The many thousands who were assembled at Jerusalem, were confounded and amazed, when they heard the Apostles, and others, preaching in all the various tongues which were spoken in their respective nations. Peter, perceiving their surprise, undertook to remove the ground of their astonishment. When they said, "What meaneth this?" he replied, "These men are not drunk as ye suppose, but this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. And it shall come to pass in the last days; (saith God) I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. And on my servants and on my handmaidens, I will pour out in those days of my spirit; and they shall prophesy." After saying much on the ascension of Christ, he adds, "This Jesus hath God raised up. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father *the promise* of the Holy

Ghost, hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." The promise of the Father to pour out his Spirit in the last days, may be found in Isa. xxxii. 15, 16, and xlv. 3. Jer. xxxi. 33, &c. "Christ repeatedly promised to send from his Father the Holy Ghost to his disciples. See John xiv. 16, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. Verse 26, But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things." Chap. xv. 26, But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father. Chap. xvi. 7, But if I depart, I will send him (Holy Ghost) unto you." When Christ ascended, he renewed the promise of the Holy Ghost, saying, "Behold I send the promise of my Father unto you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endowed with power from on high." See Luke xxiv. 49. For this promise of the Holy Ghost they waited. And when the Holy Ghost fell on them on the day of Pentecost, and they began to prophesy and to work miracles, Peter told the wondering strangers that what they then saw and heard was only the fulfilment of that promise of the effusion of the Holy Ghost, which Christ made to his disciples when he was taken up into heaven. "He, (i. e. Christ,) having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." See v. 33. He soon after exhorted them to repent and to be baptized for the remission of sins. And as a motive to obedience, he promised that they too should receive the Holy Ghost. To encourage their hope of this promise, he says, "the promise is unto you and to your children." Now as Peter had told them that what was then passing before their eyes was the fulfilment of the prediction of the miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost, and of the promise of Christ of the same thing, would they not naturally conclude that he had reference to the same promise, when he said, Ye shall receive the Holy Ghost, for the promise is unto you and to your children? His exhortation is this: God hath promised by the mouth of Joel, that he would, in the last days, pour out his Spirit on all flesh, and that miraculous things should follow, and Christ hath received of the Father the fulfilment of this promise, and is shedding forth the Holy Ghost as ye now see and hear; repent ye, therefore, and you shall receive

the Holy Ghost, the same which ye now see shed forth on us : for the same promise of the Holy Ghost is unto you and to your children.

The phrase "For the promise is unto you and to your children," Peter assigns as a motive for something. But for what, all are not agreed. Pedobaptists say that it is connected with the phrase, "repent and be baptized," and is given as a *motive for believing parents* to submit themselves and their infants to baptism. But Baptists say that it is connected with the phrase, "and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost, for the promise is unto you and to your children." Which is the most natural and the most consistent with the whole context, and with the construction of the passage, is submitted to the decision of the candid reader. He is desired to read the whole chapter.

Beside, let those, who use this text as an argument for infant sprinkling, prove, that *ta tekna*, rendered *children*, means here any thing more or less, than posterity. If it mean only posterity, then their argument will prove that if a man be converted when he is seventy years old, he must be baptized and all his children, though they are all unbelievers, and though they may be forty or fifty years old, because the promise is unto him and to his (*ta tekna*,) children. It is not unto him and to his infants and minors, but unto all his posterity, of every age and sex. If this promise respecting posterity generally, be a good argument why minors should be baptized, why is it not an equally good argument, that all the other posterity of believing parents should be baptized ?

Leigh, in his *Critica Sacra*, says *tekna* is a general word which, in scripture and other writers, is used to set forth all sorts of children, of whatever sex, of whatever age, of whatever degree soever they be. See him on the word.

Moreover, will not this exposition prove that all the children of believing parents will be saved ? because effectual calling is just as extensive as the promise. If then the promise be to all their posterity, then all their posterity will be called and saved.

See Acts viii. 12. "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." You will observe, that it is not said, men and women, and their children. Is there any evidence here that Philip baptized any who did not hear and be-

lieve what he preached concerning the name of Jesus and the kingdom of God?

Acts viii. 36, 37, 38, 39, "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing." Here Philip demanded of this man, faith as an essential pre-requisite for baptism—If thou believest, thou mayest. Is it probable then that he would admit other adults to this ordinance without making the same demand? But if he were a Pedobaptist, and determined the subjects of this rite by the law of circumcision, he might frequently baptize individuals in the households of professors, who gave no evidence of faith, though perhaps they were 60 or 70 years of age.

"And the morrow after they entered into Cesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends."—"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word."—"Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." Acts x. 24, 44, 47, 48.

Here we are informed that Cornelius had called in his kinsmen and near friends and neighbours. While they expected to wait some time for the arrival of Peter, it is likely they would take with them some of their infants and children. This is certainly as probable as it is that Lydia would take her children, if she had any, on a long voyage. If, then, Peter practised infant baptism, it seems rational to look for some account of it in this place. But we find that those who heard the word, received the Holy Ghost, and those were the only individuals, whom he commanded to be baptized.

Beside these places, the baptism of individuals is mentioned in Acts ix. 17, 18. xxii. 16. xviii. 8. xix. 5. In these passages we are directed to apply this rite to those only, who make profession of their faith.

But it may be asked, were not infants admitted to this ordinance, in those recorded instances of household baptism? These are three, the household of Stephanus, the Jailer, and that of Lydia. Let us, my brethren, examine them with fairness and candor.

The history which Paul has given of the first family, is sufficient to silence all arguments drawn from it in support of Pedobaptism. Says he, "Ye know the house of Stephanus, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." On this text Dr. Mc'Knight says, "The family of Stephanus seem all to have been adults, when they were baptized; for they are said to have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints." Dr. Guise remarks, "It therefore seems that the family of Stephanus were all adult believers, and so were all baptized on their own personal profession of faith in Christ."

What was the character of this house? They were the holy fruits of Paul's ministry. What was their employment? They exerted themselves in acts of charity, and in expressions of christian sympathy and affection towards the sick and afflicted. But this character and these labours of love cannot be predicated of infants.

An account of the Jailer and household we have in Acts xvi. 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34. "Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." Here we have the act of the jailer.—He brought them out; he inquired what he must do to be saved—He is directed, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." The meaning of this promise "cannot be (says Dr. Doddridge,) that the eternal salvation of his family could be secured by his faith, but that, if they also themselves believed, they should be entitled to the same spiritual and everlasting blessings with himself." Family Expos. We also learn from these words, of what characters his house-

hold consisted. "They spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to *all that were in his house.*" Here we find Paul in the jailer's house, instructing all, or preaching to all the members of the house. They *all* heard, they *all* believed, or rejoiced in God, and were *all* baptized. Before baptism, we find them *all* in the house; after baptism, we find the jailer led them back into his house. It is certain, then, that after sermon they went out of the jailer's house. But for what purpose, unless for baptism? Had they been sprinkled, then for this purpose there would have been no need of leaving the house; because one cup of water would have sufficed. Some have said, that fear of transgressing the injunction of the magistrates would have kept them from going out of the prison for baptism. But facts prove that this fear did not confine them. They came out of the inner prison, they went into the jailer's house, they went out of the house, and they entered it again. All this motion is certain. This fear, then, did not confine them during the night—nor did they on this ground refuse to leave the prison in the morning. But they meant to remain and humble those magistrates, who had infracted the laws by their false imprisonment, and oblige them to come in person and give them an honourable discharge. See ver. 37, 38. It is said that we have no proof that any of the jailer's family believed but himself. The apostle says, he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. If you say that you dined with the legislature, none would doubt but they ate as well as yourself. Should you say that you rejoiced with them at the ratification of peace, the idea would be taken, that you were both the subjects of joy. And if it were said, you believe *with* the congress of the United States, that Washington captured Cornwallis, no one from this mode of expression would doubt, but what they believed this intelligence, as well as yourself. So when it is said that the jailer rejoiced, believing in God *with all* his house, we are naturally led to conclude, that both he and they were the subjects of faith.* I will just add, my brethren,

* The adverb *πανοικι* some say means, domestically, i. e. he rejoiced, they say, not with his *family*, but in all the various apartments of his house. But in opposition to this strange notion, Josephus, Screevillius, Parkhurst, and others, say, this word is equivalent to the Greek words, *συν παντι οικω*, with all the house, and equivalent to the Latin words *cum tota domo cum tota familia*, with all the house, and so fully justify the correctness of our version.

that the manner in which Pedobaptists explain this text, will turn it into an argument to baptize a pagan woman, and admit her into the church. For if, as they say, no individual of this house believed but the jailer, and that all were baptized on his faith, then it is just as fair to say, that he had an idolatrous wife to baptize, as well as unbelieving children and servants. It was as likely that she was a component part of the family, as graceless children. Should a minister take this text, thus interpreted, for his guide, then if blessed to the conversion of an Indian sachem, who is the only believer over a numerous family, he must proceed to baptize him and his graceless companion, all his children and pagan servants, and incorporate them all into the church. And when he had done, he might say, in this conduct, I am borne out by the example of Paul, for he baptized the jailer's whole household, though in it he was the only believer. Wherever then I find a believing father, connected with an impenitent wife and children, I must comprise them all in the baptismal law, and by this rite initiate them all into the kingdom of God. This, says he, is the manner in which the apostle treated the household of an individual believer.

The next case to be considered, is that of Lydia. Before the baptism of her household can be made to bear on the point at issue, four things must be taken for granted. 1. That she at this time, or lately, had an husband. 2. That she had children, and children then in infancy. 3. That these children were then with her at Philippi. 4. That such children were actually baptized.

But, my brethren, where is the proof that any of these circumstances existed? What evidence is there that she was then, or recently, a married woman? If she had a companion, why did she, the weaker sex, take the management of their commercial concerns, and for traffic engage in a distant and perilous voyage? Why was he, in the history, cast entirely into the shade, while she appears as the only ruler and director of her domestic and public affairs? If she had children, who were then too young to act for themselves, where is the proof that they were then with her? She belonged to the city of Thyatira, in Asia Minor. Paul found her at Philippi, a city in Europe, whither she had travelled, and taken temporary lodgings, for the purpose of vending purple, which in those days was held in high demand. Now it seems

very improbable, that she should, with all her merchandise, take her little children, if she had any, on a journey of about 200 miles, performed mostly by sea.

Lydia's household comprised all the individuals who were first baptized within the boundaries of Europe; and the jailer's contained the second company of baptized individuals. The last, Paul and Silas left at the prison, when they went back and entered the house of Lydia. Here they saw, and comforted the brethren. But who were these brethren?—how came they in her house? What evidence have we, that they had, during the absence of Paul and Silas, collected from the neighbourhood? If there were believers interspersed in the city, it is all conjectural, that they were then assembled in her house. Who, then, the question returns, were those brethren, whom Paul and Silas comforted in the house of Lydia? Were they not those believing individuals, whom he baptized in her family, when he first landed in Europe? Dr. Whitby, on this place, says, "And when she, and those of her household, were instructed in the christian faith, in the nature of baptism required by it, she was baptized, and her household." The assembly of divines, in their annotations, and note on this text, say, that Paul and Silas entered into the house of Lydia, "doubtless to confirm *them* in the faith, which they had preached to them.—Lydia, and *hers*, hearing of their miraculous deliverance, could not but be comforted, and confirmed in the faith."

I am, &c.

LETTER XIV.

ON THE DESIGN OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

Beloved Brethren,

It is of the highest moment in this debate, that we should gain correct views of the sacred design of this religious rite. A mistake here, like the adoption of a wrong figure in mathematical calculations, will inevitably lead to a false result. But if we can ascertain from scripture the design or import of this institution, we can then the better determine in what mode, and to what subjects it was administered.

1. Baptism was designed to form the visible boundary between the world and the kingdom of Christ. Says Christ to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." By kingdom of God, I believe, is generally understood the visible kingdom of the Messiah on the earth; though the kingdom of glory may be included. Now for a regular, visible standing in this kingdom, Christ demanded two prerequisites. First, being born of water, or, which is the same thing, being baptized. And second, being born of the Spirit. All who gave evidence of possessing both of these, had a regular standing in the kingdom. But those who gave no evidence of grace, and were not the subjects of the baptismal birth, could not, according to Christ, enter into this kingdom of God. Hence it follows, that being born of water, or baptized, is the external sign which forms the dividing line between the church and the world.

In passing, we will pause to make two remarks. First, that if the gospel church, and the Jewish church, be one and the same, as some say, why then did Christ declare with reiterated emphasis, that Nicodemus must be born of water, and of the Spirit, in order to his entering into that kingdom in which he had long stood, and was at that very moment one of its distinguished officers? Can the question be answered, without admitting that these churches were different in their terms of admission?

Second, since Christ here makes the spiritual birth, as essential as the water birth, for admittance into this kingdom of God, will it not follow, that baptism alone, on a subject that gives no evidence of being born of the Spirit, cannot give that subject admittance into the kingdom of God? Does he not lack a qualification, without which Christ hath declared, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God? But can an infant give charitable evidence of this new birth, without which evidence none are to be received into the Church?

2. Baptism is designed to answer a good conscience toward God. Says Peter, "the like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,)" 1 Peter, iii. 21. The apostle here without doubt means, that baptism is the answer of a good conscience toward God in those, who are the sub-

jects of the ordinance. Peter doth not here say that it was the answer of a good conscience in some, but not in others. His definition is general, teaching us, that when baptism was received with right motives, it was in all such the answer of a good conscience toward God. Now if this be the design of baptism, must it not be confined to those who are capable of exercising a good conscience? Apply it to an idiot, and it would not in him be the answer of a good conscience. He does not know whether the ceremony is right or wrong, and of course his conscience neither approves, nor condemns the action. Let us suppose for a moment that Pedobaptism is true, and then in the millennium all parents are believers, and all children are baptized in infancy; when this is the case, will not this general definition of baptism cease to be true? will it any longer be the answer of a good conscience toward God? If any one will say that the answer of a good conscience is found not in the subject of baptism, but in the infant's parent, or sponsor, we will call upon him to exhibit, if he can, one syllable in the word of God, that gives the least proof that the good conscience is to be answered, not in the subject of baptism, but in his proxy. It is true, that in the baptism of an infant there may be a washing away of the filth of the flesh, but where is the answer of a good conscience toward God? Can it be found in that tender age, alike ignorant of the existence of God, and of all moral obligation? Beside, if all infants in the millennium are baptized, will not every ambassador of Christ then be under the necessity, when he recites his commission, to change the order of its words somewhat, to make it speak truly? Can he then say, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved?" or must he not reverse the order, and say, "he that is *baptized*, and *believes afterwards*, shall be saved." No one can with propriety retort and say, that in that day there will be no need of exhortations to believe and be baptized, unless he is prepared to maintain that all faith, in that happy period, will be miraculously produced in all infants as soon as they are born.

3. Baptism is designed to be a badge of our public profession. Says Paul, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." What is meant by putting on Christ? This text will be best explained by quoting parallel passages. "Put off, concern-

ing the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lust; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye may put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. iv. 22, 23, 24. Putting on Christ, then, means the same as putting on the new man; and this new man is created by the power of God, in righteousness and true holiness. Putting on Christ, is the same as having the heart and spirit renewed, and possessing so much of the temper and disposition of Christ, as to resemble him in his spirit and conduct. Mr. Locke explains the phrase, *putting on Christ*, thus: "God now looking on them, there appears nothing but Christ, they are, as it were, covered all over with him, as a man is with the clothes that he hath put on; and hence in the next verse it is said, they are all one in Christ Jesus, as if there were but that one person." But if Paul had baptized all the unbelieving children, and infants, and servants, of all the professors among the Galatians, who gave no evidence that they, by regeneration, had put on Christ, how could he in this case say, that "as many of you, or all of you, who have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ," when at the same time a great portion of those, who had been baptized, had never put on Christ? On the whole, does not the Apostle here teach us, that all who had been baptized into Christ, had exhibited qualifications, of which infants are utterly incapable of manifesting? They can exhibit no evidence, unless by miracle, that they have put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, with all his christian graces.

4. Baptism was designed to be a symbolical representation of our spiritual death, burial, and resurrection to newness of life. In this way it also becomes a sign of our fellowship and communion with Christ, in his death, and burial, and resurrection from the grave. This opinion of the design of baptism has been believed and supported by the most eminent divines in all ages of the church. In proof of this we could produce many testimonies. Says Dr. J. Goodwin, "The covenant there signified and represented by baptism, is not simply the blood of Christ as it washeth us from sin, there is a farther representation therein of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, in the baptized's being first buried under the water, and then rising out of it; and this is not in a bare

conformity unto Christ, but a representation of a communion with Christ in his death and resurrection." See Christ set forth, pp. 82, 83, as quoted by Booth. It seems that the apostle Paul was of this same opinion. Hence he says, "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 we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. vi. 3, 4. Mc'Knight, in his notes on this place, says, "Christ submitted to be baptized, that is, to be buried under the water, by John, and to be raised out of it again, as an emblem of his future death and resurrection. In like manner the baptism of believers is emblematical of their own death, burial, and resurrection. The burying of Christ and believers, first in the water of baptism, and afterward in the earth, is fitly enough compared to the planting of seeds in the earth, because the effect in both cases is a reviviscence to a state of greater perfection. Our baptism, setting these things before us, the daily recollection of it, ought to stir us up to every religious and virtuous action, that we may be meet for the society of God and Christ forever."

In Col. ii. 12, we read, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God." This same critic notes on these words: "Christ began his ministry with receiving baptism from John, to show in an emblematical manner, that he was to die, and to rise again from the dead. And after his resurrection he commanded his disciples to initiate mankind into his religion, by baptizing them, as he himself had been baptized, (and that the Dr. has told us, was by putting him under water,) to show that although they shall die like him, through the malignity of sin, yet as certainly as he rose from the dead, believers shall be raised at the last day. Wherefore his disciples, having been baptized, as he was, and for the very same purpose, they are fitly said to be *buried* with Christ in baptism; and in baptism to be *raised* with him."

If baptism be designed to be an expressive symbol of our spiritual death, burial, and resurrection, then immersion must be the mode. Change it into sprinkling, and this design vanishes from the view, and it ceases to be a sign of our fellowship with Christ. Who will pretend,

that opposite sets of symbols will equally well express the same ideas? We might as well say, that the declaration, John is buried in his grave, may be just as naturally and impressively expressed by this different combination of words, viz. John has had a few particles of earth scattered on his face.

If we are correct in our views of the import of baptism, then its application is fixed to believers. Apply it to a new born babe, is it then an outward sign, that the infant is the subject of spiritual death, that his *old man* is buried, that he has been raised to walk in newness of life, that he has repented and believed, that he has put on Christ, and is ingrafted into his mystic body, and that with him he holds a spiritual and sensible communion and fellowship? I know that some say that baptism when applied to adults is a sign of inward purity, but when applied to an infant, it is a sign that it is polluted, and needs cleansing. What evidence have we, my brethren, that baptism is designed to signify one thing, when applied to one person, but a different thing when applied to a different individual? Do the scriptures teach us that it is in some the sign of inward purity, but in others the sign of inward pollution, and the need of renovation?

I am, &c.

LETTER XV.

THE DESIGN OF CIRCUMCISION CONSIDERED, AND SHOWN TO
BE DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF BAPTISM.

Beloved Brethren,

We are sensible that much has been said and written respecting the covenant of grace, and the covenant of circumcision. Some have maintained their identity; others, their individuality. For the present, we shall pass this debate, because even should we admit the oneness of these two covenants, we should not be obliged to adopt infant baptism as the legitimate consequence of this admission. For if circumcision and baptism be different in their nature and design, then there is no conclusive reasoning from the former to the latter.

The reasoning, on the covenant of circumcision, if we rightly apprehend, is this: This covenant is spiritual and

everlasting. In it God promised to make Abraham the spiritual father of a spiritual seed, among his natural descendants, and that circumcision was a pledge from God that he would faithfully execute this promise; that in this promise all successive believing parents became interested, and that circumcision was performed on their children as the renewed pledge that God would be faithful to them respectively, in rearing up a spiritual seed in their posterity. This same promise is made, they say, to christian parents and to their seed, and therefore baptism, the changed seal of this covenant, must be administered to their children, as a continued pledge from God that he will keep his word and make them the spiritual parents of a spiritual seed.

Now this process of argument takes for granted two things which require proof, and which are by no means conceded: viz. 1. That circumcision was a sacred pledge from God, that he would rear up to each believing parent a spiritual seed among his posterity; and 2. That baptism is a substituted pledge for the same things. If both these positions are on examination found to be incorrect, then all arguments drawn from them must be equally incorrect and inconclusive. Or, in other words, if circumcision were not intended to be a divine pledge to parents, that they should become spiritual fathers to a spiritual offspring, and if baptism be not its substitute, but is different in its nature and design, then the supposed similarity between the two rites vanishes; and all arguments in favour of infant baptism, resting on this supposed similarity, fall to the ground.

I do not deny but God has made many gracious promises to believing parents, respecting their seed. But I believe circumcision was not designed as a pledge from him that he would fulfil them. For if it were to be so viewed in relation to one parent, without doubt it must be so viewed in relation to all parents. Hence, upon this plan, Ishmael, when he became a parent would have a right to consider his circumcision as a pledge from God, that he had entered into the same covenant with him, that he had made with his father, and that he, on given conditions, was to become a spiritual father of a numerous spiritual seed, and that God would collect a church out of his descendants. But you see, my brethren, that all this is directly in opposition to the word of God. It is there

said, to the exclusion of Ishmael, "But my covenant will I establish with *Isaac*." It is true that he was blessed, and was to be multiplied exceedingly, and to become a great nation; but these blessings were not conferred on him because God had made with him a covenant similar to that with Abraham. Did circumcision seal to the sons of Abraham, by Keturah, that they too should become spiritual fathers, and that the covenant of grace should descend in their line? Had Esau a right to view his circumcision as a pledge from God, that he would take out of his natural posterity a holy seed, a peculiar people? If this be true, why was not Esau's standing as good as Jacob's? Upon this plan both were in the same covenant, both had the same promises, and both had the same pledge of their fulfilment. But what saith the scriptures on this point? "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called—The children of the promise are counted for the seed. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Rom. ix. 7, 13.

When this rite was performed upon the children of Ishmael, of Esau, of the sons of Keturah, and on the children of heathen proselytes, was it to these parents respectively a sacred pledge from God, that he had established the covenant of circumcision with them, and that he would on certain conditions fulfil to them, and to their children, its promises? If this be true, then each of these individuals was as truly in this covenant, as was Abraham; and when they like him believed in Christ, then they might plead the covenant promise, that God would make them, respectively, exceedingly fruitful; that they should become the renowned ancestors of nations and kings; that they in their turn should become Abrahams, and be the spiritual fathers of all born into the kingdom after them; the inheritors of the promised land, and the heirs of the world. For all these blessings, and more, were promised to Abraham, and if they stood exactly in the same covenant with him, then certainly they would become heirs to the same promised blessings. Now if circumcision did seal covenant blessings to these individuals, why then were they so often excluded the covenant? It is said, "in Isaac," not in Ishmael, "in Jacob," not in Esau, "will I establish my covenant. The

son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman."

