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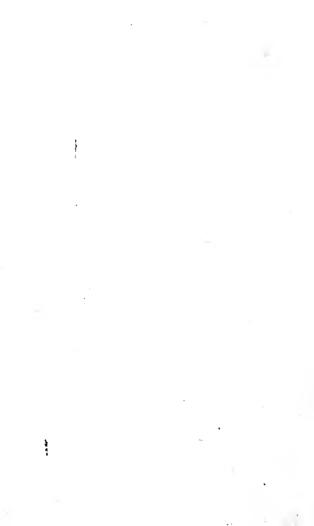
Princeton, N. J.

BV 800 .C738 Crewdson, Isaac, 1780-1844. Water baptism and the Lord's Supper









WATER BAPTISM

AND

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENTS

IN

BEHALF OF THE PERPETUAL OBLIGATION

OF THESE

Ordinances.

BY ISAAC CREWDSON,

ELISHA BATES,

And a few Additional Remarks,
BY IOTA.

" Search the Scriptures."

PHILADELPHIA: WM. STAVELY, 12 PEAR STREET.

1837.



"Follow Feace with all Men."

TO WM. EVANS AND THOMAS EVANS,

Editors of Friends Library.

RESPECTED FRIENDS,

It is I trust in the spirit of the apostolic injunction which I have selected as my motto, and not with any disposition to provoke angry controversy or excite hostile feeling, that I have ventured to address you on the important subject treated in the accompanying pamphlets. Coming as they do from those with whom you have long been associated as members of the Society of Friends, and who have occupied the most prominent stations in that Society, esteemed in your own body "standard bearers of the truth," and among other denominations looked up to as firm supporters of your peculiar views, you cannot refuse to weigh well the arguments by which they seek to justify the change in their own opinions on a subject considered by your Society if not fundamental, at least of great importance. That it is esteemed of vital importance among you may surely be fairly deduced from the assertion made by Josiah Forster, Samuel Gurney, and George Stacy, that they "consider the spiritual character of the gospel of our holy Redeemer "to be intimately connected with the disuse of water baptism." It certainly is a startling circumstance and one well calculated to excite an

^{*} See letter to E. Pates,

anxious investigation of the soundness of your views, that the author of a work still referred to as a standard authority among you, and so highly esteemed as to have run through no less than four-teen editions of 1000 copies each, within the short period of ten years, comes forward in the open renunciation of the views which he then advocated, and is followed in this step not by the young and uninformed, and perhaps unsettled members of your Society, but by those who have been most highly esteemed by yourselves for the soundness of their principles, and among those who are without the pale of your peculiar denomination, for the purity of their lives and the integrity of their characters. When upon the one side you see thousands of those who have professed fellowship with you dropping off into the darkness of mysticism and infidelity, and on the other behold those who have been the instruments in the hand of God for preventing the whole body of the Society rushing into the same destruction, abandoning the ground they then occupied, and inviting you to the examination of the reasons by which they have been induced to take this step, it certainly becomes you to examine well the foundation on which you stand, and to hear patiently and weigh deliberately the arguments they address to you. In reading the accompanying pamphlets it has appeared to me that there are still some arguments left untouched by their authors to which it may not be amiss to invite your attention. Far be it from me to accuse you or the body which you represent of having "made the commandments of God of none effect by your traditions," though I do believe you have abandoned a plain precept of His holy word. Equally far from my heart is any disposition to accuse you of having departed from the faith, believing as I do that you are building on the alone foundation Christ Jesus; but while I thus extend to you the hand of fellowship and express my belief that you are members of that body of which Christ is the head, I cannot but long to see you without abandoning one of those principles by which you are actuated, which have their authority founded on the written word of God, yield the same simple obedience of faith to those institutions of the Saviour which he established as the outward and visible signs of that inward and spiritual grace which he communicates to the souls of those who trusting in his righteousness and atonement, are looking for salvation through his obedience and blood.