Nor was circumcision, when applied to the seed of believers after Abraham's time, a pledge from God that he would fulfil to them respectively and in succession the same promises, which he had made to Abraham in the 17th chapter of Genesis; because, as before, on this plan each believing parent could, while standing in the place of Abraham, claim by promise great earthly prosperity, a large landed estate, a numerous offspring, the honour of being the parent of kings and nations, the heir of the world, and father of the church. The truth is, as Dr. Emmons hath well observed, "there is no evidence, in the New-Testament, that believers are now in the covenant of circumcision; but clear evidence to the contrary. For, they are neither under obligation to perform the duties of that covenant, nor entitled to any of its peculiar blessings. The bond of that covenant does not lie upon them; for they are not required to *circumcise* either themselves or their families. And it is equally evident, that they are not entitled to any of the peculiar blessings of that covenant. In that covenant, God promised to give Abraham a numerous posterity; but he makes no such promise to believers under the gospel. In that covenant, God promised, that Abraham's seed should possess the land of Canaan; but he makes no such promise to believers under the gospel. In that covenant, God promised, that Abraham's seed should enjoy great *temporal* prosperity; but he makes no such promise to believers under the gospel. In that covenant, God promised, that the Messiah should descend from his family; but that promise was fully accomplished at the incarnation of Christ."

But it is time to express positively our belief, respecting the design of circumcision.—1st. It was designed to prefigure the necessity of regeneration,—Rom. ii. 28, 29. "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew which is one inwardly: and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Gal. vi. 15. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Col. ii. 11. "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made

without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." This rite, when applied to infants, was designed to show the want of a new heart, not the actual possession of it.

2. Circumcision was a seal from God of the righteousness of Abraham's faith, which he had previous to his receiving that rite. Or, in other words, circumcision was to be, in all its repetitions, a pledge from God, that all who believed in Christ should have this their faith imputed to them for righteousness, in lieu of perfect obedience. Circumcision spoke this gospel truth, whether put upon Isaac or Ishmael, Jews or Gentiles. In all its exhibitions, it held up the gracious encouragement, that those who believed in Christ, of whatever nation, should be counted righteous persons, and be delivered from the curse of the law.

That this view of the design of circumcision is correct, is confirmed by what is said in the fourth chapter of Romans. In this chapter the apostle treats of the blessedness of those whose faith is imputed to them for righteousness without the deeds of the law. Says he, verse 3d, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." Ver. 6—12, "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only; or upon the uncircumcision also? For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the *righteousness of the faith* which he had, yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision to them, who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had, being uncircumcised." Here we are taught that the blessedness of having faith imputed for righteousness came upon Abraham before he was circumcised, and that it was thus imputed before this rite for several reasons. And 1st,

That this righteousness of faith might be sealed by circumcision; 2nd, That he might become the father of all them that believe, whether Jews or Gentiles; that righteousness might be imputed to them also. In the last part of this chapter we learn, that an account of this imputation and sealing of the righteousness of faith was not written for Abraham's private interest only, but for the benefit of his spiritual children. Verses 23, 24, "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him. But for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." Here we learn that circumcision sealed the great gospel truth, that faith in the promised seed, the Messiah, should be counted for righteousness; and that this seal of the righteousness of faith was exhibited for the design to instruct and comfort all succeeding believers, to the coming of Christ. It was a seal of the general gospel truth, that faith in Christ should be imputed for righteousness. It spoke this gracious language to Jew and to Gentile.

From this view of the design of circumcision, let us turn to baptism, and see if this rite be designed for the same thing. If it be a seal of the same truth, a sign of the same thing, and the same pre-requisite for admission into the church, then there may be some safety in reasoning from one to the other.

Where then is the passage in the whole New-Testament that teaches us, or that will lead us fairly to conclude that baptism is the seal of the righteousness of faith? It is no where called a seal of the covenant, or of the righteousness of faith, or a sign of faith, or token to recognize, as Pedobaptists say, the constituted relation between believing parents and their children. No intimation is given that it was intended as a pledge from God that he would fulfil to professing parents the same promises which he made to Abraham.

Let us now more briefly show the difference between these two rites. Circumcision was a mark of national distinction; but baptism is a mark to distinguish individual saints from sinners. Circumcision was generally a sign of the want of a new heart; but baptism is an outward sign of that, which already exists. Circumcision *looked forward* to something to come; but baptism looks *back* to something already come. Circumcision was *typical*, bap-

tism *commemorative*. Circumcision was a seal of the *righteousness* of *faith*, but baptism is no such seal. Circumcision was expressly confined to males, but baptism is to be applied to believers of both sexes. Circumcision did not demand faith and repentance as prerequisites for its reception; but the law of baptism demands of all faith as a qualification for its due reception. Circumcision might be administered by any private head of a family; but baptism is to be administered only by regular ministers of Christ. Baptism is an outward sign of our communion and fellowship with Christ; but circumcision was generally an outward sign that the subject of it was not yet prepared for this union and fellowship with Christ. By comparing these two rites, it is easy to see that they were different in nature, design and practical purposes. This difference between the two ceremonies destroys the force of the whole system of analogical reasoning from one to the other.

I am, &c.

LETTER XVI.

MORE SCRIPTURE PASSAGES CONSIDERED.

Beloved Brethren,

Having attended to the history of the church, as recorded in Acts, I will now proceed to some other passages in the word of God, which are viewed as favouring Pedobaptism.

The first that I shall mention, is the text in Jer. xxx. 20. "Their children also shall be as aforetime." Great reliance has been made on these words, as supporting Pedobaptism. But let any one consult the context, and he will be satisfied that it contains a prediction of the restoration of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon. See verse 18. "Thus saith the Lord, behold I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents—and the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain," &c. Says Pool, "This verse manifestly is a promise of the rebuilding of the city, and was fulfilled in the times of Ezra." In commenting on the 20th verse, he remarks, "Their posterity also shall be as happy, and in as much repute as they were before this carrying into Baby-

lon." This verse contains a promise long since fulfilled, and has no reference to infant baptism.

The next that I shall mention, is the famed text, found in Mark x. 14. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." Mr. Scott and others grant that these children had not been admitted to baptism. They came there unbaptized. They were not brought to receive that ceremony, but to obtain his blessing. When Christ had prayed and blessed them, they went away, as they came, unbaptized. All these circumstances, one would think, were rather forbidding to Pedobaptism. They *were not* baptized before they were brought; they were *not* brought for this purpose; they did *not* receive it while present; and *without* it they retired. It is difficult to see how all these *negatives*, respecting infant baptism, can be framed into an argument to enforce that practice.

I know it is said that their membership in the kingdom of heaven, is the ground on which this rite is supported. Here a question arises, what is meant by the kingdom of heaven? If it here mean the future world of glory, as is most likely, then another question arises, what constituted these children heirs of that kingdom? Was it the faith of their parents? Then it will follow, that all infants of unbelieving parents, when they die, are lost forever! because their parents were destitute of that faith, which would have made their children heirs of life. But if they were constituted heirs of the kingdom of heaven, by circumstances common to all infants, then the argument drawn from this text becomes too sweeping; it will enforce the baptism of all infants, whether their parents are christians or infidels.

In our remarks thus far on this text, we have employed what logicians would call "argumentum ad hominem," or have taken our opponents on their own ground. They consider the word *such* as a term, which in this place expresses identity, but not comparison. This opinion of theirs is by no means certain. The question is, did Christ mean to say, the kingdom of heaven is made up in part of these identical children? Or of those adult individuals who were like these little children, not in age and size, but in a humble and docile spirit? If the word *such* here expresses comparison, and not identity, then the passage affords no support to Pedobaptism. In the

context, and other places, Christ used the words *such, as, like, &c.* in relation to children, not as terms of identity, but to express that resemblance, which in several points exists between christians and little children. "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted and become *as* little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself *as* this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." No one supposes that Christ here meant to teach that we must shrink into the *size* and age of little children, but that we must in certain points resemble them in the temper of our heart. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God *as* a little child, he shall not enter therein." Does not Christ here mean to say, that adults must receive the kingdom of God in that humble, meek, and depending temper, which will make them appear *like* or *as* little children? So when he said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven," he used the word *such*, we believe, as a term of comparison. This some deny, and say, that the words *of such*, are equivalent to the words of *the same*. According to this, let us see how the text will read. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," for these *same* little children "are the kingdom of heaven." Did he then mean to say, that these little children constituted the kingdom of heaven? From the absurdity which results from saying the word *such* expresses identity, we conclude that it must express *resemblance*. A comparison is instituted. But between whom? between two sets of children, or between children and adults? Let the comparison be between children and adults, and the sense is natural. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such, [as resemble them] is the kingdom of heaven. You will not, my brethren, suppose that by these remarks, I mean to argue against the salvation of infants. Yea, to them I view this very passage as peculiarly auspicious. Christ took them up in his arms, and blessed them, and said, of such, or of those who are like them, is the kingdom of heaven. Mr. Scott, and others, tell us that these children had been circumcised, and this rite was not then abolished, and therefore their baptism was unnecessary and improper. Why then was not baptism unnecessary and improper for any

of the immediate disciples of our Lord? They too had been circumcised.

The next passage on which I shall remark is found in 1 Cor. vii. 12, 13, 14. "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman that hath an husband, that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. 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." It appears from a careful inspection of this chapter, that in Corinth some doubted the propriety of entering or continuing in the marriage state, under any circumstances. They wrote to Paul, desiring him to solve their scruples. In reply, he took up several cases, told the believer not to leave his or her unbelieving companion, and then gave his reason for this direction: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband." Here we are told that the unbelieving husband is sanctified by or to the wife. To sanctify, is to make holy. The unbelieving husband then is made holy. This holiness cannot mean internal purity, because he was an unbeliever. His holiness must be either a ceremonial, or a civil holiness.

The same kind of holiness, possessed by the father, is without doubt conveyed to his children. If then both the unbelieving parent and his children possess the same ceremonial holiness, why not admit both to the same rite? Both have the same qualifications. If the holiness of the children be a good argument, as Pedobaptists say, why they should be baptized, why is it not an equally good argument to enforce the baptism of the unbelieving husband or unbelieving wife? Here is a child and his mother, both possessing the same kind and the same degree of holiness. Will you admit the child into the visible church because he is sanctified and made holy, while you repel the mother, though she be equally holy? Should she ask you to tell her, how you proved that her holiness was no reason why she should be admitted to the ordinances of the church, while you maintained that the holiness of her child was the sole reason, why he was received, would you not find it somewhat difficult to make a satisfactory reply? Could you invalidate the claims of the mother,

without equally invalidating the claims of the child? But if the holiness of the unbelieving partner be civil, as I believe, or that which sanctifies the marriage bond, the same kind must be imparted to the children, and then this text furnishes no ground for Pedobaptism.

Before we can accede to the exposition usually given to this text, we wish to have the following objections removed.

1. The usual manner of construing the passage places the right of infants to baptism on the legality of marriage. It is, if I mistake not, agreed that the sanctity imparted to the unbeliever, is that something which consecrated the marriage bond. Now the apostle has told us that without this sanctification of the matrimonial state, their children would have been unclean; "else were your children unclean," i. e. as some say, not fit for baptism. But restore this sanctity, and then their children would have been clean, i. e. fit for baptism. Is not this placing their right to this ordinance on the legality of marriage? On this plan, if David and Bethsheba were now living, their first child could not be admitted to this rite, notwithstanding all the faith and penitence of his father, because it was begotten out of wedlock.

In passing, I will just observe, that I do not suppose the sanctity which the apostle here mentions came into existence after one of the parties became a believer; but it was commensurate with their marriage bond. To say that it began at the conversion of one of the parties, would be nullifying, at one sweeping stroke, every marriage contract throughout the pagan world.*

2. This exposition perpetuates that ceremonial uncleanness, which God has removed. "Else were your children unclean." That is, say they, possessed of the ceremonial uncleanness, which existed between the Jews and Gentiles, and which render them unfit for the congregation of Israel. But this kind of uncleanness before this, was done away by the express command of God. See Acts x. 15. "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." This was said in immediate reference to the Gentiles, and with a design to convince Peter that he might go and preach to Cornelius, a Gentile, because that ceremonial uncleanness, which had long subsisted

* The verb in the original is in the perfect passive time. The unbelieving husband *has been made* holy by the wife.

between them and the Jews was abolished. But do not those perpetuate this distinction, who maintain that the children of non-professors are unclean like the ancient Pagans, in relation to the Jews?

3. This exposition involves the absurdity that the brethren at Corinth knew that their children were holy, and had baptized them as such, when at the same time they were ignorant of the existence of the very cause which made them holy. The unbelieving husband is sanctified by or to the wife, else, or if it were not so, your children would be unclean, but now are they holy. Here we are taught, my brethren, that the sanctity of the marriage bond was the very cause of the holiness of their children. But of this sanctifying cause they were wholly ignorant. Yea, they strongly feared that their marriage union was unholy. Yet it is said that those very parents had gotten their children baptized as holy. But what could lead them to believe their children were holy, and to treat them as such, when at the same time they were wholly ignorant of the very and only cause of their holiness, viz. the holiness of their marriage covenant?

Finally, the interpretation usually put on this text makes Paul reason at a singular rate. It makes him assign the baptism of infants as an argument to prove the sanctity of the married state, between a believer and an unbeliever. It represents him as virtually saying to those doubting christians at Corinth, "You, my brethren, might have known that your scruples, respecting cohabiting with your unbelieving partners, were altogether groundless, if you had only reflected how I baptized your children, when with you, and considered them as holy members of the church, which I never should have done, had not your continuance in marriage been proper. By baptizing your children, I furnished you with a sure argument that your marriage was lawful."

To conclude, my brethren, we observe, if the holiness here mean federal holiness, the text proves too much; and if it mean civil, it proves nothing to the point. Take it as you please, it gives no aid to Pedobaptism.

Col. ii. 11. "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ." This text is cited as proof that baptism is substituted for circumcision. But this circumcision is said to

be made *without hands*, but baptism is made *with the hands*. This circumcision consisted in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, but not in washing away the filth of the flesh by water baptism. It is said to be made by Christ, but baptism is performed by man. Hence we conclude, that the circumcision mentioned in the last part of this verse is wholly spiritual, and therefore not synonymous with baptism.

If baptism was to occupy the place of circumcision, why have we not somewhere an account of this substitution? Circumstances often existed, which seemed imperiously to demand an explicit avowal of this change of seals. Why was not this substitution recognized by the first council, who convened for the express purpose of settling the question, whether those very individuals, who had been baptized, ought not also to be circumcised? If these early christians had understood this substitution, why then did such a question ever arise? and why did not these Apostles put down this question by this broad declaration?—"These brethren at Antioch have all been baptized, and received the milder seal, which you all know Christ appointed in lieu of circumcision, why then clamour any longer about that bloody and vacated rite." Read the summary of the result of this council, in Acts xxi. 25. "As touching the Gentiles, which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing;" *i. e.* no such thing as circumcision. What, no such thing? When if they were Pedobaptists, they believed that baptism was the same in nature, same in design, same in import, the same seal of the same covenant, the same door into the same church, and to be applied to the same subjects? Yet, strange to say, these very churches are directed to observe no such thing as circumcision.

The Jews were informed that Paul denied circumcision to children. Why did he not exonerate himself, by saying, true, I do not apply the bloody rite, but you know that I sprinkle them as a substitute. When he entered Jerusalem, they said to him, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of the Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous of the law: and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews that are among the Gentiles, to forsake Moses, saying, that *they ought not*

to circumcise their children ; neither to walk after the customs." Acts xxi. 20, 21.

On these words, Dr. Baldwin justly remarks, in his Letters to Dr. Worcester, "Two things are plain from the above passage. 1. That the Jewish believers still continued to circumcise their male children, and therefore not at all likely that they baptized them in the room of circumcision. Had they not been still in the practice of circumcision, they certainly would not have blamed the apostle for neglecting it. 2. Notwithstanding their zeal for the continuance of circumcision among such Jews as embraced Christianity, and had been baptized, they totally disapproved of its being urged upon the Gentile churches.

Had the Apostle, Sir, understood the subject precisely in the same light as you do, it would have been the easiest thing in the world for him to have satisfied his brethren entirely, unless they were as obstinate as the Baptists. Could he, consistently with truth, have availed himself of the second part of your conclusion, it would have done the work at once. What could they have said, had he boldly insisted, with you, that "the infant seed of the church are now as proper subjects for the seal of the covenant, in the form of baptism, as anciently they were for the same seal in the form of circumcision?" They must have either denied his statement, or been entirely silenced by it.

And is it not unaccountable, that this happy thought should have wholly escaped the Apostle? Yes, Sir, perfectly unaccountable, that neither at *Antioch*, nor before the *council*, nor at this time when the subject was again revived, a solution so perfectly natural and easy, as that proposed by you, should not in the whole course of the debate have occurred to his recollection? I am persuaded, Sir, had you been on the spot with your present views, they would have felt the force of your eloquence, if you had not convinced them." Baldwin's Letters, pp. 136, 137.

Another passage which has been much employed in this debate, is found in Rom. ix. 16. 24. "For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches."

On these words we will propose some questions: 1. What is meant by first fruits? Probably, the Apostles, and

first converts to Christianity. 2. What kind of holiness did this first fruit possess? Internal and spiritual; but not ceremonial. 3. What is meant by the lump? The whole mass, or nation, of the broken off, or rejected Jews. 4. What did the Apostle mean, when he said, the lump also? The reader will observe, that the words *is* and *holy*, are not in the original, but are supplied by the translators. Various versions, and the best critics, teach us, that the supplied verb *is*, should be in the future tense, *shall be*; the lump shall be also holy. The Apostle certainly did not mean to say, that this lump of rejected Jews was *then* possessed of internal holiness; nor did he, as we believe, mean to say, that they were then ceremonially holy; because they were then under the anathema, or curse of God. The gathering of the first fruit, or first Jewish converts, Paul viewed as a divine intimation, that the whole lump of broken off Jews would be made *intrinsically holy* at their restoration, or millennial harvest. Of this opinion was the pious Mr. Baxter; says he, "If God hath accepted those Jews which are believers, who are to the whole nation but as the first fruits to the lump, he will accordingly accept the nation, when they come to Christ, as we have done, and as he accepted Abraham and their believing ancestors, he *will* also accept them. And if those Apostles be honoured of God as holy, who from them are sent with the gospel into the world, so *shall* the broken branches be when they are restored." See his Paraphrase on the New Testament.

You see, my brethren, that Paul is here reasoning about a few pious Jews, called first fruits, and the whole community of rejected Israelites. What can you see in all this, which has any relation to infant baptism? If the early conversion of these few individuals, was an earnest that the whole excommunicated body were in due time to be made holy, will it hence follow, that each believing Gentile parent becomes a first fruit, or root, in relation to his natural seed, and that they are a holy lump, or holy branches? This would be saying more of the children of professors, than was said of the rejected Jews. Of them it was predicted, that they should be holy at their restoration. If the conversion of a few Jews to the christian faith, be viewed by Paul as a merciful intimation that God will convert the whole scattered tribes, are we from this to infer that each believing parent becomes a holy root,

a spiritual father, and all his household the holy lump, or holy branches in the church? Such an inference is not contained in the premises, and is unnatural and inconclusive. It is certainly foreign from the subject which Paul was discussing.

It is said, that as the Gentile converts were inserted into the good olive tree, hence it must follow, that the privileges in relation to households, which belonged to the rejected branches, must also belong to those who were newly ingrafted. This mode of reasoning goes on the ground that the olive tree symbolizes the church as formed by the covenant of circumcision. This, however, is not granted.* But for a moment let it be granted that the olive tree is a type of the church as it existed from Abraham to Christ, and the above argument will ruin itself by proving too much. Says Mr. Innes on this text, "We must not only bring in all the children of converted Gentiles, but all their slaves; and we must not only admit the children to baptism, but, on the same principle, admit them to the Lord's table. Few, however, would think of carrying the argument this length, though there appears not a doubt, that this passage furnishes as fair an argument for these practices, as it does for infant baptism. Again is it alleged, that if you abridge the privileges of Christians by depriving their offspring of the seal of the covenant, you will thus throw a stumbling block in the way of the Jews? I reply, will you not throw a similar stumbling block in their way, by not admitting these children to the Lord's supper, seeing the event it commemorates is so directly compared to the passover of old, of which all the members of the Jewish family were

* Says Dr. Austin, "The reinsertion of these broken off branches into the good olive tree, (alluding to the restoration of the Jews,) can mean no less than their occupying the place, which they held, before they were broken off. Occupying this place, they necessarily partake of the fatness of the olive tree. This is the blessing, the entire blessing secured in the promise. But the land of Canaan is expressly a part of this blessing. Their being brought back then under the covenant, must necessarily restore them to the enjoyment of this land." *View of the Economy of the Church of God.* chap. xiv. p. 305.

If this reasoning be correct, it follows that Gentile believers cannot be considered as ingrafted into the olive tree, because they do not inherit the land of Canaan, which is expressly a part of the blessing, secured in the promise, and represented by the fatness of the olive. *Judson's Sermon on Chr. Bap.* p. 29, 3d Edit.

allowed to participate? The whole argument proceeds on the *fallacious* supposition, that the Apostle cannot contrast the character and conduct of adult Jews, who are moral agents, with that of Gentiles of the same description, without including the infants of both, who are not moral agents. But, I conceive, on this passage we may even go a little farther, and say, not only is there no allusion to children here, but the reasoning is such, that children cannot be included. The apostle is only speaking of those who are capable of believing, or being guilty of unbelief. Hence, if we attend to his argument, so far is it from countenancing infant baptism, that it may, perhaps, fairly be viewed as leading to the very opposite conclusion. Thus, the branches broken off, represented those Jews separated on account of the personal guilt of *unbelief*; the branches grafted in, denoted those Gentiles who *believed*, as they stood by faith. Would it not be a plain inference from this figurative language, that they only of the Gentiles became partakers of the root who were capable of faith? in other words, those who professed faith were alone considered as the spiritual seed of Abraham." [Conversations, pp. 173. 179.]

I am, brethren, yours, &c.

LETTER XVII.

SOME OBJECTIONS TO THE PRACTICAL TENDENCY OF PEDOBAPTISM STATED.

Beloved Brethren,

We beg leave to submit for your consideration, some remarks which we have to make on the natural tendency of the theory we oppose.

And 1st. We object to Pedobaptism, because it militates against the grand object of the new dispensation, namely, to advance the gospel church to a higher state of purity, than what obtained in the Jewish church.

There are several passages, which teach us that the kingdom of God under the present economy, is to be elevated in purity and spirituality much above the ancient congregation of Israel.

Matt. iii. 10. "And now also the *axe* is laid unto the *root* of the *trees* : therefore every tree which *bringeth not forth good fruit*, is hewn down and cast into the fire." Verse 12, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will *thoroughly purge* his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner." Eph. ii. 15. "To make in himself of *twain*, one *new man*, so making peace." Verse 21. "In whom all the building *fitly framed* together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." Chap. iv. 16. "From whom the whole body *fitly joined together* and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of *every part*, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love." Chap. v. 26, 27. "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he *might sanctify* and cleanse it with the *washing* of water by the word : That he might present it to himself, a glorious church, not having *spot* or *wrinkle*, or any such thing ; but that it should be *holy* and without *blemish*." 1 Pet. ii. 5. "Ye also, as *lively stones*, are built up a *spiritual house*, an holy priesthood, to offer up *spiritual sacrifices*, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

Now, my brethren, let us grant for a moment that the whole world are all Pedobaptists, then after this, the church will, in all instances, be built, not of *living* and spiritual stones, but of infants, who are incapable of manifesting moral life. Whatever change may pass on these infants after baptism, it must be granted, that for aught we know, they were *dead* materials and inwardly *unholy* at the time they were incorporated into the holy temple of God. On this plan the builders of Zion frame nothing into her walls but *lifeless stones*. Tell me, will you, my brethren, how this continued addition of moral death can preserve and augment her moral life ? How can the continued accession of such a mass of spiritual *impurity* augment her sanctity ? A missionary under God converts an Hindoo Rajah, he proceeds to baptize all his children, all his Pagan wives and servants, and builds them all upon Christ, the foundation of Zion. This must be the consistent practice of all those, who take the law of circumcision for their guide, to determine the subjects of baptism. Now would not this missionary find the work of self-defence somewhat difficult, if the great Apostle Paul should return, and say to him, Have you, as a wise builder on this foundation, taken heed how you have builded ? Have you been careful to

select only the *gold* and the *silver*? Or have you not knowingly built thereon, principally with *hay*, *wood* and *stubble*? Does the enlargement of the church, with such unholy materials, tend directly to preserve and advance her internal purity? Or will not the introduction of such an assemblage of pollution so defile the temple of God, that it will need cleansing, yet so as by fire?