Before we proceed to the specific argument respecting the ordinance of baptism, let us devote a few moments to the consideration of the ground on which the claim of external rites to continued observance is founded. We are told that this is a spiritual dispensation, and that therefore all external observance which have a tendency to divert the mind from spiritual things are contrary to its character. It is certainly granted that it is a spiritual dispensation, seeing the Lord himself hath assured us that in it they that worship the Father must worship him in spirit and in truth. But while it is true that it is the heart that must be changed, and the affections that must be elevated, and the spirit that must be purified, still there is connected with this very work something of an outward character. Was it not by the outward and perfect obedience of Jesus to the whole law

of God that he became "the Lord our righteousness?" And was it not by the outward offering of his body on the cross, and the pouring out of his most precious blood that he made atonement for our sins and opened for us the gate of everlasting life? Now as this righteousness wrought without us is to be the clothing with which we are to appear before God, and this atonement without us is to be the ground of our acceptance with God, the dispensation cannot be said to be so strictly spiritual as to exclude every outward act. This outward work in our behalf is admitted by all those who believe the testimony which God hath given of his Son to be the Foundation on which rests our hope of glory. Jesus of Nazareth thus "made sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," received into the heart by faith, becomes a source of holiness, and the spirit which he bestows on those who thus receive him carries on the work of sanctification, "purifying the heart," and causing the believer to increase in meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. But while the first step in the Christian course is the acceptance of the offer of salvation through a Redeemer . making atonement for sin with his own blood, and the last act of the Christian life is still "looking to Jesus as the finisher as well as the author of faith," the omega as well as the alpha of our confidence toward God, there is an evident fitness in the appointment of some institutions which shall call to our remembrance the blessings which flow to us from these acts performed for us and without us. The necessity of some such institution will become more evident when we take

into consideration the natural tendency of the heart to trust in its own righteousness, whether inherent or wrought by the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit as the ground of its acceptance with God. Thus then baptism becomes on the part of man a testimony of trust or belief in an outward Saviour, and the partaking of the consecrated symbols of the body and blood of Jesus keeps us continually in remembrance of the exceeding great love of our Saviour Christ in dying for us, and of the great and endless benefits which by his precious bloodshedding he hath procured for us. Thus much as to the design of the ordinances of the gospel and their fitness to fulfil that design, not that this is all that could be said, for I fear to allow myself to dwell on this part of the subject so widely does it open before me.

But my specific object in addressing you is to solicit your attention to two points. I am willling to grant (for the sake of argument, not in fact) that the fundamental principle of Quakerism, as distinguished from other denominations of professing Christians, is correct, and that the promise of the Saviour to bestow upon his followers the spirit of truth by which they were to be led into all truth, is susceptible of the construction you put upon it, and that in consequence of this gift every Christian has within him something, which if he gives heed to its teachings will lead him with certainty to the knowledge of what the Lord requires of him. I presume that in thus stating your views of the influence of the Spirit I am keeping within the limits you would assign to it. Now granting this to be the case, I would ask to whom could this promised teacher be more necessary than to

those to whom was confided the important duty of laying the foundations of that Church against which the Gates of Hell are not to prevail? To whom are we to expect it would be conveyed in larger measure than it was to those who had followed the Lord in the regeneration, and had partaken with him of his sorrows and griefs? How could it be consonant with the wisdom of Him who is declared to be all-wise, to permit those whom he had selected to occupy the most prominent stations in his kingdom upon earth not only to fall into error themselves on subjects so important, but to lay upon others obligations by which he never intended they should be bound? if the ground assumed by high authority among you, that "spiritual religion is intimately connected with the disuse of water baptism," be correct, the apostles and early disciples of our Lord were so far from finding the Spirit to lead them into "all truth," as the Lord had promised it should, that they rested on forms which were adverse to the genius of that dispensation which demands of its disciples that they should worship in spirit and in truth. Is not this assumption fatal to the whole system of revealed truth? If they to whom the Spirit was given, certainly in as large measure as to any members of the Christian Church in the present day, were so blinded by "prejudice" that they could not follow its guidings, what warrant have we that we shall not ourselves be left in greater ignorance and darkness than they ? If they were in error when they baptized with water those who professed to believe in Jesus as their Saviour, how are we to know that they were not equally in error when they asserted that Saviour to be the. "Son of God," "who having tasted death for every man," is "now exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins?" In short, if they were not so guided by the Holy Spirit that all they taught to be of divine authority is obligatory on the Church, and all they declared to be divine truth has the sanction of the Head of the Church, then is there such confusion and disorder in the Christian system that it loses

all its obligation on reasonable men.