2. We object to Pedobaptism, because it infringes that personal freedom of choice, which the gospel vouchsafes to each individual.

Says Paul, "who art thou, that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." Rom. xiv. 4. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom. x. 10. Religion is a personal concern, and lies between God and the soul. It must spring from the free exercises of the heart, as excited by the spirit of the Lord. Under the hand of restraint or compulsion it dies away, and its ceremonies, without the heart, become like the sounding brass or the tinkling cymbal.

Let us proceed, my brethren, to inquire whether the system of Pedobaptism will not detract from the rights of conscience.

To-day a believing parent gets all his children sprinkled and incorporated into the church. As they advance in years and knowledge, he continues to instruct them, and to call on them to acknowledge the validity of their baptism, and to embrace the creed, and to submit to the practice of the church. But it so happens that these children, while reading for themselves, are led to believe that sprinkling is not the mode, nor infants the subjects of that baptism, which Christ appointed. The parent continues his fruitless labors. He calls in the aid of the church, but nothing avails. These children refuse compliance. But still they give good evidence that they are conscientious. This church has then within her walls several individuals, who refuse to adopt that belief and to obey those laws, which give her visibility. What must be done? Will not a strict and consistent adherence to the law of circumcision require their expulsion? Should they carry their system out, and anathematize these individuals, would they not tax the rights of conscience by the infliction of a punishment, more tremendous than any other within the power of the church?

Take another case. Suppose that a parent has half a dozen children all under age, and all belong to his house. They are all the subjects of grace, and some of them in opinion are Baptists, and the rest Quakers. Soon after this their parents both are converted, and join a Pedobaptist church. They are required to bring all their children for baptism and admission. How shall this case be managed? The children are all minors, all under the control of their parents, and all residing in the house; but they have all chosen a different religion. Now, says a Pedobaptist, to guide us in this difficult case, we must take the law of circumcision. It has never been repealed, and that required the believing parent to apply this rite to all in his house, capable of its reception; hence, says he, all that we find within the walls of the family, we must comprise in the baptismal law. What would have become of those children, who grew up in the wilderness, had they refused to be circumcised by Joshua, because they professed to differ from their fathers in their religious opinions? The law speaks with a plainness, that no one can misapprehend. "The uncircumcised man child—shall be cut off from his people, he hath broken my covenant." To dedicate offspring in baptism, is the sacred duty of parents which they owe to the church, and to their God. In this ceremony children, while minors, are to be considered as passive as the infant of eight days old. The scruples therefore of these children, continues he, are without foundation. Baptism is a duty not on their part, but on the part of their parents. For it they are not responsible. They ought to acquiesce, and give their parents the privilege of performing that duty, which they owe their Maker.

If this speech should take effect, then an attempt would be made to compel these children to embrace opinions, and to engage to submit to practices which they sincerely believe to be contrary to the word of God. It is useless to say these consequences never have occurred? The question is not what is usually done in such a case, but what are the legitimate consequences of the Pedobaptist theory?

That Paul did not take the law of circumcision for his guide in applying the rite of baptism, is evident from the fact, that he required a christian believer to dispense with baptism, in relation to his unbelieving wife. The

law of circumcision demanded the application of that rite to every member of the household capable of receiving it, on the pain of excision from the people of God. Now if this law be our guide in settling the subjects of baptism, then it must irresistibly follow, that it must be applied to all the members of a believer's family, who are capable of receiving that ordinance. All must grant that an unbelieving wife is as capable of receiving it, as a male child. But the Apostle directed a believer at Corinth to retain in his family his unbaptized companion, when if the law of circumcision had been his guide in this case, he would have required her expulsion. See 1 Cor. vii. 14. The directions which he here gave furnish irrefragable proof, that he did not reason from the vacated law of circumcision, to determine who were to be baptized, and in what manner to treat the unbaptized.

Take another case. A believing father brings his son, of 20 years of age, to baptism, and incorporates him into the church. But his life is bad. His father and the church immediately begin to labour with him to persuade him to repent, to own his baptism, and come to the table of the Lord. But all in vain; he remains refractory, and is cut off. After you have excluded him, he turns and says to you: Show me the two opposite texts of scripture, which authorized you to take into your church an individual, without requiring faith and repentance; and then immediately to excommunicate the same individual, for the *want of faith and repentance*? Why did you say, that I, an unbeliever, ought to be brought into your church, and then say to me, no unbeliever has any right to remain, and therefore I must be turned out again?

I am, brethren, yours, &c.

LETTER XVIII.

ARGUMENT FROM ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

Beloved Brethren,

As I have closed the examination of this subject in the light of divine truth, you perhaps now expect me to enter the boundless and maizy field of Ecclesiastical History. But you may be assured that in this way I shall not severely tax your

patience. Respecting myself, I can say that I have gone over this field, and in it taken a pretty wide range. From this source it would be easy to collect favourable arguments enough, to swell this little pamphlet into a ponderous volume. This, however, is unnecessary and inexpedient. I shall only very briefly touch on a few points, and then relieve your patience.

Before we proceed, we will just repeat an observation on the inspired records.

In all the writings of the New-Testament, we find neither precept nor example for infant baptism. These writings cover a period of nearly one hundred years. During this time, instances of infant baptism, if it then prevailed, must have been quite innumerable; yet all are passed over in the most mysterious silence.

It may be objected here, that if the want of precept and example will exclude infants from baptism, then for the same want, consistency requires us to shut *females* from the table. This old objection rests on the false supposition, that *sexes* must be specified in order to enforce a duty, or to give title to church privileges. This ground is not tenable; if it were, would not females be excused from the duty of faith, love to God, and self-examination? For where is the command in the New Testament, which enjoins these duties on females? The fact is, the gospel describes *character* which entitles to ordinances, and by this we are to be guided. If the specified character of a penitent and believer be found, then the administrator must admit the person to allotted privileges, without stopping to inquire whether it is found in man or woman, because in relation to the benefits of the gospel, the distinction of sexes is expressly abolished. "There is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. iii. 28. We do not object to infant baptism merely because infants are not mentioned in the commission, but because in them we cannot find that character, which we are to require in all the candidates for this ordinance.

Though the apostolical Fathers of the first century frequently mention the baptism of *believers*, yet, like the inspired penmen, they are all silent on infant baptism.

No mention is made of infant baptism in the second-century, unless it be just at its close.

In the third century we grant that there is clear evidence of infant baptism, and infant communion. In ecclesiastical history, these two practices may be traced to the same origin, and they are here supported by the same arguments. In proof of this we will cite some authorities.

Chillingworth says, "Saint Augustine I am sure held the *communicating* of infants, as much apostolic tradition, as the *baptizing* of them.—The eucharist's necessity for infants—was taught by the consent of the eminent fathers of some ages without any opposition from any of their contemporaries, and was delivered by them, not as doctors, but as witnesses; not as their opinion, but as apostolic tradition." Judson, p. 39.

Says St. Austin, "No one who professes himself a christian of the catholic faith, denies or doubts, that children, without receiving the grace of regeneration in Christ, and without eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, [*i. e.* without baptism and the Lord's supper] have not life in them, and therefore are liable to everlasting punishment. Would Austin, do we think, ever talk after this rate, unless he knew it to have been the practice of the eastern, as well as the western churches, to give the eucharist to children? and very remarkable is another passage of St. Austin to our purpose; which Dr. Wall has taken notice of, and thus translated. The christians of Africa do well call baptism itself one's salvation; and the sacrament of Christ's body, one's life. From whence is this, but, as I suppose, from that ancient and apostolical tradition, by which the churches of Christ do naturally hold, that without baptism, and partaking of the Lord's table, none can come either to the kingdom of God, or to salvation, and eternal life? For the scripture, as I shewed before, says the same. For what other thing do they hold, that call baptism salvation, than that which is said; he saved us by the washing of regeneration; and that which Peter says, The like figure whereunto even baptism doth now save us? And what other thing do they hold, that call the sacrament of the Lord's table *life*, than that which is said, I am the bread of life, &c. And the bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. And except you eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of Man, you have no life in you? If then, as so many divine testimonies do agree,

neither salvation, nor eternal life is to be hoped for without baptism, and the body and blood of our Lord, 'tis in vain promised to infants without them." See Dr. Austin's View, pp. 244, 245. This is, without doubt, clear evidence that St. Austin was satisfied that infant communion was as necessary and as much apostolic as infant baptism.

In this quotation St. Austin tells us he *supposed* that the churches naturally held that infant baptism and infant communion were both traditions from the Apostles; and he also informs us, why they viewed them as traditions, viz. their belief that certain texts of scripture make both baptism and communion absolutely essential to all for eternal life. All agree that the false construction of the passage in the 6th chap. of John, 53d verse, "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," was the erroneous ground, on which they placed the necessity of infant communion. On a similar perversion of certain texts, which speak of baptism, they grounded the necessity of imposing this rite on infants. History traces both of these ceremonies to one common origin, namely, necessity; and supports both by the same process of argument. It seems then impossible to invalidate the historic arguments for infant communion without ruining to the same extent the arguments in favour of infant baptism. Nor can you, my brethren, it is believed, argue against infant communion, even from *scripture*, without confuting all your favourite arguments in support of infant baptism. Do you say that infants ought not to partake of the Lord's supper, because they cannot manifest any evidence of repentance, faith and ability to discern the Lord's body, the prerequisites for this ordinance; are they not equally incapable of manifesting faith and repentance, which are just as much demanded for baptism as they are for communion? Do the scriptures teach us to administer the eucharist to none but the visibly penitent, and at the same time direct us to baptize some *penitents*, and some who are manifestly *impenitent*? Nor can infant baptism be supported without furnishing arguments for their right to communion. Will you say that the law of circumcision, covenant relation, membership in the church, the benediction of Christ, the holiness of children, the law of kindness, and their superior privileges under the gospel, all go to prove

that all minors and servants of believers ought to be baptized, and yet deny that these same arguments afford any proof that any one of them ought to commune? The Jewish church admitted all her members to communion; but Pedobaptist churches admit only about half her members to the table of the Lord. How then can they, on their mode of reasoning, say that the gospel church has *enlarged* the privileges of her children above what they enjoyed under the former dispensation? And how can they consistently talk of open communion, while they refuse to communicate with perhaps more than half their *own* regular members?

Let it be proved how their exclusion from the table of the Lord will not in any measure sink the gospel church below the Jewish church, and this argument will be just as good to prove that their exclusion from baptism will not diminish their religious privileges.

If any one question the truth that little children were admitted to the passover, I would refer him to Exodus xii. 3, 4. "They shall take to them every man a lamb according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house. And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating, shall make your count for the lamb."

Why was each parent here directed to enumerate his household to determine how much or how little he must prepare for the passover, if none of them were to eat with him? If the number of *souls* in one house was too small to eat one lamb, they must join the next family, and so increase the number of communicants at one table till they could consume the paschal feast.

Further, no member of the household was allowed to eat any unleavened bread for 7 days. Now is it not highly improbable that their children, and little ones, during all this long space, were prohibited the use of bread?

I know some of late have said, that infants ought not to be brought to the table, because they are physically unable to participate. But do the men, who make this excuse, mean to tell us, that as soon as this inability is gone, they are then to be brought to the Lord's Supper? Certainly not: their practice informs us, that they exclude little children from the eucharist, not for natural inability,

but for the want of faith and repentance. This excuse, therefore, is altogether deceptive and nugatory.

But, to return to Church History. We observe, that though infant baptism is found in the third century, yet then, and for some time after, it was far from being universal. In proof of this, we submit the following authorities :

The first shall be Archbishop Basil, of the fourth century. Says he, in one of his Lent Sermons to the candidates for baptism, "What time for baptism, so proper, as Easter? For this the church lifts up her voice, and calls from far her sons, that those whom she once brought forth, she may now bring forth again; and feed with substantial food, them whom she hath hitherto fed with the milk of the first elements of religion. To you the apostle says, Repent and be baptized, every one of you—Why do you delay? Why do you deliberate? What do you wait for? Instructed in the doctrine of Christ from your infancy, are you not yet acquainted with it? Will you continue your trials to old age? Last year you deferred it till this; do you now intend to put off your baptism till the next?"

The second shall be taken from the Lent services of the Church at Rome. Says the Priest, "Dearly beloved brethren, you know the day of *scrutiny* is at hand, in which our elect may be divinely instructed," *i. e.* the candidates for baptism. When the candidates were brought out for this rite, the deacon said to them, "Ye elect males, kneel down and pray." He pauses, and then says to them, "Rise, finish your prayers together, and say amen." They all obey. He then said the same to the elect females." See Robinson's History of Baptism, pp. 77, 78, & 86.

That these were the children of professors, and not of pagans, cannot be doubted. They are said to be those, whom the church once *brought* forth, and fed with food, and had instructed from their infancy. And that these children were to be baptized on the ground of their own profession and desire, is evident from the whole Lent service. They were scrutinized, or examined, from time to time, during seven days. They were directed to pray, to observe their orders, and to profess their faith in the creed of the church. But how could all this happen, if professors then baptized all their infants?

In the year 381, Gregory, Bishop of Constantinople, gave his opinion on the propriety of baptizing children, and the absolute need of baptizing even babes, in case of danger of death. His words are: "But say some, what is your opinion of infants, who are not capable of judging of the damage sustained by the want of it? Shall we baptize them? By all means, *if there be any apparent danger*. For it were better they were sanctified without their knowing it, than that they should die without being sealed." See Robinson, p. 230.

Gregory, the metropolitan of all Greece, the oracle of the catholic world, gave it as *his opinion*, that infants should be baptized, *if* the prospect of their death made it necessary. When there was no such necessity, he maintained they ought not to be baptized, till they were old enough to hear and understand for themselves. All this is clear proof that infant baptism was then a new affair, and not settled by law, human or divine. If it had been, Gregory would have supported it by arguments much better than his private opinion. If he knew that the church had all along baptized infants, on the law of circumcision and covenant right, why then did he not plead this ground, and not give his private *opinion*? Christians were early settled on the island of Great Britain. Here they flourished till the year 448, when they were invaded by the Saxons, and driven into Wales. There they remained in quietude, till 596, when Austin visited the island. But he found that these ancient christians were Baptists. With these christians, Austin wished to form a union, and to bring them within the pale of the Catholic Church. For this object, he proposed to them several articles of agreement. One was, "That they should give christendom (or baptism) to their children." But they refused to depart from the primitive practice of believer's baptism.*

I am, &c.

* See Ivimey, v. 1, p. 42.

CONCLUSION.

Thus, my Brethren, I have submitted for your candid perusal, the various arguments, which moved me to take those important steps, of which you are fully apprized. As soon as these arguments had settled my mind, you certainly could expect nothing less of me, than an honest and frank avowal of my belief. If I am deluded, I need your tenderest commiseration. But if I am right, the errors of the opposite scheme are by no means trivial. They effect the whole fabric of the church of God. By my change, I had nothing of this world to gain, but much, very much to lose. The sacrifice was great indeed, and before my selfish heart could be willing, the surrender cost me much deep anguish of soul. But long experience has taught me to say with Sir Walter Raleigh, "That a good *conscience* is the best *estate*:" or with the Psalmist, "In keeping them, (commands of God,) there is great reward."

To my former connexions in religion, I am under many obligations of gratitude, and for them I hope to carry down to my grave an affectionate remembrance. I trust you will bear me witness, my brethren, that I have not "dipped my pen in gall." I have honestly, and with freedom, spoken what was deemed the truth, but with love. I can assure you that my trials have been much aggravated by the fear of diverting, in a small circle, the public mind from the great and good things of the present day. I must, however, indulge the hope that my labours will ultimately subserve the interests of truth.

Our time for action, my brethren, is short and fleeting. Years roll round and steal away, and will soon bring us to the impassable boundary of death. Till then let us be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Let it be our daily and united prayer, that God would continue to accomplish his designs of mercy, and hasten the introduction of that day of seven fold light, when the watchmen shall see eye to eye, and there be nothing to hurt, or destroy, throughout God's holy mountain.

I am, dear Brethren, your's in sentiments of Christian affection.

STEPHEN CHAPIN.

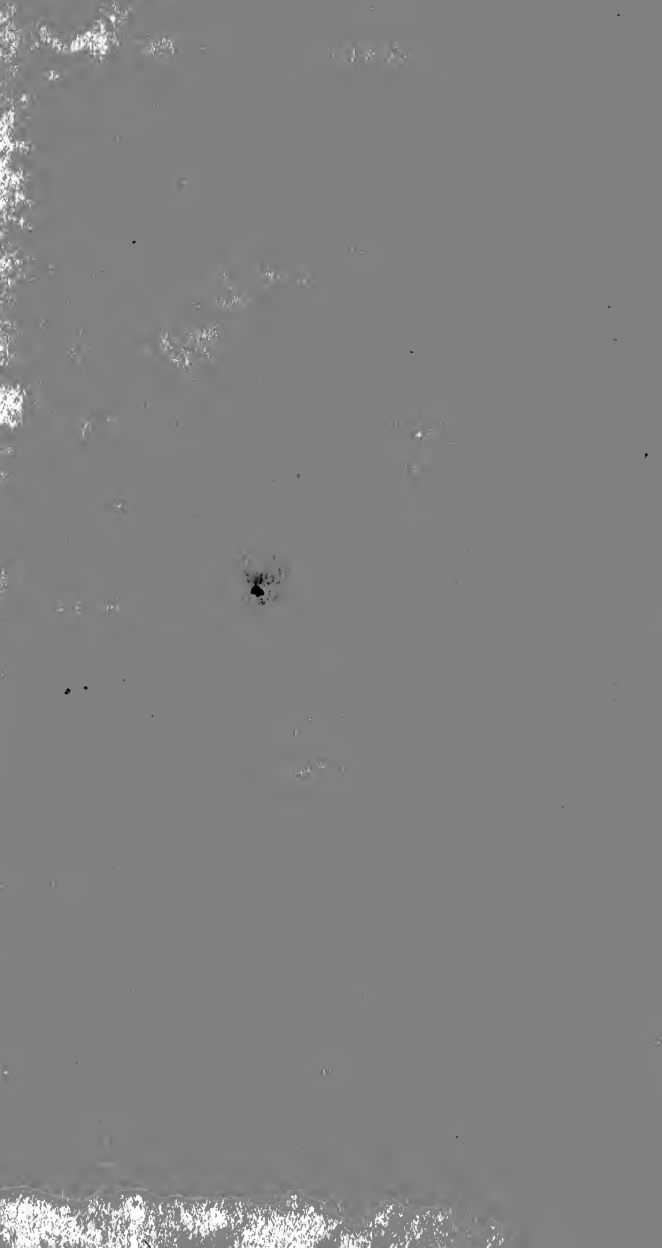
AN
APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

STRICTURES

ON

REV. MR. MOORE'S REPLY.



LETTERS

ADDRESSED TO THE REV. MR. MOORE, IN
ANSWER TO HIS REPLY TO THE FOREGO-
ING LETTERS.

LETTER I.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

THE relation which once existed between us was endearing and important. For a series of years we laboured in the same part of the gospel vineyard, and in the same denomination, as the professed ministers of Christ. To dissolve a union so deeply interesting to ourselves, and to the cause of Zion, demanded clear and substantial arguments. Such arguments, I firmly believe, were discovered after long, painful and prayerful examination of the ground on which I formerly stood. These reasons, which produced such a revolution in my opinion and corresponding change of practice, I deemed it my duty to declare to the world. This I did in a Series of Letters, addressed to the christian public. To these Letters you have been pleased to issue a reply. You have avowed with much frankness, the reasons why they received your animadversions. In your belief, there was an imperious call to furnish your readers with an early antidote to the poison of error. If you viewed yourself attacked, you had a right to stand on the defensive, and to employ such means, as you deemed most proper to repel aggression. The controversy now pending between us excites, to a considerable extent, the attention of the surrounding churches. Better judges than ourselves will convass and decide on the weapons and the spirit, which we may employ and discover. It becomes us, therefore, to look well to our feelings and to the manner in which we manage this debate. I regret that I cannot pronounce my unqualified approbation on the spirit of your publication. It is spiced, as some would say, pretty generously with wit and laconism. It exhib-

its such strong marks of family likeness to your other productions, that it is at once recognized as your own legitimate offspring. For a dry and sarcastic style you have long borne away the palm. Nor do I regret that I possess little talent to rob you of this glory.

I have confined myself to the most prominent things in your pamphlet. Many things of minor consequence have been passed in silence.

Yours, &c.

LETTER II.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

In your advertisement, you are pleased to assign three reasons why you laboured to invalidate my arguments against the sprinkling of infants, rather than to prove the correctness of the practice. They are, *First*, "It appeared most pertinent. *Second*, Because an answer was desired as soon as possible. *Third*, Because the author calculates to write a treatise on the subject."

Certainly you had a right to select your own mode of reply. You are sensible, however, that it is much more difficult to frame and complete a building, than it is to attempt its demolition. What your promised work will contain, time will disclose. Perhaps it will not be very hazardous to predict, that your present Reply furnishes us with all the principal materials of your intended building. Your intimation may subserve your interest by amusing the publick mind, and by retarding the decision of some, until they learn what farther aid they can obtain from your promised publication.

You also inform us, that "care has been taken not to misrepresent the meaning of the author of the letters."

Whether care were the constant companion of your pen, I am willing to refer to the better judgment of those, who shall peruse both your writings and mine.

I am, &c.

LETTER III.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

You remark in your introduction that, "There can be no doubt then, that Christ has given specific rules for the

formation and regulation of his church, and it is equally evident that his rules should be observed and applied. He, who is light and truth, has communicated the divine will in a luminous manner." Please, sir, to compare these words with what you have said at the close of your fourth letter. There you assert that Christ is just as unintelligible, respecting the mode of admission into his kingdom, as he would have been, had he *studied* to be *obscure*. Yea, in another place you have told us, "If Christ was indefinite on the mode of baptism, *he chose to be so*." If a number of believers were about to be embodied for religious privileges, I suppose you would say, that the administration of baptism upon them would be necessary to form them into a regular church. The ceremony of baptism then is one of the specific rules for the formation of a church. But, sir, will you *specify* what this *specific* rule means? You contend that Christ did not require any particular mode; but he *required baptism*. I ask you to tell us what baptism is. You are not invited to define the mode, but baptism itself. If the manner of using water be only a circumstance attending baptism, it is not baptism, because mere circumstances are ever considered distinct from the thing about which they stand. You have said that baptism is a positive institution, and that Christ was explicit in all its parts. It seems, then, that sprinkling, pouring, bathing and immersion, are no part of baptism, because you say, that he was, upon all these ways, perfectly inexplicit. If then all these ways, and every other imaginable way of applying water, form no part of baptism, we leave it to you, sir, to define this ordinance, and to find parts, or materials, to give it being. You cannot with any consistency say that Christ required any of these ways of application, because you have maintained, that he meant to hide the mode of baptism in perfect darkness. The specification, therefore, of any mode, would have been inconsistent with his chosen concealment.

If you will say that baptism is an unknown application of water in the name of the Trinity, we ask you to produce authority. Did the Apostles believe, that Christ, when he said to them, "Go preach the gospel to every creature,—baptizing them in the name of the Father," &c. meant to say, Go apply water to your subjects just as *you* and *they shall please*? How will you reconcile this vague sense of the word with your declaration, that "baptism

is a *positive* institute ; that the ordinance is *explicit* in *all its parts* ;" that Christ hath in a luminous manner delivered specific rules to regulate the admission of members into his kingdom ? But yet according to your language in other places this *specific rule specifies an unknown something*, this *luminous law* is still involved in impenetrable *darkness*. It seems that your various modes and circumstances of baptism are left in the predicament of the fabled tortoise, on whose back the Indians have placed the earth, but forgot to furnish the poor animal with any pedestal to enable her to sustain her ponderous load.

I am, &c.

LETTER IV.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

IN your second letter you admit the correctness of my general principles respecting positive institutions. The only fallacy of which you complain is this : Mr. C. "takes it for granted, that positive institutions are positive in all their parts, and in all that pertains to them, and that no circumstance, form, or manner, is left discretionary." I did suppose, and do still, that every part of a positive institution is positive. But there are many circumstances, attending such an institution, which form, as you say, no part of the positive law. The quantity of water, provided it be sufficient for the specified purpose, the place where, the time when, and the position of the subject of baptism, and many other things, are left discretionary.

Yours, &c.

LETTER V.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

IN your third letter you inform us that "From the time they, (the Baptists) practised trine immersion, till they appeared in Munster, there is no want of variety of opinion" amongst them.

When did the Baptists begin to exist, as a denomination ? You have told us in the 75th page of your Reply on the authority of Wall, that for the first eleven hundred years only two individuals can be found in the whole history of the church, who leaned towards our particular views.

You doubt whether these two were thorough Baptists. All the rest of the christian world were, in your belief, Pedobaptists. According to your calculation the Baptists had no existence till after the beginning of the twelfth century. You have informed us that the Baptists have used and have advocated the use of baptisteries, and *trine* immersion. Will you, sir, undertake "the small task," and prove, that in or after the 12th century, the Baptists built and advocated the use of baptisteries? This you must do to support your quotation from Wall. But I believe you will find some difficulty to prove that baptisteries were built, so late as the 12th century, either by Catholics or Dissenters. After infant baptism was established by law, these large buildings were not much needed. They therefore gradually decayed and disappeared, and little fonts for babes within the walls of churches occupied their place.

Or will you contradict Wall, and grant that there were Baptists before the 12th century? Let any one read your 29th page, and he would naturally suppose, that you meant to concede they existed long before that period. You there say, that, baptisteries began to be built about the middle of the third century;—and that those who built and used them, were exceedingly corrupt in doctrine and in practice. You then in the next paragraph ask the Baptists, who use and advocate the use of baptisteries, why they have departed from the ancient simple manner of baptism? Will any of your readers suppose, that you meant this question should relate to Baptists, who existed in, or after the 12th century? I believe, sir, you will find on a revision of your Reply, that your own language and your quotation from Wall are quite contradictory. But perhaps when you have leisure, and do not write under an imperious call, you will be able to exonerate yourself from this contradiction.

I am, &c.

LETTER VI.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

I had said that if Christ had intended to conceal the mode of applying water, he might have chosen for this purpose *kathairō*, or *agnizō*, both of which are, as **Job**

grant, indefinite, as to the way of application. To these words you object, because they contain a specific meaning, viz. that of cleansing the filth of the flesh. This specific sense you say is "inconsistent with the nature and design of the ordinance;" might you not just as well object to the word *sprinkle*? This word in scripture most certainly conveys the idea of cleansing. Consult all the purifications of the law, and you will find that sprinkling was one important way of cleansing the filthiness of the flesh. Besides, will not your objection to these words lie equally strong against *embapto*, which you think would have answered better, than *baptizō*, if he had intended immersion? *Embapto* means to *dip in, to steep, to dye, to colour*. See Schre. and Ains. This word then means to immerse for a specific purpose, viz. to dye, to stain, or to colour. Have you not, then, by your objection to *kathairō*, on account of its specific character, forever ruined your favourite word, *embapto*? This means to dip, but most generally for the purpose of coloring, or that the thing dipped may be in some way affected by the liquid into which it is immersed. So it is used in John xiii. 26, "Jesus answered, he it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it, and when he had dipped the sop." So in Mark xiv. 20, "One of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish." This sop was a small piece of bread, dipped in some broth or liquid to render it the more palatable. May we not say in your own language, "If the design of baptism were" to imbue, or to leave a stain on the flesh, "the word *embapto*, which you have chosen to express" immersion, is well selected? But as this is not the design of the ordinance, your proposed word, though definite as to the manner of applying water, contains a specific meaning, viz. dying or coloring, "which is inconsistent with the nature and design of the ordinance."

You have made much use of my quotation, from Dr. Reed. When I cited the Dr's words, I meant to reason "argumentum ad hominem." As you did not take me thus, I regret that I did not apprize my reader of my design. I meant to say, that admitting this word has as many meanings, as the Dr. has given it, it would fairly follow that Christ required immersion, if his words were explained according to the common rules of interpreting statute laws. Its first and most obvious and common sense would be taken in settling the meaning of the com-

mission, and not its most obscure and rare signification. The dispute between us is not, as you say, whether this word in all its uses means nothing but immersion; but whether Christ has not given us sufficient proof in his word, that he requires immersion, as the only appointed ordinance. When he compared his sufferings to a baptism, he showed that the word means an overwhelming. Because between a light *sprinkling* and his heavy sufferings there were no points of resemblance. And when the Apostle tells believers, that they are *buried* in baptism, he gives irrefragable proof, that primitive christians were immersed. If they were not, such a phrase, in relation to this rite, would never have been used, either in a figurative, or literal sense. Dr. Reed seems to have been fully apprized, that the sense of words varies with the progress of time. He says, "the original sense of words is, by custom, very frequently altered by being enlarged, or restricted. To bathe, in the primitive sense of the word, seems to imply immersion, and yet it is now commonly used to signify any kind of wetting. The word *Baptist*, primarily signified a baptizer," (or dipper,) "but it now is commonly used to signify any person, who denies infant baptism, and holds to immersion." It seems, then, according to the doctor, the word *baptist* has in modern times departed very materially from its ancient signification. So we say the word *baptizō* has senses now affixed to it, which it did not primarily contain. Hence the unsafety of settling the ancient meaning of this word by its modern construction. Let any one read the history of this word, and he will find, that it has been made a leaden rule, bending and turning to suit all the varieties of opinion on the mode of baptism. Some have told us, that the flexible character of this word, is a grateful quality, because it leaves to each individual the liberty of making his own election, and because it accommodates the word to all the diversities of custom and climate. But this word possesses a firmer texture, than to be changed by the ever various and forever varying opinions of men.

We admit that *baptizō* implies cleansing, dying and washing. If you dip a thing in water, it is of course washed and cleansed more or less. If you dip cloth in dye, it, of consequence, is colored more or less. I am aware that you have said that "baptism is a generic term." Now this is so far from being correct, that directly the reverse is true. Baptism or immersion is not a genus or generic term, but a species. You well know that the

“species includes the genus and all that is in it, but the genus does not include the species.” Washing is a generic term, but dipping, pouring and bathing are species, or kinds of washing. It is hoped the reader will bear with me, if I briefly show what is meant by genus and species. Genus is a comprehensive word or name, given to a number of classes of beings, possessing some prominent trait, common to them all. Thus the property of walking on four feet is common to a great variety of animals. Hence we apply to all such animals, the name quadruped, which means a four footed beast. Quadruped then is the genus, and horse, lion, dog, elephant, are so many species of four footed animals. So washing is the genus, but dipping is a species of washing. Hence when you say that *baptizō* means to wash, to dye, to cleanse, &c. you do nothing towards proving that this word means any thing less than dipping, because all these may be only the consequences of immersion.

I am, &c.

LETTER VII.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

You have now come to attempt more directly the invalidation of my arguments, in favour of immersion. The arguments which were employed in favour of this practice, were the following: 1st. The obvious meaning of the word, employed to express this ordinance. 2nd, Many scripture passages, taken both from the practice of John and of the Apostles, after the resurrection of Christ. 3d, The places chosen for the administration of this rite. 4th, The language employed in its description. 5th, The practice of the Greek church. 6th, The authority of the translators, who have rendered the word *baptizō* in various languages, into a word which means to dip. 7th, Confessions of faith in large bodies of christians. 8th, The concessions of many Pedobaptists. 9th, The authority of church history. 10th, The design of christian baptism.

The manner in which these several arguments were illustrated and sustained, the reader may see by turning back to my Series of Letters, and reading under the several heads, where these topicks are discussed. These places he is desired to peruse.

I have already attended to your remarks on my definition of the word *baptizō*. I will therefore consider your objections to my reasonings from numerous texts of scripture. I quoted many passages, which relate to John's baptism. All arguments, drawn from this source, you attempt to nullify. But what are your objections to taking John's baptism for our guide in administering this ordinance? They are, 1st, It was instituted under the law. 2nd, It was essentially different from that instituted by Christ. 3d, It was designed for a different purpose, viz. to prepare the minds of the Jews for the approaching dispensation. 4th, Some of John's disciples were, as you say, rebaptized. See pp. 22, 23. Seeing these two rites are thus distinct, and under two distinct dispensations, you tell us that "of course we cannot argue from one to the other." This, to be sure, is doing the business off hand. But, sir, were you apprized, that the blow which you aimed at others, fall exclusively on your own head. For all these objections lie with all their force against proselyte baptism, which you maintain the apostles took for their guide. This, too, if it existed in the days of Christ, was, 1st, Instituted under the law, and that too by the authority of Jewish Rabbins, and not by Jehovah. 2nd, It was essentially different in its nature from christian baptism. 3d, It was designed for a different purpose, viz. to denote the washing of all profane and heathenish practices. 4th, Many, who received it were rebaptized by the apostles. Mr. Scott says, the Eunuch "was a Proselyte to the whole Jewish religion." Many who were converted on the day of Pentecost, were Proselytes to the same religion; but yet they were all rebaptized, if they had been the subjects of Proselyte baptism. Seeing then these two rites, Proselyte and Christian Baptism, existed under two distinct dispensations, and were essentially different in nature and design; "of course we cannot argue from one to the other." Show me, will you, sir, why the above objections do not as fully ruin proselyte baptism for our example, as they do that of John's ordinance? Will not your above objections destroy all your inferential arguments from circumcision? That also was under the law, and designed for a different purpose from christian baptism. Can you then argue from one to the other? Further, will not your mode of reasoning prove that the Lord's supper was not a christian ordinance, but belonged to the Levitical ceremonies? You deny a chris-

tian character to John's baptism, because it was instituted under the law. Now the Eucharist was as truly instituted before the legal dispensation closed, as was the baptism of John. The gospel dispensation did not begin, in your opinion, till after the resurrection of Christ. When the supper was first celebrated, the whole ritual law was in force. Though this institution was first observed *near* the close of the ritual law, yet this affects not the argument. It was as much under the law, as though it had been appointed a *thousand years* before its abrogation. If a ceremony is necessarily legal, because observed while that dispensation was in force, why did not Christ suspend the establishment, till after his resurrection? Unless you relinquish your objection to John's baptism, as a gospel rite, I believe you will find it an herculean task to prove that the Lord's supper is a christian ordinance.

Though you had in your opinion laid John to rest as an exemplar, yet you resolve to try your skill in explaining a few texts, taken from his administration. This you do lest any one should doubt the genuineness of your courage "in shrinking from a hard task."

You then proceed to the consideration of texts, which relate to the baptisms administered after the resurrection of Christ.

You first quote, and then expound.

"And he came into all the country about Jordan preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." People from all quarters of Judea flocked to him to hear his preaching. They were convinced by his instructions; and they were persuaded to receive the baptism of repentance. Now, considering the place where they were, near Jordan; considering the vast numbers to be baptized; considering the improbability that John, or the multitude had vessels with them for the purpose of carrying water; and considering that they could have here a more commodious and refreshing situation than any where else; where would he and they most probably resort for baptism? without any regard to the mode, where would they be so likely to repair, for this ordinance as to Jordan."

But why did they baptize *in* Jordan? why did they go down to, and then come up out of the water? The reasons why all this took place, you have assigned. They are the following. 1. The water was lower than the banks of the river, and 2d. the *improbability* that either

John or any of the multitude, had vessels with them for the purpose of carrying water. Now the number to be baptized, the length of time employed by John in preaching and administering the ordinance in that place, the inconvenience of going down and climbing up the banks of Jordan every time they sprinkled, render it incredible, that neither John, nor any of the multitude were not provident enough to take with them some vessel, or, if they were thus improvident when they assembled, that they should not have sent for one, rather than endure for months so much inconvenience. Besides if, as you insinuate, this vast multitude chose to repair to Jordan to have a "commodious and refreshing situation," would not this forethought of theirs in selecting a spot to allay their thirst, naturally have led them to think of some "vessel for the purpose of carrying water?" Or did this multitude, when they concluded to repair to this refreshing stream, without having any regard to the mode of baptism, imagine that they must lie down and take their drink in the manner of Gideon's army? Enon, another place where John baptized, you suppose was chosen, not for immersion, but because it was well watered to accommodate thirsty men and animals. You maintain, that the phrase, "much water there," means that in Enon there were *many separate streams*. In confirmation of this, you suppose that "*polla udata*," here rendered *much water*, mean "*many waters*." You also suppose, that if John did immerse his subjects, there would have been a "*gross impropriety* in using these words to convey the idea of this mode," because you say that "a little bath, a little rivulet, checked for an hour, is *abundantly sufficient* for" immersion. But you imagine that the multitudes, who assembled around John, would so *obviously* require many brooks and rivers to cool their burning thirst, that there was a "*manifest propriety* in John's selecting Enon, a place well watered for their accommodation." You maintain that when a large body of men and animals are about to assemble, the consumption of water will be so great for their refreshment, that it is *manifestly proper* to select a spot, for their rendezvous, well watered with many brooks and rivers; but at the same time you contend, that it would be *grossly improper* to choose a stream of *much water* for the purpose of baptizing by immersion! I am perfectly willing to

risque the *strength and soundness of such reasoning* to make converts to your favourite views.

The Bible teaches that the much water of Enon was chosen for the convenience of *baptizing*, but you believe that these many waters were selected for the purpose of drinking.

You also suppose that when "*polla udata*" are used to express quantity of water, they signify *very much*, and that, when thus used, they should be rendered *much water*. You and our translators are not agreed upon this point, as you may see by reading the following texts. "The Lord is upon *many waters*." Psalm xxix. 3. "The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." "His noise was like the noise of many waters." Ezek. 43. 2. Cant. viii. 7. "*Many waters* cannot quench love." Rev. i. 15. His voice, as the sound of *many waters*." See the Septuagint and the Testament on these texts.

Will you say that the translation in all these instances is not correct? Or that the *polla udata* in these texts does not express quantity, but many divided streams? If so, then the voice of the Lord, which roars like the mighty waves of the sea, at the same time sounds like the gentle murmurings of little brooks and rivers.

In the 28th page you quote these words: "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water," and then observes, "if Mr. C. will apply here his rule of understanding words, according to their natural and primary meaning, and not be guided by the eighth or tenth meaning, he will understand the word *apō*, to signify *from*, not *out of*." Such a rule, sir, I never adopted in defining the Greek prepositions *ek*, *eis*, *apō*, *en*, &c. But in defining them I assumed this rule, viz. "The general construction of the period, in which they are used, must determine their signification."

This rule led me to render *apō*, *out of*, rather than, *from* the water. It was employed to describe the motion of Christ, immediately after he had been baptized in the river Jordan.

Take, sir, if you please, the rule by which you think I ought to have been guided, and define these prepositions, not according to their construction, but according to their *first* signification, in the following passages. Luke 8. 29, &c. and Mark 5. 13. "For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come (*apō*) *from* the man,—and "he" was driven of the devils (*eis*) *at* the wilderness—many

devils were entered (*eis*) at him. And they besought him that he would not command them to go out (*eis*) at the deep. And there was there a herd of many swine, feeding (*en*) at the mount, and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter, (*eis*) at them. Then went the devils (*apō*) from the man, and entered (*eis*) at the swine, and the herd ran violently down a steep place (*eis*) at the sea, and were choked (*eis*) at the sea." But, sir, how were they suffocated? as, by this reading, there is *no* evidence that one of the two thousand ever went *into* the lake.

"The place where Philip baptized the Eunuch," you say, "affords no evidence of the mode of his baptism." I never supposed, that it gave positive proof of the manner of his baptism, but corroborating evidence. You grant that they stopped at some river or pond. But why so, if sprinkling were the mode? Why go down to, and come up from the water? You are pleased to give the following reasons. 1st, No evidence that he had a servant with him. 2nd, No vessel by which water could be brought. And, 3d, the water was *lower* than the chariot. But, sir, is it not rather strange, that a man of his character, having the control of all the treasures of Queen Candice, should travel in a chariot without a servant or driver? When he spoke and commanded his carriage to stand still, whom did he address but his postillion? Beside, must he not have been a very dexterous charioteer to have driven two or four horses himself, and yet at the same time have been deeply engaged in reading the prophet Isaiah? This criticism, sir, I believe is purely original, and all the praise which it demands is certainly *yours*. You ask, "does going into the water imply total immersion? Then Philip was immersed as well as the Eunuch." It is strange that you should bring forward this stale, this childish objection. Who reasons at this loose rate? Did I infer, as you say, that he was put wholly under water, merely because he went into it? My words are, 'It is true that the phrases, *into* and *out of* the water, will not of themselves prove immersion. But they are strong corroborating evidence. It is not simply said that they went *into* the water, but while in the water Philip *immersed* the Eunuch.'

I have taken considerable pains to ascertain the meaning of the particle *eis*, and believe that those who are conversant with the original language of the New Tes-

tament, will generally admit that it signifies *into*. When used in a local sense, it seldom means any thing else. When it is connected with *udor*, *Jordanus*, *potamos*, or *pūr*, it never has, so far as I recollect, any other signification. See Matt. xvii. 15. Mark i. 9, and ix. 22. Acts viii. 38. Rev. xvi. 4.

You suppose, sir, *eis* and *ek*, translated *into* and *out of*, in other places mean *to* and *from*; and you wish to know by what authority I gave to them the sense of *into* and *out of* in this place. As you will not allow me to make much use of the authority of our translators, I will bring my support from the context of the passage. If the inspired penman had understood the preposition *eis* to mean the same as *to*, why did he not use it, when he would express "their arrival at a certain water?" But now he says when they came *epi ti udor*, that is, *to* or *unto* a certain water. But when he describes them as alighting from their carriage, and using the water, he doth not use the preposition *epi*, but *eis*, "they went down *eis* both *into* the water. They came *epi*, *to* the water before baptism is mentioned. Why is not this motion enough? It certainly is upon your principle. But Luke did not think so; he therefore describes another motion, (*eis*) *into* the water, before baptism was administered. Here we have the most decisive proof, that the inspired penman meant that the preposition *eis* signified something more than *to* the water, because he had gotten them *to* the water when he used the other preposition, *epi*. As this particle is evidently used with the most explicit reference to baptism, and being obviously employed to express a different idea from that of *epi*, it must consequently signify *into*, in this passage. A similar opposition in the sense of these two prepositions may be seen in John vi. 16, 17. "His disciples went down (*epi*) *to* the sea, and entered (*eis*) *into* a ship. So Mark xvi. 2, 5. They came (*epi*) *to* the sepulchre, and entering (*eis*) *into* the sepulchre. Acts xvi. 19. They caught Paul and Silas and drew them (*eis*) *into* them into the market place, (*epi*) *to* the rulers." See Matt. xiii. 48.

Eis is also opposed to the preposition *ek*, as you may see by consulting Matt. xv. 11. "Not that which goeth *into* the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh (*ek*) *out of* the mouth." Mark vi. 51, 54. Luke ii. 4. John iv. 47, 54. And many other passages.

That the preposition *apo* is frequently used to signify *out of* is evident from Matt. vii. 4, 5, and xiv. 29. Luke

viii. 2, 12, 33, 35, 38. In Luke ii. 4, and viii. 33, it is directly opposed to *eis*.

Another argument in favour of our mode we drew from the practice of the Greek church. The early members of this church, we maintained, were the best judges of their own language in which the New Testament was written. This argument you first deny and then confirm, as the reader may see by what follows. You say, "There is no evidence that they are better qualified, than any other nation to judge *which* meaning the word *baptizō* has, when it is used to express the action of baptism. We have as much authority as they to select a meaning of the word and apply it to the ordinance."

Here we are taught, that the members of the Greek church, though some of them lived at an early period, and though they spoke and wrote in that language, are no better qualified to judge of the meaning of the word, *baptizō*, when applied to the ordinance of baptism, than are the present French or English. The members of this Greek church existed long before their separation from the Roman church. And in all their societies, and from their earliest days, they have uniformly practised immersion. Yet you tell us that they are no better qualified to say in what sense the word *baptizō* should be taken, when applied to the ordinance than men of any other nation. But when you wished to settle the meaning of the Greek word, for disciple, you contradict all this, and maintain, that a Grecian must be best qualified to use this word in its true sense, and to make a just application of it. Towards the bottom of the 71st page, you quote Justin Martyr as saying, "several persons among us of 60 and 70 years old of both sexes, who were discipled to Christ in their childhood, do continue uncorrupted." The word *discipled* here you say, "is radically the same, which St. Matthew employed in recording Christ's commission." This word Justin applied to children. You conclude, that his "knowledge of the Greek language, for he wrote in Greek, and his proximity to the Apostles, qualified him to use the word *disciple*, in its true sense, and make a just application of it." Why then were not the fathers of the Greek church, who spake and wrote in that language, equally well qualified to use the word *baptizō* in its true sense, and to make a just application of it to this ordinance?

The arguments, which I drew from the authority of translators, from confessions of faith, from the conces-

sions of numerous individuals and bodies of men, together with a brief account how immersion was dropped, and sprinkling adopted in its room, you pass over very hastily, as if you felt conscious, that you could not well invalidate their testimony. You think, however, that if "Wall were left to dispose of himself; he would throw his weight into your scale."

That Mr. Wall was a strong advocate for infant *immersion* is well known. And it is equally well known that he strongly reprobated infant sprinkling, when neither sickness nor danger of death required that practice. He commends the Baptists for adhering to immersion, but blames Pedobaptists for dropping it, and sprinkling on all occasions. He blames us for not admitting the validity of sprinkling in urgent cases. So far as the mode is concerned, and for this only was he quoted, let him dispose of himself, and he will throw his influence decidedly in our favour.

Another argument which we employed was taken from the testimony of ecclesiastical historians. This proof you first attempt to invalidate, but at last you give it full sanction by your own broad concessions. So that I have nothing to do, but to repeat my testimonies, and to quote your acknowledgments.