But fatal as such a position would be to divine revelation, let us again suppose it true; let it be admitted that in the abrogating all rites and ceremonies which had been instituted to foreshadow a Saviour, when that Saviour had come and fulfilled all which these types and shadows had prefigured it did not accord with divine wisdom to establish other ordinances which, as those which preceded and pointed the eye of faith to a promised blessing should now keep alive in the believer's heart the memory of what had been accomplished. Let it be admitted (as before, for the convenience of argument, not in fact) that it was the design of our Lord to establish a purely spiritual dispensation without outward symbol or sign, and that the Apostles in blessing the cup and breaking the bread,* as well as in administering the rite of baptism with water, were acting in conformity with

^{*}St. Paul says, 1 Corinthians, x. 16. "The cup of blessing which WE bless, is it not the Communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which WE break, is it not the Communion of the body of Christ?" How could he more emphatically declare his continued adherence to this outward ordinance?

carnal prejudices. Then let it be remembered that those disciples who had followed him in his wanderings, and partaken largely of his instructions, those disciples who had left all to follow him, to whom the immediate promise of the Comforter had been made, upon whom, after his resurrection, he had breathed, saying "receive ye the Holy Ghost;" with whom he had conversed "during forty days concerning the things which belong to the kingdom of God;" upon whom the Holy Ghost had descended giving them that power from on high with which they were to be endued as the qualification for teaching all nations, that Apostle whom the Lord had miraculously converted for the express purpose of sending him to the Gentiles, and who declares that the gospel preached by him was "not after man," seeing he neither "received it of man, neither was it taught but by the revelation of Jesus Christ," that Apostle who " was caught up to the third heaven and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for man to utter," these men so wonderfully prepared to receive the truth, and so miraculously qualified to promulgate it still remained in the bonds of prejudice, and were permitted to fasten the same bonds on all succeeding generations of men, (bonds be it remembered which are adverse to the existence of spiritual religion,) and it is reserved for an individual sixteen centuries afterward to shake off the shackles of the same prejudice and emancipate his own mind, and those of a small portion of the Christian Church, while the remainder are left in darkness to this day. Was then this individual more holy than the Apostles of Christ? Had he larger measures of the Spirit of Christ? Did he

vield more implicit obedience to the teachings of this Spirit? Or were the bonds of prejudice less firmly fixed on his soul than on theirs? (for it must not be forgotten that George Fox himself had been educated in dependance on forms and ceremonies and accustomed to their observance.) You certainly will not claim for him the affirmative of either of these propositions. Yet do you not virtually do so when you permit the authority of his opinions and example to weigh more with you than the opinions and example of the Apostles of our Lord, as recorded in the book of Acts? Either you must prove that the Spirit promised to guide unto all Truth was not bestowed on the Apostles, or that they did not baptize with water and command others to do the same-or else you must claim for George Fox a superior degree of inspiparation or greater obedience to the teachings of this Spirit. Plainly as these results flow from the principles which are avowed by the Society of Friends I am sure you are not prepared to adopt either alternative.

I am next to consider an argument which from the days of Barclay down to the present time has been esteemed of great weight in this controversy, and which is urged as evidence that the Apostle Paul abandoned the use of water baptism. If this fact could be proven, then I admit all my previous reasoning would be of no value. But little need be said to convince you how utterly untenable is such an assumption. The following text is commonly adduced as evidence of the fact: "I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius," *****. "And I baptized also the household of Stephanus, besides I know not

whether I baptized any other." Now I would ask by what argument do you prove that the word "baptize" here means "to wash with water?" And by whatever argument you prove this, by the same will I prove that the same word in the commission given by our Lord to his apostles, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned," must mean the same thing. There is nothing in the context to limit it in either case. And again I would ask your attention to the fact that while St. Paul thanks God that he baptized none but those whom he names, "lest any should say that he had baptized in his own name"-he addresses them all as those who had been baptized: "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" The argument of the apostle is so simple that it is astonishing how it can be perverted to mean any thing but that which he clearly intended it should. He commences by informing the Corinthians that it had been declared to him that there were divisions among them, one saying I am of Paul, another I of Cephas, and a third I of Christ. He then asks is Christ divided, was Paul crucified for you, or were you baptized in the name of Paul. (If Paul was not crucified for you, and ye were not baptized in the name of Paul, why then call yourselves by his name.) He then declares his thankfulness that he had not given even that shadow of excuse for thus designating themselves, which might have been found had he personally admitted them within the pale of the church by the initiatory rite of baptism. Any other use of the passage can only be effected by such arbitrary

straining of language as would not be allowed to influence you in other cases. The fact that he had not personally baptized them (that they were baptized he has before asserted) and the remark that Christ sent him not to baptize, but to preach the gospel, is sufficiently explained by the history of the baptism of Cornelius and his household, which Peter "commanded" should be done. An equally unauthorized construction is put upon the parallel passage in St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, where among other inducements for the maintenance of the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," he speaks of "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." If as is asserted by those who oppose the use of the external rite of baptism with water, the apostle here intended to affirm that there is but one kind of baptism recognized by the Christian dispensation, he palpably contradicts those passages of the word of God in which are men-tioned the baptism of suffering—the baptism of fire-the baptism of the Holy Ghost, not to mention the simple type from which all these figures are drawn. The apostle, however, is not guilty of this contradiction, if we allow the whole scope of the passage to give the key to the use of the word. In truth the construction you put upon it would take this single member of the sentence out of its just and natural relation, destroy entirely the connexion of the several parts, and weaken a beautiful and forcible argument in behalf of that love which is the badge of our discipleship.

During the preparation of these few remarks for the press, an article has met my eye in the pages of the Friend in which the disuse of baptism is supported on the authority of the assembly of

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the apostles and elders and brethren which was held at Jerusalem on the question brought before them by Paul and Barnabas, respecting the circumcision of Gentile converts. To this it is only necessary to reply that the question of baptism did not come before them, and this very silence shows the undoubted authority of the rite, seeing it was never called in question. The very next chapter, however, affords a more distinct and unquestionable refutation of the whole argument. For we there read that while Paul and Silas were passing round the churches and delivering "the decrees for to keep that were ordained of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem," they baptized Lydia and her household, and the jailor at Philippi, and "all his." I am aware that an objection may here be started that in the same chapter we have recorded the circumcision of Timothy. For this, however, the evangelist thinks it necessary to account, while the other he passes by without any apology, merely recording the facts. Timothy being the son of a Jewess, he was not subject to the decree of the apostles and elders which had reference only to Gentile converts.

A few words more and I shall then submit the whole matter to your calm and prayerful consideration. When we urge upon you the propriety (may I not say necessity) of simple obedience to the plain commandments of the Lord, and the advantage of following the Apostles as they followed Christ," we are constantly reminded that this is a spiritual dispensation, as though there was something in the observance of these institutions which was hostile to spiritual feeling. Did the Apostles find it so? are we to be more spiritual

than they? cannot the assurance of those who participate in the benefit be received, that they do not hinder spirituality, but rather increase it? If the ordinances of religion were unmeaning observances, then might such an objection lie against them, then should I be the last to urge their obserupon any one; but they are not so: on the contrary they are full of meaning. I am ready to assert my conviction that they are essential to the Church, for the very purpose for which one of them was expressly instituted-" to show forth the Lord's death until he come." I do not assert them to be essential to salvation, as we are often falsely accused of asserting; to this but one thing is essential-" Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." But they are essential as the means by which the knowledge of the facts of our Lord's incarnation and suffering is to be maintained and the arguments of opposers refuted, and if not essential certainly highly important means of keeping alive in the heart of the individual believer the simple trust in the merits and sufferings of Jesus whereby alone we obtain remission of our sins and are made partakers of the kingdom of Heaven. If half the ingenuity and argument which are necessary for the support of your peculiar views were needful on our side, I for one would abandon the views I now uphold; but with the simple letter of the command in our behalf, and the undeniable and undenied practice of the apostles to support this simple construction, we should be abandoning ground on which the whole fabric of Christianity rests were we to coincide with you.