In my Letters I made the following selections, "How can we be placed in a condition of likeness to his death? Answer, by being buried with him in baptism. How are we to go down with him into the grave? By imitating the burial of Christ in baptism; for the bodies of the baptized are in a sense buried in water. By three immersions we administer this important ceremony of baptism, that death may be represented in a figure." Arch. Bishop Basil. Eusebius, speaking of Novatian, says, "he received baptism, being besprinkled with water on the bed where he lay, *if that can be called baptism.*" Du Pin says, in the three first centuries, they plunged those three times in the water, whom they baptized. The author of the History of the Church by an impartial hand, says, speaking of the three first centuries, to me it seems evident, that their usual custom was to immerse, or to dip the whole body. Gregory informs us that baptism in the primitive times was administered by immersion.

Says Mosheim, those who had formed the resolution of mending their lives, were initiated by John into the kingdom of the Redeemer by immersion. The

sacrament of baptism was administered in the second century without the publick assemblies in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by *immersion*. Those adult persons that desired to be baptized received the sacrament of baptism, according to the ancient primitive manner of celebrating that institution, even by immersion.

Dr. Cave, in his primitive christianity, says, the action having proceeded thus far, the body to be baptized was wholly immersed or put under water, which was almost the universal custom of those times.

Eusebius, in his life of Constantine the Great, records the following speech of the dying Emperor. "This is the hour, i. e. the hour of baptism, wherein we may also enjoy that seal which confers immortality. I had heretofore taken the resolution of doing this in the stream of the river Jordan, where our Saviour himself, in likeness to us, is recorded to have partaken of the laver."

Gregory, speaking of the fourth century, says, "many were so desirous of receiving this initiatory rite in the same place with Christ, that they delayed baptism, till they could travel into Judea. The Emperor Constantine was among the number, and earnestly desired to receive baptismal rite in the waters of Jordan."

When you had read all this, you add, "*We are ready to admit all that these historians have said in these quotations.*" Certainly this is a sweeping concession. It is truly surprising that it should come from you after you had laboured so hard to prove, that there is no certain evidence, that either John or the Apostles, or primitive fathers of the three first centuries, practised immersion!

But here you grant that they almost *universally immersed*, or dipped the whole body. How far this acknowledgment differs from yielding the debate on the mode, the reader will judge. We know that in the third century they admitted the validity of sprinkling only in cases of necessity. These are the few exceptions to which Dr. Cave alludes. But this opinion of the fathers is not supported by scripture. It was an error which grew out of their notion, that baptism was necessary for salvation. It furnishes no rule for us to sprinkle the dying, who cannot be baptized, according to the command of Christ. Much less will it sanction sprinkling in all cases whether in sickness or health, in warm climates or cold,

where no such necessity exists, which the ancients believed would justify and sanction such a departure from the divine institute. If these ancients were now on the earth, it is presumed they would raise a loud voice against the general practice of sprinkling, where no necessity can be plead in its favour. But further, you in this concession implicitly admit that the primitive church did almost universally understand *baptizō*, to mean to immerse; unless you mean to say, that they did that almost universally, which they knew this word did not require. This, it is presumed, you will not pretend. Without doubt you will say, that they were as much agreed in the meaning of that word, as they were in immersion. Here then you grant that this word did among the primitive christians mean to dip. But in page 19th you contradict all this, and say, "It is evident the word *baptize* in Christ's and the Apostles day did not invariably, nor does it appear that it did *generally* signify to immerse."

Before I leave this subject, I would make some remarks on your words taken from Mr. Enoch Pond. You quote him thus. "Constantine the great, being clothed with white garments, and laid upon his bed, was baptized in a solemn manner by Eusebius, Bishop of Nicomidia. Du Pin's Hist. Eu. vol. 2nd. p. 84." I had said, 'he was baptized in the usual way.' As you had no copy of Du Pin, you could not tell, who was correct, Mr. P. or myself. I had and still have Du Pin, and have turned to the page he mentions, and do not there, nor any where else, find a single word which Mr. Pond has quoted! I have a London edition, printed 1724. What edition Mr. Pond used I know not.

The last argument which we employed was taken from the design of baptism. This "was designed to be a symbolical representation of our spiritual death, burial, and resurrection to newness of life." From this design we inferred that this ordinance must be performed by immersion. Change this rite into sprinkling, and this design vanishes from the view; because sprinkling is no symbolical representation of our burial and resurrection with Christ. You, sir, and your brethren, would at once feel the force of this reasoning if it were applied to the other ordinance, the Lord's Supper. Mr. Scott maintains that Papists in withholding the cup from the laity, and by giving an *unbroken wafer* instead of *broken bread*, have changed the Lord's Supper, till it has become quite another

thing, from its original design. He believed that this ordinance should be observed in such manner as to give a symbolical representation of the shedding of Christ's blood, and the breaking of his body on the tree of the cross. But in the Catholic church, this rite is so observed, that of these there is no representation. Paul says, "for as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do *show* forth the Lord's *death*." Whenever therefore this ordinance is so observed that the sufferings and death of Christ are not shown, it is changed from its primitive purpose. "We, being many, are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." Whitby in commenting on this verse, says, these words, 'the loaf or bread is one, and we all partake of one loaf, and therefore are one body,' show how grossly the church of Rome has varied from Christ's institution, in distributing to the communicants severally an unbroken wafer; so that they are neither partakers of one loaf, or bread, or of bread broken. But, sir, is there a greater difference between eating an unbroken wafer, and eating broken bread, than there is between sprinkling and immersion? Is it not just as evident from scripture, that baptism was designed to be a symbolical representation of burial and resurrection, as it is, that the Eucharist should show the Lord's death? Paul says in the sixth of Rom. "therefore we are buried with him by baptism;" and in Col. ii. 12, he says, wherein, i. e. in baptism, ye are risen with him. Here Paul treats of the *nature* of baptism. It is a *burial*. How are saints buried with Christ? "by baptism." In what have they risen with Christ? in baptism. He next treats of the *design* of baptism. If any one had asked the Apostle, why or for what purpose saints were buried and raised with Christ in baptism, he would have told him it was done, "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*." Doth not the Apostle, sir, in this place teach us with great clearness, that believers were buried in the water, and then raised up out of it in baptism, to represent by outward signs that they by profession were dead to sin, and that their soul had been quickened and raised from their moral grave, to live a new and holy life? In the manner, in which you celebrate this rite, there is an entire departure from its original design. Sprinkling is no symbol of suffering, burial, or resurrection, any more than an unbroken wafer is a

symbol of the broken body of Christ. Have you not then as grossly varied from the primitive design of baptism, as the Papists have from the design of the Lord's Supper? With you, sprinkling is designed to be the sign of an *oath* between God and believing parents, and a sign of inward pollution, and of the need of the cleansing of the Holy Ghost. But Paul viewed baptism as intended for very different ends.

Let us now attend a little to your efforts to prove that the design of baptism furnishes no proof in support of our mode. You ask, "what resemblance is there between hatred and renouncing of sin, and immersion or baptism in *any mode*? By resurrection to newness of life, I understand spiritual life or devotedness of heart and life to God. I perceive no resemblance between this and a person being raised out of the water. If there be no resemblance between two things, one cannot be a symbolical representation of the other." In this last remark you are perfectly correct. Says Mr. Blake, "Sacraments are analogical signs, such as carry analogy and proportion with the thing signified; they have ever an aptness in them for resemblance." Says Austin, "If sacraments carry no resemblance of the things whereof they are sacraments, they are no sacraments at all." If then you can perceive no resemblance between hatred and renunciation of sin and baptism in any mode, we would ask, what resemblance you perceive between sprinkling a few drops of water on the face of an adult, and his dying to and renunciation of sin? Or, when you sprinkle an infant, what resemblance can you discover between that ceremony and the necessity of an inward cleansing? If, as you say, there be no resemblance between baptism in any mode, and death to and resurrection from sin, what then does it resemble? And why do you use water in any mode? Can you discover a resemblance between sprinkling an infant and the *duty* of its parents to pray for and to train it up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? You grant, that I am "not alone in the belief that baptism by immersion is a designed representation of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Rom. vi. 4. and Col. ii. 12, are brought in support of this opinion. But I can perceive no similarity between Christ suspended on a cross, breathing out his life, and a person put under water. I can perceive no similarity between the interment of the dead body of Jesus in a tomb hewn out of a rock, and a mo-

mentary immersion of a living person in water. *I can perceive no similarity between Christ rising to life from the tomb, and a person rising out of the water, as he was put in. Suppose the apostle was speaking of spiritual baptism, and there is similarity and consistency."*

Spiritual baptism, you correctly define to be a "hatred and renouncing of sin." But between this, and water baptism in any mode, you say there is no resemblance. You have also told us, that between water baptism, and the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, there is *no resemblance*. The two things, then, between which you discover a resemblance, are spiritual baptism, and the literal death, burial and resurrection of Christ. What, sir, can you discover no resemblance between dying to sin and baptism in any mode, and yet discover a strong resemblance between dying to sin and Christ's dying on the cross? Can you perceive no resemblance between burying the old man of sin, and burial under water in baptism? And yet perceive a resemblance between burying the old man of sin and Christ's burial in the tomb? Can you discover no resemblance between rising to newness of life and rising out of the water, and yet discover a resemblance in rising to newness of life and the resurrection of Christ from the grave?

It is well, sir, that you have mentioned your blindness so repeatedly, when you wrote the above paragraphs. If you had not, I should have been utterly astonished that they should have dropped from your pen. You employ the phrase, *I can perceive*, no less than five times in the compass of a few lines. I believe this ample testimony, which you have given of your want of perception. But you did not expect that the blur, which was upon your sight, would open the eyes of others. What if *you* could not discern this resemblance, will this prove that others cannot? Thousands of saints and martyrs have seen and rejoiced in this resemblance. But after all that you have here declared, you nevertheless say, even before you leave this page, that "water is an emblem of purity, and the application of it well represents the purifying influences of the Holy Ghost. And in the next page but one, you say, "baptism with water represents the baptism of the Holy Ghost." If you had a clear perception of your subject, why should you so frequently have been guilty of such flagrant contradictions?

I am, &c.

LETTER VII.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

In this letter my observations will be somewhat miscellaneous.

You have grossly perverted my comment on the 7th of Mark; my exposition of the 4th verse, you have taken and applied to the 3d verse. The washing in these verses I considered were of two kinds, one referring to the hands, and the other to the body. Did I suppose that Christ had been to the market, bought provision, brought them to the pharisee's house, and that the pharisee marvelled because he did not wash these provisions before he ate? Certainly not. And had you discovered how palpably you had misrepresented my language, you would have suppressed your string of interrogatives, which, it seems, you uttered with much self-complacency.

In page 21st you say, "It appears the Jews expected from their prophecies, that when John, the predicted Elias, and the Messiah should come, they would administer baptism." In the 22nd page you say, "from these remarks it appears, that christian baptism was taught or foretold by the prophets." By christian baptism here you certainly mean that, which John administered. But on the next page you adduce many arguments to prove that John's baptism was not a christian rite.

You wonder why I passed over the famous text in 1 Cor. x. 1, 2. You seem to imagine I was apprized, that the passage would be refractory in my hands, if I attempted to shape it into an argument in my favour. No such fears were entertained. It is here said the Jews were all baptized *in* the cloud and *in* the sea. Between the passage of the Israelites through the sea, and baptism, there are some points of resemblance. The text must be taken figuratively by whomsoever employed. They went down into the sea, were quite surrounded by water, and then they came up out of the sea. So candidates for baptism go down into the water, and then come up out of the water. But between sprinkling and this march into the sea, and emerging from it, there are no points of resemblance. I know you say that it is highly probable they were sprinkled by the sprays, or fine particles of water, which flew from the breaking waves, and by mist from the cloud. We are told by the inspired pen-

man, that "the depths were *congealed* in the heart of the sea," Exo. xv. 8, and that they stood up like walls on each hand. How could sprays be blown from congealed walls of water?

Is there any more probability, that they were sprinkled from the cloud? This was not then over them, but between them and the Egyptians. Beside, the face of the cloud towards the Jews was red, like a pillar of fire, and there was not the least appearance of rain or mist about it. Moreover, the distance of this cloud from the van of the army of Israel must have been considerable. More than half a million marched into the sea. We are not told how wide was the channel, nor how broad their column. But it is likely that their line of march stretched over several miles. Now on your plan, a rain or mist must proceed from this *fiery* cloud, and then be driven by winds a number of miles so as to sprinkle the distant front of the army.

Perhaps you may think, that if I pass your submitted journal, I shall shrink from a hard task. I am not conscious of any fear to meet this or any other portion of your reasoning. Upon your journal I will just observe, that it doth not contain one word of scripture which was ever intended to describe your mode of administering this christian ordinance!

In page 37, you inform us that, "the ancient christians, when they baptized by immersion, were all baptized naked. As it might be expected, these baptisms were sometimes attended with great confusion and tumult. Some of the outrages, committed on these occasions, are too bad for description."

You do not I suppose mean to insinuate by your emphasis on the word immersion, that this was rarely practised in those primitive times? Because you have granted that immersion was the almost universal mode in the earliest ages. Neither could you mean that these *naked* folks, and this confusion and tumult, and these *outrages*, which "might be expected from" *this way of baptizing*, belong to the Baptists, because, according to *your chronology*, they did not exist till after the commencement of the 12th century. Wall mentions immediately after the passage you have quoted from him, an outrage, which took place in the great baptistery of Constantinople. See him, page 479. But this outrage was a military assault, which took place in consequence of hostilities between two contending

bishops, and which would have occurred, if sprinkling had been the practice. Was this passage in your eye, when you insinuated, that this outrage was the offspring of immersion? Was the *contention* of two ecclesiasticks, or *immersion*, the cause of this outrage?

Yours, &c.

LETTER VIII.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

Having finished your observations on the mode, you proceed to the more important particular, the subject of baptism.

You begin by quoting the great apostolical commission. I had maintained, that this commission does not contain infant baptism. This opinion of mine you viewed as a material error, and it was your object to refute this, as you thought, false sentiment. But, sir, you certainly appear in this in a very inconsistent attitude. You first labour at considerable length to prove that infant baptism is not contained in this commission. And you assign the reasons why it is not embraced. Infants, you contend, were baptized with proselyted parents, when they were admitted into the Jewish church. This practice, you say, the Apostles well knew, and therefore there was no need that infant baptism should be specifically mentioned in the commission. After this you tell us that "infant baptism appears to be contained in the commission, as penned by one evangelist." But, sir, if it were so evidently contained in this commission, or any where else in the Bible, why did you not proceed to show directly where it is expressly enjoined. Why did you not show book, chapter and verse, in which God had commanded believing parents to sprinkle their children? If infant baptism be contained in any part of scripture, you could have found the places where it is mentioned, and exhibited them, as easily as you could find proof of this practice in the Talmudic writings. If the Bible would furnish you with proof, why do you leave this, and resort to the doubtful testimonies of the rabbins? Yourself and Wall, and Lightfoot, and many others, support pedobaptism by arguments drawn from the Talmud or Misnah of Jewish doctors. By this conduct you proclaim to the world in the loudest manner your painful conviction, that infant baptism is not to be found in the oracles of truth.

For if you believed it was, why did you not bring your support from this infallible source, and not resort to the corrupt writings of superstitious Jews? This question I wish you seriously to consider.

You, and other learned men, can read the ponderous volumes of the traditionary writings of the Jews. And after tumbling over many pages, you may find what you think is proof of infant baptism. But what are private and common christians to do, who can have no access to these volumes? and if they had, they could not understand the language in which they are written. Can you believe that Christ left his church to gain their main proof for a positive institution from a source, which he himself pointedly condemned? How severely did he rebuke the Jews for holding to traditionary washings! See Mark vii. 3, 4, 7 and 8. "For the pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels and tables. Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups; and *many* other such like things ye do." *If proselyte* baptism then existed, it was but a tradition of men. And how can you tell but that Christ meant to put it down by this sweeping anathema? That the reader may see the ground you take, we present the following extracts from your Reply. "But it doth not follow from this, that they had no knowledge of baptism before this time. Had they been entirely ignorant of this rite, it seems that the commission given them would have been explicit, as to mode and subject, if it were designed that only one mode should be practised. But if they knew any thing about the rite of baptism, what they knew and what was in familiar use, needed not to be contained *specifically* in the commission.

"This principle is observed in civil laws. Legislators, when they pass an act, do not recapitulate the laws, which they had enacted, and with which the present one was connected. They presume that the people are acquainted with the laws existing; and of course they need not specify in one act what was contained in another,

with which it was intimately connected." You then proceeds to inquire what the Apostles knew, and what was the practice of baptism, when they received their commission. "The Apostles were Jews. They were well acquainted with the method of converting, or proselyting Gentiles, and of bringing them under the discipline of their religion. It is evident that the custom of the Jews before our Saviour's time (and as they themselves affirm, from the beginning of their law) was to baptize, as well as circumcise any proselyte that came over to them from the nations. This does fully appear both from the books of the Jews themselves, and also of others that understood the Jewish customs, and have written of them. They reckoned all mankind beside themselves to be in an unclean state, and not capable of being entered into the covenant of *Israelites* without a *washing* or baptism, to denote their purification from uncleanness.—And so in all ages when an Ethnic is willing to enter into covenant and gather himself under the wings of the Majesty of God, and take upon him the yoke of the law, he must be circumcised, and baptized, and bring a sacrifice; or if it be a woman, be baptized, and bring a sacrifice. As it is written; as you are, so shall the stranger be. How are you? By circumcision, and baptism, and bringing of a sacrifice.—It is to be observed, that if any such proselyte, who came over to the Jewish religion and was baptized into it, had any infant children then born to him; they also were at the Father's desire circumcised and baptized, and admitted as Proselytes. The child's inability to declare or promise for himself was not looked on as a bar against his reception into the covenant; but the desire of his father to dedicate him to the true God, was counted available and sufficient to justify his admission.

"This is also plainly proved and agreed by all the learned men aforesaid, and by all others, to have been the custom of the Jews; that if they found any child that had been exposed in the fields, woods, or highways by the Heathens; or if they took in war any infant children, whom they brought home as booty, and intended to bring them up in their religion, they baptized them in infancy and accounted them as proselytes.—These cases were very frequent.—So that Dr. Lightfoot says, *the baptizing of infants was a thing as well known in the church of the Jews, as ever it has been in the Christian church.* Wall's Hist. Inf. Bap. pt. 1. pp. 3, 9, 13.

“From these quotations, which are well substantiated, we see the Jews’ method of making proselytes from the heathen. The Apostles were Jews converted to christianity. Christ, when he gave them a commission, authorized them to proselyte heathen, not to the Jewish, but to the christian religion, if he had designed that they should have proselyted them in precisely the same manner, in which they had before proselyted them, he would, undoubtedly, have required his Apostles in general terms (not expressing the particulars of the method) to proselyte them, or he would have expressed all the particulars to which they were accustomed. Instead of this he commands his Apostles to *baptize* the Heathen, whom they should proselyte or convert. As he particularized baptism, and that only, it is a fair conclusion that he designed that circumcision and sacrifice should not be used at the initiation of Heathen into the christian church. Had he designed that any alteration should be made in respect to subjects, he would as probably have particularized in respect to them, as in respect to the method of admitting them. Had he particularized adults, and them only, it would be as fair conclusion that infants should be left out of the number of subjects to be proselyted, as that circumcision and sacrifice should be left out of the method of initiating them. But as he particularized nothing in respect to subjects, it is a fair conclusion that he designed that the same description of persons should be proselyted and baptized under the Christian dispensation, which had been under the Jewish dispensation.” pp. 41, 42, 43.

Here you lay down your first principles, your strong foundation, on which you rear your structure of Pedobaptism. For the present I will admit, for argument’s sake, your grand basis, and proceed to show that the broad principles, which you have adopted, will in their legitimate consequences overturn your whole theory.

1. If proselyte baptism be the origin of infant baptism, then this latter rests for its support, not on the Bible, but upon mere human tradition. See Wall, p. 53d, 1st pt. Ed. 2nd. No such institution is found in the law of God; or that any such ceremony was ever observed cannot be learned from the whole history of the Bible. At best it is only an invention of man.

2. You must hold to immersion. All the authorities on which you rely, teach you that proselytes were dipped when taken into the church. Of this, I can bring

the most direct and ample proof. But for brevity's sake, I shall only refer to the places where it may be found. I presume that neither you nor any of your brethren will dispute this, or ever wish to see it exhibited. Such proof is directly against your practice. See Wall, pp. 44, 45, 59. Now let us take for our guide one of your grand rules. "What the Apostles knew, and what was in familiar use respecting baptism needed not to be specifically contained in the commission." When they considered that Gentiles and their children were received into the Jewish church by *immersion*, they would rationally conclude, that when they were admitted into the christian church, they would be received the same way," i. e. by immersion. "For Christ made no alteration as to the mode of baptism." All this you farther confirm, when you say, p. 41, "If such a commission were given to a Baptist minister, he would undoubtedly conclude, that he was authorized to baptize according to the method, which he had before practised." The Apostles understood Christ to require dipping, and they immersed in obedience to his commands. All this you must admit, or deny your own sentiments. All your laboured remarks about the studied ambiguity of Christ vanish into air.

3. When you receive a believing man, you must baptize him, his wife, his children, and all his servants, whether they give evidence of grace or not. Says Wall, p. 48, "As Abraham of 99 years old, and Ishmael his son, of 13 years old, and all the males in his house that were eight days old or upward, were circumcised at the same time, so such a proselyte, with all his, were both baptized, (and circumcised if they were males) but if they were females, they were baptized." Now as the Apostles had been accustomed to see a man, when proselyted to the law of Moses, bring his wife, children and servants to baptism, would they not rationally conclude, that they must do the same in admitting members into the christian church? "For Christ gave no intimation to them, that he meant they should make any alteration either in the mode or the subjects."

4. Baptism must not be applied to those children, who are born after the conversion of their parents. See Wall, pp. 50 and 51. "What has been said of the baptism of children of proselytes, is to be understood of such children as were born before the parents themselves were

baptized; for all the children that were born to them afterwards, they reckoned, were clean by their birth; for he that is born of a baptized parent, is accounted as baptized. And Dr. Lightfoot gives this as their rule. *The sons of Proselytes, in following generations, were circumcised indeed; but not baptized—as being already Israelites.*”

As they employed this baptism to wash away the filth of heathenism, so they viewed it as improper to apply it to those, who were born in their church, and had never been polluted with paganism. The Apostles knew very well the design of proselyte baptism, and the extent of its application. Would they not then rationally conclude that it must be used for the same purpose and employed to the same extent in the christian church, seeing Christ gave them no intimation to the contrary? You consider the infants of believers as members of the kingdom of heaven, by which, you mean the church. From their membership you infer, that they ought to be baptized. See p. 58. But the ancient Jews from their *membership* inferred that they ought *not to be baptized*.

I know that you have endeavored to prove the perpetuity of christian baptism by the words of Christ: “Except a man (tis, any one) be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.” But this is a direction to those, who are *out* of the kingdom; and not to those, who are *in* the kingdom. The word, tis, any one, doth not embrace church members, but non-professors. Hence this text on your plan will not prove the perpetuity of baptism.