As I have before said, I am far from the disposi-

tion to assert, as regards any individual, that he has departed from the faith and made void the foundations of the Gospel, but I do fearlessly assert that the tendency of the principles which are held by the followers of Fox and Barclay is to desolate that Church which the Redeemer hath purchased with his own blood.* In inviting you to examine again the reasons on which we support our conformity to what we believe an imperative commandment of the Lord, we do not ask you to abandon one tittle of "spirituality;" rather we would say to you "grow in grace and in the know-ledge of the Lord;" we do not ask you to conform to the world; we rather say come still more out from them and be separate. We do not ask you to renounce the belief in the influence on the Holy Ghost; we only ask you to believe that it influenced Apostles and Prophets when they laid the foundation of the Church, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; -Ep. xi. chap.,

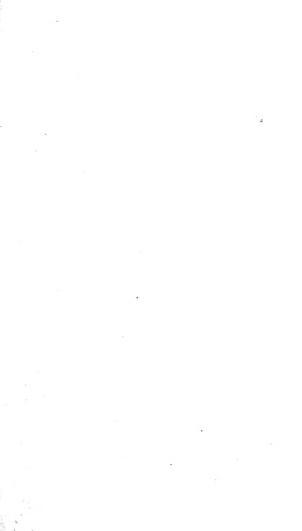
^{*} Let me reiterate the assurance of my desire that nothing here said may be supposed to have any personal application. It is to me a source of much satisfaction to be able to believe that notwithstanding the natural tendency of the principle to which I allude, there are among you many who hold the simple truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and on whom those truths produce their natural result in great holiness and pureness of living. Yet there is evidence too palpably plain to be misunderstood, that the tendency of the doctrines which distinguish your Society from other Christians is evil. I speak of the distinctive doctrines of your Society-because I am firmly convinced that those which are scriptural are held in common with other sects of Christians, and wherever they are practically held, must produce fruit unto holiness, as they do with you.

20 verse. We beg you to "recur to first princi-ples," not, as you too often apply it, to Fox and Penn, and Barclay, but to Peter, Paul and John; let them decide what was the intention of their Master and Lord, and follow them in the path which they trod. We do not invite you to adopt any human scheme of doctrine or discipline, but we entreat you to lay aside the prejudice of education, and examine for yourselves, "searching the Scriptures whether these things are so" with earnest prayer that the Holy Ghost will enlighten your understandings to receive what these Scriptures certify of Jesus. A crowd of arguments in behalf of these views present themselves to my mind, but I am anxious not to obscure so plain and simple truths by a multitude of words. I hold myself in readiness to examine carefully any thing you have to adduce in support of the views held by your Society, and also to abandon my present convictions should you be able to overcome them by reasonable arguments founded on Scriptural truth.

It may be proper to apologize for addressing these remarks to you as individuals while I maintain for myself the privacy of an assumed signature. Nothing could be gained by the knowledge of my person, either to the cause or by myself, while you have assumed personal responsibility for these doctrines by appearing before the public as the editors of a Friends Library, intended to disseminate your peculiar views.

Allow me again to assure you of warm personal esteem and earnest desire that you may be rooted and grounded in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, that so when he shall appear you may be ready to meet him with joy.

IOTA.





WATER BAPTISM

AN

ORDINANCE OF CHRIST.

AN ADDRESS TO THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

BY ISAAC CREWDSON.



WATER BAPTISM

AN

ORDINANCE OF CHRIST.

TO THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

My DEAR FRIENDS,

Though the connexion which I have had from my birth with the Society of Friends is now dissolved, this separation has not destroyed the interest which I have long felt in your welfare. Sincerely should I rejoice that you should be established in the truth of Christianity, and heartily receive the whole Gospel, as it is set forth in the Holy Scriptures; where alone we must look for the doctrines that we are bound to receive, and the precepts that we are required to obey.

I am convinced that some views of religion have been inculcated in the Society, which are not taught in Holy Scripture; and that the adoption of certain principles not found therein, has led to the inevitable perversion of some of the doctrines and practices of Christianity. Perhaps nothing has tended more to

these errors, than the views propagated on the subject of immediate revelation. The admission of this opinion, led the early Friends to determine for themselves, what was befitting the spirituality of the Gospel dispensation, instead of ascertaining it solely from the doctrines and practices of the Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles, as set forth in the New Testament.

With the natural proneness of man to error, every thing which draws the mind from a dependance on the written revelation, for the doctrines of true religion, must inevitably lead to the perversion or abandonment of some truth. I believe this natural result has been strikingly exhibited by the Society of Friends, in their total rejection of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, as taught in the New Testament. To the former of these, it is my object, in the following pages, to draw your attention.

I am well aware of the ground taken by the Society, that baptism with water was a Jewish rite, appointed under the law, and though permitted to the weakness of the infant Christian Church, was of a carnal nature, inconsistent with its more mature state, and not in accordance with the spiritual nature of the Christian religion. Believing this conclusion to be erroneous, and that it has been attended with consequences inimical to the reception of the whole Gospel, as set forth by the Apostles

of our Lord, I am inclined to lay before you the grounds, which have proved satisfactorily to my mind, that WATER BAPTISM is Divinely appointed as a standing ordinance in the

Christian dispensation.

The design of John's baptism, as he himself declared, was, that Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, should be made known to Israel. "That he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water."—

John, i. 31.

That John's baptism was of Divine appointment, no one who believes the Scripture will question. The proofs are abundant—"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John." John, i. 6. "He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost: and I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."—John, i. 33, 34.

These passages may suffice in proof of the Divine appointment of John's baptism; but although John was the herald of Christ, and his baptism was of Divine appointment, he constantly asserted, that when Christ was come, his own mission would gradually close. "He must increase, but I must decrease," was his emphatic testimony. And so we find it really proved. Only a very short period elapsed, after he had announced the Lamb of God

which taketh away the sin of the world, before he was beheaded, and his baptism, so far as appears, came to a full end. On the other hand, the disciples of Him of whom John was the harbinger—the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, of Him to whom the promise was made, "I shall give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession," have been making disciples, and baptizing with water, in His name, from that day to the present. So literally has the testimony of John been fulfilled. But as John's baptism was only preparatory to the Christian dispensation, and not a part of it; and as evidence will be adduced in its proper place to prove, that water baptism, as

proper place to prove, that water baptism, as practised in the Christian Church after the ascension of our Lord, was essentially distinct ascension of our Lord, was essentially distinct from John's Baptism; there is no necessity here to dwell upon it, further than to adduce one single passage which appeared to me not inappropriate, as proving, (not, indeed, in express terms, but by implication,) that the baptism (unto Christ) by the Apostles was not considered, even during our Lord's ministry on earth, the same as the baptism of John, notwithstanding in both cases water was used. The Evangelist John says, chap. iii. 25, 26, "Then there arose a question between some "Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples, and the Jews, about purifying, and they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond

Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." These men do not appear to have considered the baptism of Christ, through the Apostles, as identical with John's baptism, neither does it appear, by the reply which John made to them, that he himself so considered them. See v. 27, to the end of the chapter.

In the last sentence I used the phrase, "the baptism of Christ through the Apostles," and I thought I was warranted in doing so, from the concluding words in the quotation, viz., "He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." It will, however, be needful here to determine, by a full examination of Scripture, whether the baptism administered by the Apostles during our Lord's ministry was under his authority, or it was not; as I am aware it is a point in dispute, and I had been taught to believe, that it was not administered under his authority, but only permitted in condescension to the Jewish prejudices of the Apostles and early believers.

In addition, then, to the passage above quoted, we find it recorded (in v. 22 of the same chapter,) as the testimony of the Evangelist himself, that "Jesus baptized." "After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the

land of Judea, and there HE tarried with them

and baptized."

In the iv. chap. v. 1—3, the same Evan-gelist says, "When, therefore, the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard, that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) he left Judea." &c. Now I could see no alternative between understanding this parenthesis as an entire contradiction of what the Apostle had previously asserted, or, as explanatory of the way in which baptism was administered by Christ, to wit, through His disciples acting in His name, and by His authority. The latter interpretation, which is in accordance with fair criticism, and is the only one consistent with the veracity of the writer, I could not hesitate to adopt, but it proved to me that water baptism was an or-dinance of our Lord, during his personal ministry on earth; and it invalidated every argument which I had been accustomed to hear against water baptism, on the assumption, that the ordinance was merely a Jewish rite, and identical with the baptism of John; because, if water baptism was administered under the authority of Christ, (and less than this surely is not implied in the words Jesus baptized,) every attempt to discredit or invalidate His ordinance, by asserting its identity with any former rite, I thought would be, to say the least, highly presumptuous.

The proof I regarded as demonstrative, (not that Jesus baptized with his own hands, but) that water baptism, as administered by the disciples of our Lord, was an ordinance of Christ.