5. You must say, that baptism is no mark of parental and divine obligation, or no sign of a covenant between God and believing parents, respecting their children. The apostles well knew, that proselyte baptism was designed “to denote their forsaking and washing off from them all their former profane and heathen practices.” Again you say, by citing Wall, “They reckoned all mankind, beside themselves, to be in an unclean state, and not capable of being entered into the covenant of Israel, without a cleansing or baptism, to *denote* their purification from their uncleanness.” This design of baptism the apostles well knew, and there was “no need of its being *specifically mentioned* in their commission.” They would therefore “rationally conclude, that when converts were made to christianity,” baptism must be em-

ployed upon them for the same purpose, as it was on Jewish proselytes: viz. "to denote their washing off the uncleanness of paganism," to be fit members of the church of God. As Christ, the great legislator of Zion, gave no intimations, when he issued the apostolic commission, that he intended any change in the design and extent of baptism, so, as you reason, they would fairly infer from this silence, that no alteration was meant, and of course they would continue the practice without any alteration in its design or extent of application. All this is confirmed by your own words. "When Christ required his apostles to proselyte the heathen to Christianity, they would proselyte, as they *understood* the *method* of proselyting, and as they had been accustomed, and Christ, unless he *taught them to the contrary*, would expect it of them." "From these remarks it appears that the reasonings of some Socinians, Quakers, and Mr." M's, will all equally conclude against the *design* and *perpetuity* of Christian baptism.

6. If you will maintain, that christian baptism succeeds to proselyte baptism, you cannot then, without gross absurdity, say that it comes in the lieu of circumcision. That you do infer infant baptism from these two opposite sources is abundantly evident. See p. 57. Circumcision and proselyte baptism were different in their nature and design. Now to say that infant baptism is a substitute for circumcision, and yet the *successor* of proselyte baptism, is as incorrect, as to say, that two fountains of opposite natures, *salt* and *fresh*, should nevertheless both send forth streams which perfectly resemble each other, though they flow from springs of dissimilar qualities. While you reason from both of those different topics in favour of the same rite, you appear like a man, who rears with one hand, and demolishes with the other. Says Mr. Hill, a presbyter of Bath and Wells, England: "Those who say baptism succeeds circumcision, virtually confess the Jews had no such baptism, as that of *Proselytes*, for if there was such a rite among them, and our Lord took this ordinance from it, they ought to say our baptism succeeds to that, and not circumcision. These same persons, it is true, at other times, derive it from the Jewish baptism too; which plainly discovers their great prejudices and partiality, and how inconsistent they are with themselves." See Gale, p. 379.

7. You must advocate the use of God-fathers and mothers. According to Mr. Wall, the Apostles had, before they received their commission, been familiarly acquainted with the use of sponsors in favour of infants of proselytes. "As the Jews required that for an infant proselyte, either his father, or else the consistory, (or church) of the place, or at least three grave persons, should answer or undertake at his baptism; so the christians did the same; putting the several interrogatories of the creed, and of the renunciation and requiring the child's answer by his parents or other sponsors." Wall, p. 59. Introduction.

This author, it seems, traces the origin of sponsors in the christian church to their use in the introduction of the children of proselytes into the Jewish church.

8. If this be the foundation of infant baptism, then persons baptizing themselves, without any administrator at all, will be supported by it, as this was unquestionably the way in which the baptisms referred to were sometimes observed.

Thus we have shown some of the inevitable consequences of your theory. If it were reduced to general practice, all our churches would at once be changed into Jewish synagogues, and this rite of initiation would be attended with all the ceremonies of their superstitious rabbins.

We will conclude this examination in your own words with a little variation. "He lays down his arguments, respecting pagans, converted to Judaism, and draws his conclusions, respecting Gentiles converted to christianity. This is a species of reasoning which does not well agree with the rules of logic."

The reader will bear in mind that thus far I have only granted, for argument's sake, what I do not believe to be true; viz. That proselyte baptism existed in the days of Christ and the Apostles. That it existed some time after, I do not deny. The reasons of my belief I will briefly assign.

1. The Old Testament no where mentions or alludes to such a ceremony as proselyte baptism. It tells how proselytes were to be admitted, and how they were actually received. There was only one law for the stranger and for the home born Israelite. See Exod. xii. 48, 49. The particular ceremonies to be observed at the marriage

of a Jew to a pagan woman, taken in war, are mentioned in Deut. xxi. 10, but nothing is here said of her being baptized. When Ezra returned from Babylon many pagans separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen, and united with the Jews in eating the pass-over, but no mention is here made of their baptism.

2. There is no mention of this kind of baptism in the New Testament. Proselytes are mentioned, Matt. xxiii. 15. Acts, ii. 10, and vi. 5, and xiii. 43. But nothing is here said respecting their mode of admission. If it then prevailed, why no mention of it in the baptisms of John, of Christ, and the Apostles ?

3. Gill, in his dissertation on this subject, shows that there is no mention made of proselyte baptism, by any authors who wrote before the days of Christ, nor by any, who wrote for some time after the days of the Apostles. It is not mentioned by Philo, the Jew, who lived in the first century; nor in the rabbinical books of this time, nor by Josephus who wrote a little after Philo; though he treats of the religious ceremonies and customs of the Jews and speaks of many Gentiles, nay, of whole nations, coming over to Judaism; and speaks of their being circumcised, but nothing of their baptism. He particularly mentions Helena, queen of Adiabone, but says nothing of her baptism, though he mentioned the circumcision of her son, nor in the Chaldee paraphrases, nor in the Misnah, or book of Jewish traditions, nor in the commentaries on the pentateuch written, A. D. 300, nor by any of the christian fathers of the first three or four centuries.

The two Talmuds, the Jerusalem and Babylonish, were compiled, the first about A. D. 230, and the latter about 500. The last was abridged by Maimonedes in A. D. 1100. The authority which Wall brings from them in support of his theory is of such a doubtful character, that to it I would make no reply.

4. Proselytes to the Jewish religion were baptized when admitted into the christian church. There were proselytes among the three thousand, who were baptized on the day of Pentecost. The Eunuch was a proselyte; but yet he was baptized when he embraced christianity. But if he had been baptized before, would not this look like rebaptization ?

The doctor concludes his dissertation then with boldly asserting, after the most minute inquiry, that this custom

of baptizing children was so far from being common in all ages, foregoing the times of John, Christ, and his Apostles, that not a single instance can be given of any one that ever was then baptized." And adds, in the words of Dr. Owen, "that the opinion of some learned men concerning transferring the rite of Jewish baptism by the Lord Jesus, which indeed did not then exist, for the use of his disciples, is destitute of all probability." To these names I could add those of Lardner, Jennings, Buddeus, Danzius, and many others. Whoever wishes to read on this subject may consult Gill and Innes. In p. 43, you say, "As he particularized baptism and that only, it is a *fair conclusion* that he designed that circumcision and sacrifice, should not be used at the initiation of heathen into the Christian church." Here you tell us, that the *silence* of Christ, *respecting circumcision*, furnished a fair conclusion, that he meant it should be dropped. This is certainly your meaning, as will appear to any one, who will read the period and the whole paragraph. Now let us turn to the 62nd page. Here you say, "When Paul was charged with denying circumcision to the children of the Jews, Mr. C. wonders why he did not exonerate himself by saying," "You know that I sprinkle them as a substitute," "and brings in Dr. Baldwin to help him wonder, and to help him out. Suppose the Apostle had told the Jews, that the law of circumcision was abrogated, and that he administered baptism in its place, would this have satisfied them? They were accustomed to circumcise and baptize those who were proselyted to their religion. When they were proselyted to christianity, and they knew that baptism was a rite of introduction into the church, they would naturally infer, till they were taught otherwise, that *circumcision would also be used.*"

Here, when you would overthrow my reasoning, you maintain, that from the silence of Christ about circumcision, the Jews would naturally infer that he meant it should be *continued*; but in page 43 you maintain, that the silence of Christ, about circumcision in his commission to the Apostles, would lead them "fairly to conclude, that he meant it should be *dropped.*" What a potent argument is *silence*, to what different purposes it may be turned? I wonder, sir, who helped you into this deep contradiction, and I wonder who will help you out.

Beside, who *taught* the Apostles, previous to the council at Jerusalem, "to do otherwise" than to circumcise and

baptize their converts? And how happened they to *drop* this rite, when they had a *natural* reason to infer from the silence of Christ, that he meant it should be continued? And how came the complaint of its discontinuance to arise in the church? Moreover, if, as you say, the church at Jerusalem would naturally infer, that Christ meant that both circumcision and baptism should be continued, side by side, when did Christ teach them their mistake, and that he meant they should substitute the latter for the former?

You remark that the Greek word in the commission to teach, "signifies, to convert, to proselyte, to disciple, or make disciples." If it be asked, can any be converted, or be made disciples, without instruction, or without a capability of it? We reply, it seems to be implied in what Peter said that discipleship extended to children. Peter said, "why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" Acts xv. 10. This is your *seeming* proof that infants are disciples, or that persons may be discipled without *instruction*. But all the strength of your argument, and at best it has but little, lies in the meaning of the word *yoke*. Did the Apostle mean by it, circumcision simply? Or did he not mean the whole ritual law? That he did mean the ceremonial law is the opinion of Scott, Gill, and other expositors.

The observance of this law formed a heavy yoke. By putting the yoke on the neck, is meant the imposing of the obligation to observe the Mosaic law. Certainly then the Apostles did not debate, whether it were duty to impose this yoke, this obligation to keep the typical law, on helpless infants. In order to retort upon me the charge of inconsistency, you represent me, as holding that John's ministry and that of the Apostles, after the resurrection, formed two distinct dispensations. In p. 46, you quote me thus: Mr. C. "by way of *inference* from the preceding dispensation," says, "under these circumstances the Apostles would naturally continue to use water in the same manner, and upon the same subjects as before." 'Here we see Mr. C. who adheres so closely to the commission, come down from the mountain where it was given, and plunge himself in Jordan, to discover what is the mode, and who are the proper subjects of baptism.'

Did I, sir, consider John's ministry as forming a dispensation, distinct from that of the Apostles after Christ's ascension? No, sir, you have twice granted before, that I viewed John's ministry as the beginning of the gospel dispensation. How could you then say that I enforced the mode and the subject of baptism from John's ministry, as from a preceding and separate dispensation? With entire consistency I could refer back to the ministry of John, and not argue from one dispensation to another. I am sorry to see so much evidence, that your propensity to wit leads you to violate the laws of candor. Certainly the above remarks "come with great infelicity" from you, after your concessions and formal assurance, that "care has been used not to *misrepresent* the meaning of the author of the Letters."

In the last paragraph of this letter, you observe, Mr. C. "first takes us according to our understanding of the commission, as it is recorded by Matthew, and says, we are sanguine that it embraces infants. He then takes us according to our understanding of a *part* of the commission, as it was recorded by Mark, and says, we seem to be equally sure that it doth not embrace them. Because we say, that infant baptism appears to be contained in the commission 'as penned by one evangelist, and that it does not appear to be contained in a detached part of the commission as it is penned by another evangelist, he represent us grossly inconsistent, and contradicting ourselves."

The detached part of the commission, to which you here allude is this: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not," &c. In this detached *part* of the commission, as recorded by Mark, you grant that infant baptism "*does not* appear to be contained," but you suppose it is contained in the other part of the commission, for the commissions in Matthew and Mark "are not contrariant." Let us then quote the other part of Mark's commission, that the reader may see, whether infant baptism is contained in this part. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." This is the other part of the commission in which you maintain that infant baptism is to be found. Here is a command to *preach* the gospel to every creature. You will, I presume, go with me some distance in limiting the phrase, *every* creature. You will not say that Christ meant to command the Apostles to preach the gospel to babes, or to the deaf and insane. If you say that the command to preach the gospel be limited to adults and those

capable of hearing it, then you must show, how the command to *preach* the gospel to a specified class of beings, is at the same time a command to *baptize* a different and unspecified class of beings. But though you laboured so long to prove that infant baptism is contained in the commission, yet after all, do you not mean to maintain that it is not contained? What was in familiar use about baptism, "needed not to be specifically *contained* in the *commission*." Your meaning is certainly this: that as the Apostles had been accustomed to see proselytes and their infants baptized, when taken into the Jewish church, this well known custom was a sufficient guide; therefore infant baptism needed not to be specified in the commission. If I understand you, you mean to support infant baptism, not because it is contained in the commission, but because it is *not* prohibited. It is because Christ is perfectly silent on this subject, because he particularizes nothing in respect to subject, whether adult or infant; from all this silence you conclude, that Christ meant we should baptize infants. You illustrate yourself by an appeal to the conduct of legislators. So you maintain that the law of infant baptism was in force before the commission was issued, and as Christ in it was perfectly *silent* respecting the repeal of this previous law, the conclusion is fair that he meant it should remain. The utter silence of Christ in this commission about infant baptism is your argument in favour of its perpetuity. After all, then, doth it not appear that you agree with the Baptists, that infant baptism is not contained in the apostolic commission?

Remarking on the Jailer, you say, "Whatever this salvation was, which was promised to his house, it was to come upon them in consequence of his faith." This is a very extraordinary expression. You are in this opinion, I believe, quite alone. No commentator that I have ever consulted agrees with you. I had supposed that Pedobaptists maintain that converting grace comes on their children to a greater or less extent in consequence of their fidelity in fulfilling the conditions of a peculiar covenant, existing between them and God in relation to their children; and not that their children are to be saved in consequence of their common faith in Christ. The jailer is exhorted to believe in Christ, and not in this particular covenant, and this his faith in Christ, you say, was to save his family. If this be true, then the children of believing Baptists in Christ are as sure of salvation as those

of Pedobaptists. "If," say you, "it be admitted *he* rejoiced and believed with all his house, it does not follow, that *they* rejoiced and believed with him. But a short time ago Mr. C. believed with the people of his charge, that immersion of believers was the only christian baptism. But *they* did not believe the same with him. He rejoiced with them at the new light, which was poured in upon his mind. But they wept with him." This wit, sir, may tickle the ears of superficial readers, but it will carry no conviction to the honest inquirer after truth. Are you satisfied of this childish quibble? Will you say the word *with*, in the following passages expresses a union in *spot*, but no similarity of feeling? "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them. Rejoice with them, that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece, which was lost. Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or if one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." Does the word *with* in all these places express a union of *spot*, or a union of joy and sorrow?

You express your belief, that there were no males present when Lydia was converted. Hence you infer that the brethren, whom Paul found in her house, were not members of her family, when she was baptized. That there were men, who assembled at that place of worship is highly probable. Mr. Scott says, "It seems that the Jews, in this city, had no synagogue with rulers; but there was a small oratory without the city by the river's side, where a few people were accustomed to assemble for the worship of God on the Sabbath day." To this house Paul and Silas resorted on the Sabbath day, probably to have an opportunity to preach the Gospel to the Jews, who might then assemble. It seems that before public service commenced, they sat down and conversed on religious subjects in a free manner with some women, who had early convened. Without doubt this house of prayer was built for the united public worship of both sexes. Will you say that these public services were to be conducted wholly by *female speakers*?

In page 51 you say, if it be improbable that Lydia had young children with her, "it is not improbable she might take servants with her, who composed her household." The word *doulos*, servant, when it is used as the correlate to master, means the same as slave. Such slaves then

existed both among Jews and Gentiles. To such Paul says, "art thou called, being a servant? care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free use it rather." Christ asks, "which of you having a servant ploughing, &c. Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters." 1 Cor. vii. 21, Luke xvii. 7, Eph. vi. 5. Such were the servants of Lydia, if she possessed any. These servants, you maintain, Paul would have baptized solely on the ground of her faith. Here then you exhibit Paul as teaching, that converted masters ought to bring to baptism all their unconverted servants, or slaves. It seems then, that the free spirit of the gospel was no objection in the Apostle's mind against the baptism of slaves on their master's faith. But in the 63d page, you maintain, that christian masters ought not to bring their slaves to baptism, because "the slave trade and the holding of slaves are" not "agreeable to the laws and regulations of Christ." How then happened Paul to cherish an opinion, so hostile to the very genius of the gospel, as to be willing to baptize all the servants of Lydia, and thus to sanction their bondage? Did he not understand the nature of Christ's religion as well as yourself? If he were now on the earth, would he contradict the propriety of his ancient practice, and forbid believing masters to bring their slaves to this ordinance, but command them to manumit all their servants, because their slavery was against the laws and regulations of Christ? How can it be *wrong* to baptize servants *now*, on the profession of their holders, if such a practice were *right* in the days of Paul? The nature of the gospel, and the laws and regulations of Christ, have suffered no change. I had said that if Pedobaptism should universally prevail, then the commission must be read in this reversed order: He that is baptized and believeth after his baptism shall be saved. To this you reply, "If this serious difficulty should occur, they might recite, without reversing their order, these words: "Except a man be born of *water* and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," and "they will answer just as well." For what will it answer just as well? Not to support, but to ruin your whole Pedobaptist theory. For in these words Christ makes evidence of the spiritual birth essential for entrance into the kingdom of God. But in direct opposition to this you maintain, that if what you deem to be truth, were universally believed and loved, then all parents

would bring their infants to baptism, and consequently, that every addition to the visible kingdom of God ought to be of those, who, on account of age, could give no evidence, that they had been born of the spirit. If then your plan were carried out, the difference between you and Christ would be this: Our Saviour says, "Except a man be born of the *spirit*, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." No *one* should enter this kingdom without evidence of this birth. But you believe that were it not for the error of some, and the unbelief of others, all would and ought to be united, or annexed to this kingdom without any evidence, that they have been born of the spirit.

In your fifteenth letter, page 56, you grant, that the primary and most important design of circumcision was to show the want of a new heart, and not its actual possession. Its principal use was *typical*. Now if infant sprinkling be its substitute, then the primary and most important use of this ceremony must be typical. You say, "When it is applied to infants, it signifies, that they need the sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit." To consider baptism as typical, I must view as a great error. One grand difference between the ceremonies of the two dispensations, I conceive to be this: those of the former were shadows of good things *to come*; but those of the latter, signs of good things *already come*. You remark, when it is applied to adults, it is a sign, that they have been purified. But where can you find proof that baptism is a *sign* of *present* good, and also the *shadow* of *future* good? "Baptism," say you, "is a seal or token on the part of believers, that they have faith in Christ. When they consecrate themselves, or their offspring to God in baptism, this act is an expression or token of their belief in him, who has promised; and a seal which they set to the covenant into which they have entered, that they will fulfil all their covenant engagements. On the part of God, it is a seal, or pledge of the same covenant that he will fulfil the promises, which he has made to them and to their children." These lines without doubt contain the stamina of your whole system, when you reason from circumcision. But as these are round assertions, unsustained by any scripture proof, I conclude, that your want of time, and your intention to publish on this subject, moved you to reserve your support of them to appear in your promised treatise. So that I shall look

to find substantial evidence to vindicate the opinion, that infant-sprinkling is the sign or seal of a solemn vow or promise, both on the part of God and on that of parents, respecting their children. This supposed design of infant baptism, you never fail to state and press as one of the most powerful arguments to enforce on parents and their baptized children the performance of their reciprocal duties. If the children of professors are notorious for their impiety, the conclusion is, that their parents have failed to fulfil their vows. For you maintain that if the conditions of the covenant are kept, then "they will receive the promises." Hence when the children of believers are distinguished for their piety, the inference is, that baptismal vows have been faithfully observed. Do you not frequently in your prayers and exhortations, remind parents, that the vows they make at the font in favour of their children, are solemn and of the highest moment, and that fidelity on their part will save their posterity, while a breach of covenant will expose them to endless ruin. And when you expostulate with these children, do you ever fail to tell them, that they were consecrated to God in their infancy, and brought under the covenant which they are now bound to acknowledge by their own public profession, and if they refuse, they are exposed to the pains of excision from the people of God. Pedobaptism in your view and in that of your brethren is the most popular and powerful argument to enforce the relative duties of parents and children. Now if the apostles had the same view of baptism, it is utterly unaccountable, that they never on any occasion should have employed it for the same practical purposes. The apostle Paul was a man of rare powers, and had a mind highly enriched and embellished with science and literature. He was master of the various topics which he discussed. He displayed much adroitness, in availing himself of the most natural and popular arguments in his favour. Why did he and all the rest, while inculcating the mutual duties of parents and their children, omit, at all times, to mention the oath of parents and the dedication of children by the sacred rite of baptism?

The inspired penmen were conscious that they were writing for posterity, and that the sacred Canon was designed to form a complete body of theoretical and practical divinity for the guidance of all future generations. If then Pedobaptism held in their view, as conspicuous a place in religious education, as it does in the view of its

modern advocates, they without doubt would have given it a prominent place among the appropriate arguments to persuade parents to train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But on this argument they preserve a profound silence throughout all their writings.

If, as some say, there were no reasons for a particular command for infant baptism, yet it is truly surprising, that they should never on any occasion have mentioned it incidentally for the purpose of argument and illustration. They informed believers that they had been buried and raised with Christ in baptism, and hence they encouraged their hope of the future resurrection of their bodies. They assured believers, that they had been buried with Christ by baptism. Hence they urged upon them their obligations to walk in newness of life. If any, after he had symbolically put off and buried the old man of sin in the watery grave, apostatized, he should be viewed as an apparition, or ghost, who had risen from the dead, to mingle again with the wicked world. Paul reasons from baptism, when he reproved the disorderly walk of professors, who by that rite had engaged to lead a godly life. But where has he ever employed Pedobaptism in administering reproof or commendation to professing parents for their neglect or fidelity in the religious education of their children? He exhorts parents to be faithful to their offspring; but he never enforces his exhortation by reminding them of their baptismal vows. And he often exhorts children to be obedient to their parents and to early repentance; but he never gathers arguments from their infant sprinkling to enforce his exhortations. Now, sir, peruse the treatises, the sermons and addresses of modern Pedobaptists on religious education, and you will find, that infant baptism holds the first rank in all their arguments to enforce parental and filial duties. But consult the inspired penmen on this same subject, and you will find that they are perfect strangers to arguments of this kind. In the sacred records the duties and advantages of baptism are exclusively confined to adult believers. But in the writings of the moderns, its advantages are almost wholly confined to infants and children. This difference in the practical uses of baptism between the Apostles and our opponents, is perfectly unaccountable, unless we grant that their views of the nature and design of this ordinance are correspondingly different.

I am, &c.

LETTER IX.

Rev. and dear Sir,

In your sixteenth letter you criticise my reasonings on various passages of scripture, which have been viewed as favouring Pedobaptism.

I shall pass a number of texts, and begin with your observations on 1 Cor. vii. 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."

On my exposition of this verse, you remark, "Let him produce another instance in the scriptures, in which sanctified and holy are used to express *legitimacy*, and we will grant there is some plausibility, for his interpretation." Your own comment, sir, on this text furnishes authority to say, that to sanctify, means in this text, the same as to legitimate, or to make lawful. Your exposition of this verse is this: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified to (en) the wife; and the unbelieving wife is sanctified to (en) the husband; that is, these unbelievers *are set apart* to their believing partners, agreeably to the original institution of marriage." The verb, to legitimate, means, according to Johnson, to make lawful. The unbelieving wife, you justly say, is sanctified to the husband, i. e. she is, according to the original institution of marriage, rendered *lawful* to be possessed in the connubial state. From this sanctified or legitimated marriage proceeds the holiness of the children of such wedlock. According to you, sir, this *matrimonial legitimacy* produces *religious, or ceremonial sanctity*. If so, then infant baptism is founded upon the sanctification of marriage, and all the children of Pagans, begotten in holy wedlock, are proper subjects of this ordinance.