Still, this proof did not furnish me with conclusive evidence that water baptism was to be a standing ordinance in the church. It might be intended to continue only during the personal ministry of Christ on earth. Pursuing my examination, I found, however, in the xxviii. chap. of Matt. and xvi. chap. of Mark, that after the Lord Jesus had fulfilled the whole law-after He had said "it is finished,"-after He had bowed His head and given up the ghost-after His resurrection from the dead, and just before His ascension into heaven -in the very last communication with His Apostles, when He greatly extended their commission, even to go and make disciples of all nations, He, in this commission, associated baptism with teaching and preaching, in the following remarkable words:-

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in [or into] 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 alway, even unto the end of

the world. Amen."

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the

Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is *baptized* shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

That water baptism is a standing ordinance in the Church of Christ I thought would be proved, if, in these passages, the Lord Jesus did, indeed, speak of water baptism; and I acknowledge that it did appear to me not improbable that such was the case, when I remembered, that, in the very work of making and confirming disciples, in which, to a very considerable extent, the Lord Jesus and his Apostles had already been engaged; teaching and baptizing with water, were the means which they had hitherto used; -but the evidence I still thought was not conclusive, and I was aware, that the Society of Friends maintain, that it is not water baptism which is spoken of in this commission, but that it is the baptism which John speaks of as the prerogative of Christ; "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire;" and that this baptism was in that commission delegated by Christ to his Apostles and ministers: and that it was, in the Apostolic Church, and is now, to be administered through preaching.*

^{*} The following remarks have no reference to the question, whether the Holy Ghost was given by the Apostles in the imposition of hands. On that subject no sentiment is here offered. The simple question is, whether there is evidence that, to the Apostles and ministers of the Gospel, it was delegated to baptize with the Holy Ghost in preaching.

I could not but regard this as a bold position, and one which demanded from me the most careful investigation, as nothing short of clear Scripture evidence, I thought, could warrant me, in assuming to myself, or even conceding to others, that Divine power which is stated in Scripture as the prerogative of Christ;—at the same time I was fully prepared to admit, that, if it was a doctrine taught in Scripture, the belief of it was imperative.

As the whole instrumental means appointed by the Lord Jesus in this commission, for effecting the mighty work of converting mankind, was comprised in teaching and baptizing, so it will be admitted, that it was of great moment, that the Apostles should not be mistaken with regard to the signification of the latter article, viz: baptizing, in which so material a part of their duty consisted, and which affected the spiritual interests of countless myriads of the human race.

In the words of the commission itself, I confess, I could not perceive that it was delegated to the Apostles, to baptize in *preaching*, with the Holy Ghost and fire; nor could I perceive, that the Lord Jesus gave to the Apostles, information, that the baptism, which they should henceforth administer, was any *other* than that which they had all along administered under his authority. Had it been his will, that water baptism should cease, or be superseded by the baptism of the Holy Ghost and

fire, to be administered through preaching, I could not conceive, that when He was sending forth the Apostles to preach and baptize, with a much enlarged commission, he should not have told them of the change. But I thought, if it could be ascertained how the Apostles understood the commission, which they received immediately from the mouth of their Divine Master, the evidence thus furnished would be conclusive.

On turning to the ii. chap. of the Acts of the Apostles, I found, that on the day of Pentecost—on the very first public act of the Apostles in the exercise of their high commission after the ascension of our Lord, "There appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Then was fulfilled with regard to them, in the most remarkable manner, the promise of the Lord Jesus, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence," and also the declaration of John the Baptist; "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire."*

I could not but consider that the circumstances attention

I could not but consider that the circumstances attending this memorable occasion, might have an important bearing on the question of the nature of Christian baptism. The

^{*} I need hardly say that the expression, "to be baptized with the Holy Ghost," and "to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," I have taken as synonymous.

position of the Apostles was without parallel; never before had any body of men been honored with the same power and authority. If ever men were enabled to baptize with the Holy Ghost in preaching, surely then were the Apostles; and if it could ever be known whether water baptism is any part of the Christian dispensation, it was certainly to be determined by the conduct of the companions of the Lord Jesus Christ, acting under the plenary inspiration of THE SPIRIT, which He

thus wonderfully shed upon them.

Then was presented to my mind the inquiry: Do we find that Peter, with the eleven, in preaching, baptized with the Holy Ghost? sensibly felt how much depended on the answer to this question-and I trust I was desirous of obtaining this answer from the records of inspiration. I found that when the Apostles had fulfilled the first part of their commission -when through their preaching, three thousand were pricked in their heart, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" the answer was, "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," and that this promise did not relate exclusively to the extraordinary, but also to the ordinary gifts of the Spirit, is plain, from the next verse, where it is said, "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."