At Corinth there were some, who doubted the propriety of marriage under any circumstances. They doubted, whether it were proper for the unmarried to enter wedlock, and whether it were proper to continue in it, even when *both parties* were believers. Their scruples were not confined to the propriety of the cohabitation of a believer and unbeliever. There is no evidence that they had any allusion to the prohibition of marriage, between Jews and Pagans, in Exod. xxxiv. 16. and Ezra x. 3. But it appears, as Scott on the place, says,

that "some of them pleaded for the lawfulness of fornication; others seem to have imbibed the sentiments of the Pythagorians, and to have deemed marriage, itself, inconsistent with christian purity, or at least inimical to intellectual improvement." It seems that they wrote to the Apostle to have him solve this general question: whether marriage under any circumstances was consistent with that purity of life and intellectual improvement, which ought to be sought by every pious individual. On this question the Apostle kept his eye, and to it he meant to give a direct answer. In doing which he first took up the case of the unmarried, and granted that for those, who had the gift of continency, it was best to remain in a single state. But those, who had not this gift, he exhorted to marry, to escape temptations to lewdness.

He then took up the case of the married, where *both* parties were believers; and exhorted the wife not to part from her husband, and the husband not to put away his wife. See ver. 10, 11. He next went to the case, where the parties were unequally yoked; one a believer, the other an unbeliever. Neither did he allow these to part, and violate the marriage vow. They doubted the propriety of continuing in marriage, not simply on account of the opposition in their religion, but for the same reasons, which led two believers to doubt, whether they should remain together. They did not doubt but the ceremony of marriage had been correctly performed, nor whether their marriage were agreeable to the laws of their country; but whether marriage at any time and under any circumstances was consistent with great purity of life. That this was their question appears from Paul's answer. After exhorting them to remain together, he gave his reason why they should. "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." Their being thus set apart or sanctified for each other's matrimonial use at the time of their marriage, is the reason, which Paul gives, why they should still cohabit. But what does this prove? Simply this, that marriage was consistent with purity of life, and that the Pythagorian philosophy, which they had imbibed, was, in this particular, incorrect. And this was just what they wished to know, and the reasoning of Paul exactly met their question. But if their question were simply, whether a christian and

an idolater should live together in the connubial state ; then Paul's reply would have been irrelative. This may be illustrated. Suppose in the days of Ezra, a *Jew*, who had a *Pagan* wife, had come to the high priest, and asked him, whether his continuance with his companion were consistent with the laws of the nation. But the priest in answer goes on to prove that in Pagan countries, when a Pagan marries a Pagan, they are mutually set apart, or sanctified for each other's use, agreeably to the original institution of marriage, and therefore marriage among *them* was consistent with the laws of purity. Would not the Jew have said to him, "your answer, sir, does not apply to my case. I do not doubt all that you have said respecting the propriety of marriage among *Pagans*, but I wish to know, whether the *Jewish* laws will allow me to retain my Pagan companion?" If then the question which these persons put to Paul were virtually the same with that of the above Jew, then the answer, which he gave them, would have been as *wide* from the point, as that of the high priest. But if we take their question to be, whether marriage under any circumstances was proper, then the Apostle's answer is direct and satisfactory. It was virtually this: you need not scruple the propriety of continuing together, because, when you were first united, you were then set apart or sanctified for each other, agreeable to the *divine* and original institution of marriage. But if it were not so, i. e. if your opinion respecting the lawfulness of marriage in any state is correct, then it would follow that all your children, whether begotten before or since one of you have been converted, would be unclean, or illegitimate; but now, seeing your marriage all along from your day of espousals has been proper or lawful, your children are holy, or begotten in lawful wedlock. The more this text is examined, the less aid will it afford Pedobaptism. It was once one of my main pillars. But after reasoning upon it in a great variety of ways to make it, if possible, conclude in my favour, I was obliged to leave it out of the debate, as affording me no support.

I will conclude in the words of Musculus. "Formerly I have abused this place against the Baptists, thinking the meaning was, that the children were holy for their parents' faith, which the present place makes nothing for the purpose. And I hope that upon reading this, that every one that has abused it to such a purpose will make.

the like acknowledgments; for I am sure they ought."

You seem to imagine, that my opinion, that the good olive tree was a symbol of Christ, is attended with difficulties and inconsistencies. According to my theory, you say, the unbelieving Jews were broken off from Christ. You ask, "Were these deniers, these persecutors of Christ, ever united with him? If they were united with him, it was either spiritually, or professionally. He will not say, that *unbelievers* were united with him by *faith*. Neither will he say that they, who denied him, professed his name. How then were they united with him? If they were not united with him, how could they be broken off?—Let it be admitted that the olive tree represents the Jewish church, and these difficulties vanish." I would just observe, that I do not see any particular difficulty in accounting for the removal of the unbelieving Jews, whether we consider them, as standing merely by profession in Christ, or in the Jewish church. But we wish the reader to notice that your reasonings against my views of the olive tree, apply with all their point against yourself. Permit me, in my turn to ask, how were these unbelieving Jews united to the church? and from what were they broken off? Upon your theory, they were broken off from the church of God. Were then these deniers, these persecutors of Christ, ever united with his church? If they were united with the church, it was either spiritually, or professionally. You will not say, that *unbelievers* were united with the church by *faith*. How then were they united with the church? If they were not united with the church, how then could they be broken off? If you will answer these questions, we shall be able to answer yours.

After you had given a description of the kingdom of a certain prince, and of an invasion of his dominions, and of the enrolment of his subjects, you say, "this kingdom is the church; these little ones, enrolled for discipline, for future service, are children, consecrated to God by baptism. In them we behold miniatures of a future soldiery, who will quit themselves like men under the Captain of their salvation."

The word miniature, means a representation in a small compass, less than the reality. Do you then see in these little infants and children, little friends to God? little saints, little soldiers of the cross? who have that love to Christ and to his kingdom, which will move them, as

soon as they can wield the weapons of the spiritual armory, to join "the sacramental hosts of God's" elect, to fight the battles of the Lord? Do you not at other times tell them, that they are the children of wrath, that they come into the world with a propensity to sin, which, if grace do not prevent, will soon disclose itself in open hostility to the righteous government of God? Do you not exhort them to cease from their rebellion, lest, by delay, they provoke this Prince of peace, and they perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little? Yet these children are little saints, little friends to Christ and to his cause.

On p. 67th you quote me thus, "that Paul did not take the law of circumcision for his guide in applying the rite of baptism, is evident from the fact that he required a christian believer to dispense with baptism in relation to his unbelieving wife." See 1 Cor. vii. 12. My argument here you say is this: "parents were required to circumcise their *male* children and servants." These words, sir, you must have known, did not fully state my argument. Had you possessed the candour to have stated it fairly, you would have found no room to amuse yourself with your witty inferences, which you drew from premises of your own fabrication. You deal in this place very freely in points of exclamation. But I see nothing to excite surprise, but your own ungenerous management. In this place you say, "The law of circumcision was explicit, and specified *males*." This positive law, you contend, will not grant the liberty to baptize *females*. Tell me then, will you, sir, by what authority you sprinkle *female infants*? For them you cannot plead scripture, example, law, or precept. Will you say that the proselyte law is your guide in baptizing females, but the law of circumcision your guide in relation to males? If so, what, after all, will you do with female infants of Jewish parents? You cannot say the baptism of such Gentile children will authorize you to baptize Jewish female children. Because you inform us, that the baptism of a *Gentile woman* gave no license to baptize a *Jewish woman*. Hence you say, it was proper that Jewish women should be *particularly mentioned*, as having a right to this ordinance. If then the baptism of a Gentile woman will not justify the baptism of a Jewish woman, neither will the baptism of a female Gentile infant justify the baptism of Jewish female children. If you were now invited to baptize such a child, would you comply? And by

what authority would you proceed? You attach great importance to your supposed proof, that John's ministry and baptism did not belong to the gospel dispensation, which, you say, did not begin till after the death of Christ. Your principal argument is, "that the Jewish ritual continued in force till the passion of Christ." To this I answer; the introduction of the gospel dispensation, and the gradual formation of the gospel church, were never intended to infringe the regular observance of the ceremonial law, till the crucifixion. Mr. Scott says, "This new dispensation would not interfere with the law of Moses." See him on Luke 16th. This, your argument, therefore, is by no means conclusive. In farther proof that the gospel dispensation did not commence till the death of Christ, you adduce these words: "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." If it were *come*, you think such language would not be used. But this argument will lose its force, when we reflect, that this phrase generally expresses an event, as *very near*, and also events already in existence. Hence, if the gospel church or dispensation did not commence exactly at the opening of John's ministry, it will not follow, that it did not begin till after the ascension. You very justly remark, that in your quotations and observations, it is immaterial whether we take the words, kingdom of heaven, to mean the gospel church, or the gospel dispensation, because they were *cotemporary*. If then we can prove that the kingdom of heaven existed during the ministry of John, our point is gained. The first text which we shall bring, is Matt. xi. 12. "And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." But how could it suffer violence during this specified period, if it had no *existence*? Luke xvi. 16. "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." Matt. xxiii. 13. "Wo unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." They refused to go in themselves, and obstructed the entrance of others. But how could they shut up the doors of a kingdom, which was not then in being? See Matt. xii. 28. "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." But how could it come nigh, if it did not then exist? See Matt. xxi. 31, and 43. It is abundantly evident

that John and Christ acted in harmony. Christ was the bridegroom and John the friend of the bridegroom. The disciples whom they collected, formed but one body of visible believers. This body Christ called the salt of the earth, the light of the world, a city set on an hill. Between this body and the Jewish church, there was no fellowship, but steady opposition. When one of these brethren was offended by another brother, he was directed, as the last resort, "to tell it to the church." What church? The Jewish church with their high priests and rulers, who were the most deadly enemies to Christ and his followers? It is not very probable that he would direct them to lay their grievances before this unfriendly tribunal. Who then composed this church? Mr. Scott says it was composed of "the teachers and professors of the gospel." See him on the place. Here then we have pretty strong proof, that a church existed, distinct from that of the Jews and before the death of Christ, which formed an ecclesiastical tribunal.

Schluesner says, that the verb *engizō*, translated *is at hand*, means, in some cases, an event already come. For instances in which *ēngike* is used to express time, already come, we quote Matt. xxi. 34, "And when the time of the fruit, (*ēngizen*) drew near, he sent," &c. That the time of gathering fruit had actually *come*, is evident from the parallel texts in Mark xii. 2, &c. and Luke xx. 10, which see. Mark i. 15, "The time *is fulfilled*, and the kingdom of God, *ēngiken*, is at hand." Here the phrase *is at hand*, or the verb *ēngiken*, means, that the kingdom of God had actually come. Luke x. 9 and 11, "The kingdom of God *ēngiken*, *is come nigh* unto you." Who can doubt but Christ meant to assert, that the kingdom of God had then actually come, and that the peculiar aggravation of the sin of those inhabitants, consisted in their rejection of this kingdom?

You seem to rely most on the words, "he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he." Hence you infer, that John was not *in* the kingdom of heaven. If we can ascertain the two things, between which the comparison is made, we shall then see the force of this argument. Did Christ then mean to make a comparison between different *degrees* of intellectual power? If so, then it will follow, that the person who possesses the weakest mental powers in the christian church is endowed with greater mental powers than John. This no one

will admit. Is the comparison between different degrees of grace or holiness in the soul? Will you say that you have the least share of grace of any in the church, and yet maintain, that you have *more* holiness, than the harbinger of Christ, and, in this respect, are greater than John? Is the comparison between different degrees of spiritual light, then it will follow, that the saint, who now has the most obscure and limited views of divine things, has more knowledge of the plan of redemption, than John, so that the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he! No one, I apprehend, will admit that John's views of divine things were more obscure, than are the views of the most benighted believer, in the gospel church.

But if the comparison lie between the grace of *humility* and extraordinary *prophetic endowments and honours*, we shall be free from the above difficulties. The comparison now only proves, that while John in his prophetic office and honours in pointing out and baptizing the Lamb of God, was greater than any of his predecessors; yet *that* man who has the graces of humility and meekness, and thinks himself the least, the most unworthy; in the kingdom of heaven, is more highly favoured and honored than John, so far as his prophetic office and honors were concerned. This will not prove that he was out of the kingdom of heaven, or destitute of humility. It only proves that grace in the soul is more honorable and important than prophetic light and external honors. The view that we have taken of this passage is, as we believe, supported by Matt. xviii. 4. "Whosoever therefore humbleth himself as this little child, the same is the *greatest* in the kingdom of heaven." "As this is the spirit of the kingdom, they who are most lowly and indifferent about consequence and preeminence, and most willing to be little, inferior, and neglected, must be the greatest; and not they who have the greatest abilities, most splendid gifts, or most exalted stations in the church." See Scott on the verse. See Luke ix. 48.

John had correct and pretty enlarged views of the gospel. He understood the design of Christ's advent, and the vicarious character of his sufferings and death. "Behold, saith he, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." He understood the difference between the two dispensations. "The law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." He had an en-

larged views of the rising glories of Christ and his kingdom. See John, iii. 28—36. “Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice. This my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I *must* decrease. He that cometh from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth, and no man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given *all things* into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on him.” These are some of the clear and evangelical sentiments of the forerunner of Christ.

Can you believe, sir, that the least saint at this day in the kingdom of God, has greater and more correct ideas of Christ and his kingdom, than John, or than Isaiah, for John was as great as he?

I am, &c.

LETTER X.

Rev. and dear Sir,

In your eighteenth letter you examine my arguments against infant baptism, taken from ecclesiastical history.

I had said, “no mention is made of infant baptism in the second century, unless it be just at its close.” In reply to this, you proceed to bring forward your opposing testimony.

Your first witness is Justin Martyr, who, you say, was about forty years after the Apostles; i. e. about 140 years from the birth of Christ. The passage, which you have quoted from him, was not written, till about A. D. 150, so that his testimony is confined to the last half of the second century. But let us hear what it is: “We also who by him have had access to God, have not received this carnal circumcision, but the spiritual circumcision, which Enoch

and others like him observed. And we have received it by baptism. And it is enjoined to all persons to receive it in the same way." This is your first historic proof. You suppose that Justin here meant to teach, that baptism is a substitute for circumcision, and from analogy inferred the right to apply the former to infants. What does this father mean by spiritual circumcision? Certainly the same as regeneration by the Holy Ghost, because, he says it was received by Enoch and others like him, who were not subjects of either ordinance. And this renovation of soul, he says, we receive by baptism, and *all* are enjoined to receive it, conversion, the same way. Now will you say that Justin meant by the word *all*, to include infants, and that it was enjoined upon them to be *regenerated by baptism*?

Your next proof from this father is in these words: "Many persons among us of 60 or 70 years old, of both sexes, who were discipled, or made disciples, in their childhood, do continue uncorrupted, or virgins." If these persons continued through all this period uncorrupted, or virgins, without doubt Justin believed, that they were purified, or converted in their childhood. What evidence have you, sir, that this purity, which they preserved for so many years, was nothing more than an outward, or ceremonial cleanness? If in their childhood they became the disciples of Christ, they became so by receiving instruction. You have exhibited no evidence, and we presume you can offer no argument, to show that any one can be made a disciple without instruction. If then these children were taught, and gave evidence that they were regenerated, they were fit subjects for baptism.

You next quote Irenæus thus: "For he came to save all persons by himself; all, I mean, who by him are regenerated unto God; infants and little ones and children and youths and elder persons." Wall grants that he wrote about 180 years after Christ. This passage is so generally viewed as spurious, that it is entitled to no authority in this debate. If you wish to see proofs of its spuriousness, consult Du Pin, Vol. 1, pp. 67, 68, and 71 in a note. Gale, p. 464.

But if it were genuine, your quotation is partial. The whole of the passage is this: Speaking of Christ, he says: "sanctifying every age, by that likeness it hath to him; for he came to save all by himself; all, I say, who by him are born again unto God, infants, and little ones and chil-

dren, and young men, and old men ; therefore he went through every age, and became an infant to infants, sanctifying infants ; and to little ones, a little one, sanctifying those of that age ; and likewise became an example of piety, righteousness and subjection." Now the question is about the word *renascuntur*, whether it is to be rendered *born again*, which is the literal sense of the word, or *baptized*. That it does not mean *baptized*, is evident from the fact, that this regeneration was performed by Christ. "Who by him," i. e. by Christ, are born again, &c. But Christ *baptized none*. The true sense of Irenæus seems to be this, that Christ came to save all, who are renewed by his power, and no others ; and that by assuming human nature, and passing through the several stages of life, he has sanctified it, and set an example to men of every age. Infant baptism is not mentioned or fairly implied in any of your quotations. How then could you intimate that it was mentioned in the former part of the second century ? Certainly, sir, you must be hard pressed indeed to rest your cause for the two first centuries on testimonies so conjectural, and which do not even mention, or involve the pending question.

Your next author is Origen. It is affirmed by those, who have access to the original Greek of this father, that nothing can be found in his writings, that favours infant baptism. The quotations, which you have made from him, are taken from the corrupt translations of his works, by Rufinus and St. Hierom. In these translations, there are such changes, omissions, and interpolations, as to ruin their authority in points of controversy. Your proofs from this source will not be admitted as having any weight. I have read Wall, Mosheim, Du Pin, Gale and others, and find ample proof that the translations of the writings of Origen are challenged as too corrupt to furnish any ground of reliance.

Your next proof is taken from the famous African council of 66 bishops, in A. D. 253. As the result of this council is generally produced with much assurance, it may not be amiss to quote it entire. The result is sent to one Fidus, who could not tell at what age infants should be baptized. He could find no law in the Bible, nor any examples in the church, to solve his scruples. But if infant baptism had been in use from the days of Christ, and supported on plain scripture, is it not very strange that Fidus should not have learned by the unin-

errupted practice of the church, that the age of the infant was not essential as it respected the due reception of this rite? But let us see how this *enlightened* council relieve his conscience. "As for the matter of infants, whom you said were not to be baptized within the second or third day after their nativity, or according to the law of circumcision within the eighth day thereof; it hath appeared to us, in our council, quite contrary; no one maintaining your opinion; but we all judged, that the mercy and grace of God was to be denied to no man; for since the Lord said in the gospel, the Son of Man came not to destroy, but to save the souls of men; therefore as much as lies in our power, no soul is to be lost; for what is there defective in him, who has once been formed in the womb by the hand of God? To us indeed it seems that children increase as they advance in years; but yet, whatever things are made by God, are perfected by the work and majesty of God, their Maker. Besides, the holy scriptures declare, that both infants and adult persons have the same equality in the divine workmanship. When Elisha prayed over the dead child of the Shumanitish widow, he lay upon the child, and put his head upon his head, and his face upon his face, and his body upon his body, and his feet upon his feet. This may be thought improbable, how the small members of an infant should equal the big ones of a grown man; but herein is expressed the divine and spiritual equality, that all men are equal and alike when they are made by God; that though the increase of our bodies may cause an inequality with respect to man, yet not with respect to God, unless that that grace, which is given to baptized persons, be more or less according to the age of the receivers; but the Holy Ghost is given equally to all, not according to measure, but according to God's mercy and indulgence; for as God is no respecter of persons, so neither of years; he equally offers to all, the obtaining of his heavenly grace. And whereas you say, that an infant for the first days after his birth is unclean, so that every one is afraid to kiss him, this can be no impediment to his obtainment of heavenly grace; for it is written, to the pure all things are pure, and none of us should dread that which God hath made; for although an infant be newly born, yet he is not so, as that we should dread to kiss him; since in the kissing of an infant, we ought to think upon the fresh marks of God,

which, in a manner, we kiss in an infant newly born, when we embrace that which God hath made. And whereas the carnal Jewish circumcision was performed on the eighth day, that was a type and shadow of some future good thing, which, Christ the truth being now come, is done away; because the eighth day, or the first day after the Sabbath, was to be the day on which our Lord should rise and quicken us, and give us the spiritual circumcision, therefore was the carnal circumcision on the eighth day, which type is now abolished, Christ the truth being come, and having given us the spiritual circumcision. Wherefore it is our judgment, that no one ought to be debarred from God's grace by that law, or that the spiritual circumcision should be hindered by the carnal one; but all men ought to be admitted to the grace of Christ, as Peter saith in the Acts of the apostles, That the Lord said unto him, that he should call no man common or unclean. But if any thing can hinder men from baptism, it will be heinous sins, that will debar the adult and mature therefrom; and if those who have sinned extremely against God, yet if afterwards they believe, are baptized, and no man is prohibited from this grace, how much more ought not an infant to be prohibited, who being but just born, is guilty of no sin but of original, which he contracted from Adam? Who ought the more readily to be received to the remission of sins, because not his own, but other's are remitted to him. Wherefore, dearly beloved, it is our opinion, that from baptism, and the grace of God, who is merciful, kind and benign to all, none ought to be prohibited by us, which as it is to be observed, and followed with respect to all; so especially with respect to infants, and those that are but just born, who deserve our help, and the divine mercy, because at the first instant of their nativity they beg it by their cries and tears."

The arguments which are found in this result, are the following; 1, The merciful design of Christ's advent. 2, Infants, in the eye of God, are as *big* as men. 3, Impartiality of God in his offers of grace to all. 4, Ceremonial cleanness of infants. 5, Their freedom from actual transgression. 6, The necessity of infant baptism. And to close this climax of arguments, infants must receive this rite, because they come into the world *begging and crying* for baptism. But, sir, if infant-baptism had been the universal practice of the church, why did this *sage* council offer so many *sage* arguments in

its support? and why did they not confirm their opinion respecting the *time* of baptism by pointing Fidas to the universal usage of the church?

You farther support yourself by quotations from Tertullian, St. Ambrose, St. Chrysostom, St. Austin, and the Pelagians. These men you have introduced, to prove the opinions and practices of the earliest days of the christian church. But unhappily for yourself you have ruined the reputation of your own witnesses. In p. 29th, you say, "Baptisteries began to be built about the middle of the third century," and that "it is well known, that those, who built and used them, were exceedingly corrupt in doctrine and in practice. It is very extraordinary, if we must look to them to learn primitive and apostolic practice." And in p. 75 you observe, "St. Augustine lived in the latter part of the fourth, and in the beginning of the fifth century. It is well known that, at this period, great innovations had been made in christian doctrine; that great corruption existed in the christian church; and *many* additions were made to the christian ordinances. I would almost as soon look into almost any succeeding period of the church for apostolic faith, practice and purity of the church, as into the fourth and fifth century." After you had thus freely expressed your surprise, that any should resort to this period, so exceedingly corrupt and full of additions and innovations, it is much more extraordinary that you should have drawn nearly all your historic support for infant baptism from this very corrupt fountain! Seven out of nine of your witnesses are taken from this very repudiated source. Tertullian and Origen wrote at the commencement of the third century; Cyprian in A. D. 252. Ambrose in 374; St. Chrysostom in 380; St. Austin in 388, Pelagius in 415. It is observable, that when you cited these authors in proof of infant baptism, you reckon from the *death of John the evangelist*. This you did to give weight to their testimony. But when you wished to destroy their testimony in favor of infant communion, you reckon from the *birth of Christ*. Look at your different modes of expression and calculation. "St. Austin, 288 years after the apostles, says, 'which the whole body of the church holds, as delivered to 'em in the case of little infants baptized.'" Here you say, 288 years after the apostles. John died, according to the best chronologists, in the year 100, after the christian era began. This 100 years, added to the 288 years, will give 388, the

period in which Austin began to write. But 288 sounds quite differently from 388, and the incautious reader is in danger of overlooking a whole century. But when you had a different object in view, you say, "St Austin lived in the latter part of the fourth and in the beginning of the fifth century," a period, as you affirm, of great innovations, corruptions and additions. It is obvious, that you wished to place Austin, so far from the birth of Christ, and in such a corrupt age, that his opinion in favour of infant communion should furnish but little proof, that the practice was apostolic. But, sir, *was he not just as remote from the birth of Christ, and in precisely the same corrupt age, when you quoted him in support of pedobaptism?* It is curious to see how you have amused yourself with mere sounds.

You reason with much confidence from the concessions of the Pelagians in favor of infant baptism; because you suppose that Pelagius, in his controversy with Austin, was strongly tempted to deny the practice. But he did not feel himself so very much pressed with the argument in support of original sin, drawn from infant baptism; because he could account for its prevalence on different grounds. The Pelagians held, that "the sins of our first parents were imputed to them alone, and not to their posterity; that we derive no corruption from their fall, but are born as pure, and unspotted, as Adam came out the forming hand of his Creator."* Pelagius, in his views of original depravity, resembled very much modern Arminians, and, like them, was an advocate for infant baptism, not to wash away a sinful nature, derived from Adam. He maintained, "that infant baptism was not a sign or seal of the remission of sins, but a *mark* of admission to the kingdom of heaven, which was only open to the pure in heart.†

In page 75th you have quoted the Pelagians as saying, "that no christian, no, not even any sectary, did ever deny it." You here, without doubt, have reference to the letter of Pelagius to pope Innocent. The word *it*, in your quotation, you suppose refers to infant baptism. Whether it refer to this phrase, or to the promise that some, (meaning infants without doubt) could be saved without the redemption of Christ, we cheerfully leave to the candid reader to decide, after he has seen the original

* Mosheim, vol. ii. p. 84.

† Ibid, p. 84.

Latin and the translation. The Latin is as follows : “ Se ab hominibus infamari quod negat parvulis baptismi sacramentum, et absque redemptione Christi aliquibus negna coelorum promittat.” In these words, Pelagius complains of two slanders, viz. 1, *Denying* baptism to infants ; and, 2nd, *promising* them the kingdom of heaven, without the redemption of Christ. To both of which he replies, but to the second charge he answers first, and says, “ that men do slander him, as if he denied the sacrament of baptism to infants, and did promise the kingdom of heaven to any persons, without the redemption of Christ.” By the word, *aliquibus*, rendered *any persons*, he meant infants, because no one ever accused Pelagius of promising the kingdom of heaven to adults, without the redemption of Christ. But as he denied original sin in infants, his antagonists drew for him the inference, that he must not only deny infant baptism, but also promise them the kingdom of heaven without atonement, because, in his view, they had no sin to atone for. This slander he repels by saying, “ Nunquam se vel impium aliquem hereticum audisse, qui *hoc*, quod proposuit de parvulis, *diceret.*” Here he affirms that he had never heard, no, not even any impious heretic, or sectary, who would declare or promise, *hoc*, this thing, *quod*, which, he had mentioned of infants, (namely, that infants could enter the kingdom of heaven without the redemption of Christ.) He then goes on to express his surprise that any could be so ignorant of the gospel as to declare such a thing, or even entertain such a thought. The reader will observe that he employs the singular number ; but if he meant, in these words to reply to both slanders, why does he not say, which are *things* that, &c. But now he uses the singular, *hoc*, *this thing*, referring, as I believe, to the nearest slander, or to the one last mentioned. That Austin understood Pelagius as replying to both these slanders separately, and to the second first, seems evident from his own animadversions on this letter. He says, “ And let us see what he says *next*. After reciting that testimony of the gospel, that ‘ Nisi renatus ex aqua et spiritu sancto regnum coelorum nullus possit entrare.’ None can enter into the kingdom of heaven, that is not born again of water and the holy spirit : about which there is no question : he goes on and says : “ Who is there so impious as to refuse to an infant of what age soever, the common redemption of mankind ?” The very struc-

ture of this period intimates that Pelagius intended it for a refutation of the first slander, of which he complained: viz. that he *denied* baptism to infants. In reply to the charge he quotes the passage, which, as he thought, proved the necessity of baptism to all of every age; and then to express his wonder that any should accuse him of *denying* this to infants, he asks, "Who is there so impious, as to *forbid* to infants," baptism, or "the common redemption of mankind." I know, sir, that Wall supposes that the pronoun *hoc*, refers to infant baptism; and that Pelagius meant to say that he never heard any person, whether Heretic or Catholic, deny infant baptism. But did he mean thus? Did not both he and Austin know that there were then some, who denied infant baptism? Why were laws made to enforce infant baptism, if there were none who denied it? His meaning seems to have been, as Ivimey says, "that he had never heard, no, not even any impious heretic or sectary say, that the kingdom of heaven could be obtained without the redemption of Christ." This passage, when correctly understood, furnishes no proof that Pelagius, whose learning and travels are much extolled, ever did say, or meant to say, "that he never heard any one, no, not even an impious heretic, deny infant baptism." This main pillar in the historic proof for Pedobaptism will be found, when its strength is fully tried, to crumble away, and afford no support. See Wall, Part I. p. 209, &c.

The controversy between Pelagius and Austin, respected *native depravity*, and not *infant baptism*. The latter maintained that infants should be baptized, to purge them from original guilt, while the former plead for this rite, because they *were pure*. When all this is duly considered, we should no sooner expect that Pelagius would deny infant baptism, than that he would reason against his own faith and practice.

Your next paragraph has given us much surprise. It contains a palpable contradiction against yourself, and a flagrant violation of historic facts. "As these evidences are for the first four hundred years, in which there appears to be only one man, Tertullian, that advised the delay of infant baptism in some cases, and one Gregory, that did, perhaps, practise such delay in the case of his children; but no society of men so thinking, or so practising; nor no one man saying it was unlawful to baptize infants: so in the next seven hundred years, there is not so much as one man to be found, that either spoke for, or

practised any such delay. But all the contrary." Wall, Part II. pp. 367, 369." That this quotation is exceedingly false, will appear by comparing it with the following selections.

"Many Pedobaptists, it is well known, have endeavoured to render our practice odious, by exhibiting in frightful colours the conduct of some German Baptists in the sixteenth century; and by representing our distinguishing sentiments as derived from those obnoxious characters. To that evidence, therefore, of the high antiquity and heavenly origin of our baptismal practice, which arises from the concessions and reasonings of Pedobaptists, I will now produce two testimonies from among many of our learned opposers, more directly fitted to free us from all suspicion of being descended from the Munster Baptists. Thus, for example, Venema, after assigning various reasons against considering the Mennonites as descended from the Baptists at Munster, proceeds: 'The nearest origin of the Mennonites, in my judgment, is better derived from the Waldenses, and from them also that of the Anabaptists. The Mennonites desired to have the innocence and purity of the primitive church restored, and to carry on the Reformation further than *Luther* and *Calvin* intended. Certainly the Waldenses held the principal articles of religion almost in common with the Mennonites. They have so cleared and justified themselves, both as to life and doctrine, that they cannot any longer be confounded with those at Munster, without notorious injustice and signal injury.' Such is the language of this impartial historian. I will here add the following testimony from Cardinal *Hosius*, who was President of the Council of Trent. 'The Anabaptists are a pernicious sect: of which kind the Waldensian Brethren seem to have been. Concerning whom it appears, that not very long ago they rebaptized persons: though some of them lately, as they testify in their apology, have ceased to repeat baptism. Certain it is, however, that in many things they agree with the Anabaptists: nor is this heresy a modern thing; for it existed in the time of *Austin*!' Thus it appears that these eminent authors consider the Baptists as deriving their pedigree, not from the Munster enthusiasts, but from the Waldensian confessors; which is a line of descent that we are not ashamed to own." Booth, p. 296, &c.

“The true origin of that sect, which acquired the denomination of Anabaptists, by their administering anew the rite of baptism to those, who came over to their communion, and derived that of Mennonites from the famous man, to whom they owe the greatest part of their present felicity, is hid in the remotest depths of antiquity, and is of consequence extremely difficult to be ascertained. The modern Mennonites not only consider themselves as the descendants of the Waldenses who were so grievously oppressed and persecuted by the despotic heads of the Roman church; but pretend, moreover, to be the purest *offspring* of these respectable sufferers; being equally averse to all principles of rebellion on the one hand, and all suggestions of fanaticism on the other.”

“Their *adversaries*, on the contrary, represent them as the descendants of those turbulent and furious Anabaptists, who, in the sixteenth century, involved Germany, Holland, Switzerland, and more especially the province of Westphalia, in such scenes of blood, perplexity and distress.”

“After having examined these two different accounts, of the origin of the Anabaptists with the utmost attention and impartiality, I have found that neither of them is exactly conformable to truth.” “It may be observed in the first place, that the Mennonites, (or Baptists) are not *entirely mistaken* when they boast of their descent from the *Waldenses*, *Petrobrussians*, and other ancient sects, who are usually considered as *witnesses of the truth* in times of *universal darkness* and superstition. Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe, particularly in *Bohemia*, *Moravia*, *Switzerland*, and *Germany*, many persons, who adhered tenaciously to the following doctrine, which the *Waldenses*, *Wickliffites*, and *Hussites* had maintained, some in a more disguised, and some in a more open manner, viz. that the kingdom of CHRIST, or the visible church he had established upon earth, was an assembly of true and real saints, and ought, therefore, to be inaccessible to the wicked and unrighteous, and also exempt from all those institutions, which human prudence suggests, to oppose the progress of iniquity, or to correct and reform transgressors. This maxim is the true source of all the peculiarities that are to be found in the religious *doctrine* and *discipline* of the *Mennonites*.” Mosh. vol. 4.

“If there were none who opposed infant baptism from the fourth to the eleventh century, how shall we account for the repeated decrees of councils during this period, against such opposers? One article of the council of Mela, held in the fifth century, is in the following words: “Also it is the pleasure of the bishops to order, that whosoever denieth that infants newly born of their mothers are to be baptized; or saith that baptism is administered for the remission of their own sins, but not on account of original sin, derived from Adam, and to be expiated by the laver of regeneration, be (anathema) cursed!” The first part of this decree clearly supposes that some denied that infants newly born were to be baptized. And the latter, that others, as the Pelagians, denied that baptism could wash away original sin. Again, in the sixth century, by the council of Lerida, in the archbishoprick of Tarragona, it was decreed, “that such as had fallen into the prevarication of *anabaptism*, if they should return to the church, should be received as the council of Nice had enacted.” Indeed the first ecclesiastical canon in Europe for the baptism of babes, I believe was passed in the year 514, by a council composed of a few Spanish bishops, “who met at Girona in Catalonia, and framed and subscribed ten rules of discipline.” The fourth is “an agreement to baptize catechumens only at Easter and Pentecost, except in cases of sickness.” In the fifth, they agreed, “in case infants were ill, and would not suck their mother’s milk, if they were offered, to baptize them, even though it were the day they were born.” This agreement was binding only on such as assented to it.

“But Charlemagne carried the subject still further, and in A. D. 789, passed a law to compel his subjects, on pain of death, to be baptized themselves! And “by heavy fines obliged them to baptize their children within the year of their birth.”

“It is abundantly evident, that many persons who were born of christian parents, and educated in the christian faith, were not baptized until they came to *adult* years, and made a personal profession. Helena, the mother of Constantine, was a very devout and zealous Christian, yet he was not baptized upon her faith. Nor did he dedicate his own children to God in baptism, by virtue of his faith. For we are informed by Socrates, that his son Constantius, who succeeded his father in the empire, was

baptized by Euzoius when he was preparing for his expedition against Julianus, and immediately after ended his life at Mopsucrania, twenty-five years after the death of his father. Eccl. History, lib. ii. chap. 47.

“Basil, son of Basil, bishop of Nicene, was baptized in Jordan when far advanced in years.

“Gregory the great, the son of Gregory, bishop of Nazianzen, was born while his father was bishop, and yet not baptized until he was twenty, some say thirty years old. See Osiander's Book, Cent. iv. l. 3, and Robinson's History, p. 250.

“Grotius says, that Chrysostom was born of believing parents, and was educated by Melitius, a bishop, yet not baptized till the age of twenty-one.” Dr. Baldwin on Baptism, p. 97.

Cardinal Hosius, *president of the council of Trent*. “If the truth of religion were to be judged of by the readiness and cheerfulness, which a man of any sect shows in suffering, then the opinion and persuasion of no sect can be truer or surer, than that of the Anabaptists; since there have been none, for these *twelve hundred* years past, that have been more grievously punished, or that have more cheerfully and steadfastly undergone, and even offered themselves to, the most cruel sorts of punishment, than these people. Nor is this heresy a modern thing; it existed in the time of Austin.” Judson, p. 61.

In view of these quotations, the reader will judge how much credit is due to your assertion, that for 1100 years, only two Baptists can be found.

In p. 75th, you remark, that I have “not given St. Austin's authority in the case,” i. e. of infant communion. “He has made no quotation from him. He has only given us Chillingworth's opinion of his opinion, respecting the communicating of infants; and this he takes from Judson. The amount of this authority is this. Mr. C. says, that Judson says, that Chillingworth says, that he is sure that St. Austin held the communicating of infants as much apostolic tradition, as the baptizing them.” It would be easy, sir, to retort: “Mr. Moore says, that Wall says, that Austin says, It is *reasonably believed* that *infant baptism was apostolic*.” All therefore that Austin and others have said on this subject, amounts to nothing more than *opinion*, or *belief*, and *supposition*.

But, sir, did I not quote Austin in the case? How then did it come to pass, that you, within a few lines, should

say, "Mr. C. quotes St. Austin to the following effect, that baptism and the *Lord's supper* are necessary for the salvation of infants." As you have thus early corrected yourself, I have nothing further to say respecting your mistake.

In another place you quote Austin thus: "Which the whole body of the church holds as delivered to 'em in the case of little infants baptized."

If infant baptism was ever in use and practised by the whole church, how did it happen, that Austin was not baptized till about 30 years old? "Had he, who pretended he had been a Manichean, never heard they did not baptize infants? Had all other heretics escaped his notice? Had he forgot himself when he taxed the Pelagians with denying infant baptism, and when he complained in another book of people who opposed it?" Robinson, p. 202.

You wish your reader to compare the testimony of Austin in favor of infant communion with the testimony of Justin Martyr in favor of infant baptism. Speaking of baptism, he says, 'it is enjoined on all to receive it in the same way.' Justin, in the passage to which you allude, was not speaking, as you say, of baptism, but of spiritual circumcision. Speaking of this, he says, 'It is enjoined on all to receive *it*, i. e. spiritual circumcision, or regeneration by the same way, i. e. by baptism.' But you refer the word *it* to water baptism, and so according to your criticism, Justin reasons in this tautological manner; "It is enjoined on all to receive *water baptism* by receiving *water baptism*!"

You next attempt to show that my quotation from Basil; archbishop of Cesarea, proves nothing against the prevalence of infant baptism. After we have quoted the passage and the reply, the reader will be prepared to make his own comments on your candor and promised care, not to misrepresent. The words of Basil are: "What time for baptism so proper as Easter? For this the church lifts up her voice, and calls from far her sons, that those, whom she once brought forth, she may now bring forth again; and feed with substantial food, them whom she hath hitherto fed with the milk of the first elements of religion. To you, (i. e. the children of professors, who were the candidates for baptism) the Apostle says, repent and be baptized every one of you—Why do you delay? Why do you deliberate? What do you wait

for? Instructed in the doctrine of Christ from your infancy, are you not yet acquainted with it? Will you continue your trials to old age? Last year you deferred it till this; do you now intend to put it off, (baptism) till the next?" That these were the children of professors and not of pagans, cannot be doubted. They are said to be those, whom the church once brought forth, and had fed with the milk of the first elements of religion, and had instructed them from their infancy. And for their repentance, faith and baptism, the church lifted her voice and called from far her sons. And the bishop plied these children with various arguments to persuade them to come to the laver of baptism.

To all this you reply, "In this quotation, he, the bishop, upbraids his audience for their neglect of baptism; and exhorts them to receive it. But this proves nothing against the general or even *universal* practice of the baptism of *believers' children*. Did Mr. C. never exhort his people to attend upon the ordinance of baptism, and reprove them for their too great neglect of it? Would he infer from his own preaching that infant baptism was not the general practice among his people? Or that it was not generally considered established on divine authority? As well might he infer this, as make his inference against the prevalence of infant baptism from the exhortations of Basil."

You would make your readers believe that in my quotation, Basil upbraided the *parents* in his auditory for their neglect to attend upon the ordinance of baptism, while directly the reverse of all this was true. Instead of upbraiding professors for neglecting this rite, he represents them as crying aloud that it might be performed on their repenting children; and confines his upbraidings to the *children* of believing parents. These *children* he blames for delaying their baptism, seeing they had been taught from their infancy the doctrines of Christ; and seeing their parents were then lifting up their voice in prayer that they might come to their duty. If a minister should address in the same way the *children*, not the *parents* in your church, and exhort them to come to baptism, on the ground of their own faith, and so gratify the ardent desires of their parents, would not this be decisive proof that they were not in the habit of baptizing their infants?

The history of catechumens furnishes strong proof against the antiquity of infant baptism. Catechumens

were the lowest order of christians in the primitive church. They had some title to the common name of christians, being a degree above pagans, and not hereticks, though not consummated by *baptism*. Among this class none were admitted, who had been washed in the sacred laver. But Mr. Buck and the *Cyclopedia* tell us that, "The children of ancient *believing* parents were admitted *catechumens*, as soon as they were capable of instruction. But at what age those of heathen parents might be admitted is not so clear." See Buck's *Theol. Dict.* After these children of believers had passed through several stages of instruction, and had a competency of knowledge and faith, they were scrutinized, or examined in the strictest manner, and then with various ceremonies they were admitted to baptism on the ground of their faith and confession. But if believing parents did in the primitive church, baptize all their children in infancy, why did they send them to the school of the catechumens to receive that education, which was to *qualify* them for that ordinance?

You wonder why I did not trace infant communion as far back, as you have infant baptism. You insinuate, that if I had made the attempt, I should have found a hard task. You may rest assured, sir, that we can, with ease, trace infant communion even *higher*, than you have infant baptism. For the first two centuries you have brought *no* evidence for infant baptism. Your proofs from Origen, if they were genuine, carry you no farther than the early part of the third century.

Dr. John Edwards says, "Infant communicating was a catholic doctrine. Herein all the fathers agreed. They, misunderstanding and misapplying Christ's words, John vi. 53, held that the sacrament of the Lord's supper was to be administered to infants and children, and that it was necessary for their salvation; accordingly they made them partakers of that ordinance." Booth 286. Venema says, "in the ancient church, those two sacraments, in respect of *the subjects*, were never *separated* the one from the other."

Buddoeus. "It is manifest, that in the ancient church, it was usual to give the eucharist to infants, which custom arose about the third century." Judson, p. 67.

The history of the church, written by an impartial hand, says, "In the time of Cyprian (254) it was usual for

children and sucking infants to receive the sacrament. And therefore when a little sucking girl refused to taste the sacramental wine, the deacon violently forced it down her throat." Page 112.

From these testimonies we trust that you will admit that we have shown infant communion obtained as early, and was as extensive as infant baptism.

If infant baptism be inferred from infant circumcision, hence consistency requires that infant communion should be deduced from the communicating of children at the paschal feast. This inference you deny; because, say you, Jewish children did not partake of the passover, till they were 12 years old. In proof of this, you adduce Luke ii. 41, 42. "And when he was twelve years old they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast." If your exposition of this text were true, it would not prove but what children partook at its institution, and ever after, till it was located at Jerusalem. After this location they were not prohibited, but admitted, whenever their parents took pains to bring them to the ordinance. That children did partake is evident from Exodus xii. 3, 4. Mr. Scott says, "Every person in each household, including women and *children*, ate this first passover.—The women and children were not indeed *commanded* to go up to the tabernacle—but when they did, they joined in this sacred feast." See him on Exo. xii. 43—45.

Says Witsius, "In those companies" (that partook of the passover) "men and women sat down together, old men and young, whole and sick, masters and servants, in fine, every Jew that could eat a morsel of flesh, not excluding even *young children*." See *Œcon. Fœd*, L. 4, Chap. 9th. § 14.

We never supposed, that infants at the breast ate of the passover. But they were brought to partake as early as their physical inability was removed.

"If Mr. C." say you, "were commanded to make provision for his family for a single meal, (and of meat too) according to the number of the souls of his household, according to their eating, would he count his infant, who lays cradled in his mother's arms, or would he provide more or less on its account?" In our turn we ask you, sir, If you were commanded to make provision for your family, for a single meal, and of meat too, according to the number of the souls of your household, according to their *eating*, would you leave out of your calculation all your

children *under twelve years old*? or would you provide more or less on their account? All this number you suppose the Jews left out in their preparations for the pass-over. But all above, they brought to this feast. Why then do you not imitate this Jewish example, and bring to the Lord's table all your sprinkled children, above this specified age; seeing you have told us, "the Apostles, as they had not been commanded to the contrary, would bring the *same subjects* under the christian religion, which they had been accustomed to bring under the Jewish religion."

To be consistent with yourself, you must retain both infant communion and sprinkling, or reject both. Pierce, the champion for infant communion, says, "While therefore the title of infants to baptism is loudly pleaded, but their access to the Lord's table utterly denied, it is natural for us to conclude, the conduct of our brethren, in this respect, is not reconcilable to the *necessary* consequences of their own principles. No: for it does appear that infant baptism and infant communion are twin sisters; they were adopted and cherished as such by their ancient advocates through a course of ages; that they are now fostered, as bearing that strict relation, one to the other, by half the christian world, (the Greek church.) Are not the same reasons, which are brought for infant baptism, in the like manner applicable to infant communion? And will not the objections against the latter, admit the same answer as those against the former? Nor do I see how this reasoning can be evaded, by a *consistent* Pedobaptist. Consequently, they should either *live* together, and be supported, or *die* of the same disease, and be discarded at once and on equal grounds." Pierce and Williams, as quoted by Booth, pp. 286, 288, 299.

I have now, dear sir, closed my Strictures on your Reply. I retire without any consciousness of retaining any of those unhal-
 lowed feelings, which may have been excited by collisions in the
 rugged field of controversy. All that is reprehensible in your
 Letters, I can heartily forgive: And I hope to be made duly
 sensible for all instances in which I may have disclosed an un-
 christian spirit, or have trespassed the settled laws of fair dispu-
 tation.

It only remains that I should leave my work with all its imperfections before the tribunal of an impartial publick, and implore upon it the blessing of that God, who can employ every event in hastening the completion of all his counsels of mercy. You and I are rapidly moving on to the unknown world, and must shortly appear at the bar of our common Judge. The reckoning day I anticipate with the combined emotions of hope and fear. We shall then be weighed in the balance of eternal truth. If while passing through this state of sorrow, we *must* be separated both by *space* and sentiment, let it be our steady and fervent prayer that we may live in such manner, that we may meet before the throne of the Lamb, where our only emulation will be, who shall shout the highest note of praise.

I am, dear sir, yours in sentiments
of esteem and affection,

REV. H. MOORE.

STEPHEN CHAPIN.

NORTH YARMOUTH, (Me.)
March 1, 1820.

Errata.

- Page 48, for רבנים, read ויה
 „ 62, 8th line from bottom, for *the*, read *their*.
 „ 66, for *affusion*, read *effusion*.
 „ 76, 18th line from bottom, dele *of*.
 „ 90, line 1st, dele *the*.

Appendix.

- Page 12, line 26th, for *observes*, read *observe*.
 „ 14, line 9th, dele *them into*; —next line, for *to* read *unto*.
 „ 22, Letter VII, to be noted Letter [VII.]
 „ 30, for *M's* read *M*
 „ 35, line 5th, for *enforced*, read *inferred*.
 „ 37, line 11th, for *of*, read *with*.
 „ 39, after the word *look*, in the last line, add the words, *to that*.