Three things are here enumerated, Repentance, Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and, the gift of the

Holy Ghost.

If the Apostles by baptism, meant the baptism of the Holy Ghost, then it was clear to my mind that the three thousand had not been already baptized with the Holy Ghost by the preaching of the Apostles; and if they were not baptized with the Holy Ghost by the preaching of the Apostles, who were filled with the Holy Ghost, and under the miraculous manifestation of Divine power; then, the assumption, that Christ in his last commission, delegated to his ministers the power of baptizing with the Holy Ghost through their preaching, it seemed to me was destitute of foundation, and that the system built upon it must fall to the ground.

Again, if the three thousand had been baptized with the Holy Ghost by the preaching of the Apostles, it was equally clear, that an inspired Apostle, could not immediately have told them to "be baptized" with that, with which they were already baptized, nor could they have assured them, that on being baptized with the Holy Ghost, they should receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, which gift they had already received, if they were already baptized with the Holy Ghost. As, then, he could not re-

fer to the baptism of the Holy Ghost, it was plain that he could only refer to baptism with water.

I had, therefore, no alternative but to conclude, that when the three thousand were baptized, they were baptized with water, by the direction of the Apostles, who were all present, and being filled with the Holy Ghost, spake by the Spirit, or, which I apprehend is equivalent, they were baptized by direction of THE Spirit speaking through them.

But if THE SPIRIT, through the Apostles, directed the people to be baptized with water, then, undeniably, water baptism is a Christian ordinance; and in the testimony of THE SPIRIT, through the Apostles, to this ordinance, we have indubitable proof, as it appears to me, (for we cannot imagine the will of THE SPIRIT, and the will of CHRIST, to be at variance) that our Lord, in his last commission before his ascension, enjoined water baptism, and if he there enjoined water baptism, then water baptism is as much a standing ordinance in his church, as the preaching of the Gospel.

Permit me now, in Christian affection, to beg your candid attention, to the evidence afforded in two other cases of baptism recorded in the New Testament. I mean the case of the Ethiopian Eunuch, and that of Cornelius.

The case of the Eunuch is recorded, Acts

viii. 26—39, "The Angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza."—And he arose and went; and behold, a man of Ethiopia, an Eunuch, who had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot, read Esaias, the Prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, "Go near and join thyself unto this chariot." Philip went and preached unto him Jesus. After this, the Eunuch said, "See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip said, "if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayst"—he confessed; and Philip 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."

Under this extraordinary manifestation of Divine direction and authority—first of THE ANGEL OF THE LORD, and then of THE SPIRIT, Philip baptized the Eunuch with water, and when he had done it, the sacred text says—"THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD caught away Philip." The fact of Philip having baptized the Eunuch with water, when acting under the direction of the Angel of the Lord and of the Holy Spirit, I thought was evidence that he acted in conformity with the commission of Christ, and fully proved that water baptism is a Divine ordinance in the Christian dispensation. But did he baptize the Eunuch with the Holy

Ghost when he preached unto him Jesus? There is no intimation of it.

The case of Cornelius is recorded. Acts x. The circumstances of this case, from first to last, are wonderfully marked by Divine interposition and direction. An Angel of God appears to Cornelius in a vision, and directs him to send for Peter, saying, "he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." nelius sends three men to Joppa for Peter. While they are on the journey, Peter is prepared for the great event of the admission of Gentile believers into the Christian Church, by a vision, in which the hand of God is distinctly acknowledged; God showeth Peter that he should not call any man common or unclean. While Peter thinks on the vision, the Spirit says unto him, "Behold three men seek thee, Arise, therefore, and get thee down and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them." Peter goes with them, and preaches Christ to Cornelius and his friends. While he speaks, the Holy Ghost falls on all them that heard the Word.* They, of the circum-

^{*} This, I think, is the only case in Scripture that seems to afford the least ground for the hypothesis, that to ministers of the Gospel it is delegated to baptize with the Holy Ghost, in their preaching. I freely acknowledge that if it were a doctrine of Scripture, I could not have hesitated to admit this case as a corroboration of it; but, in the absence of all proof, that it is a Scripture doctrine, and with much evidence that it is not, this case is surely not sufficient to build the doctrine upon. And, it is to be ob-

cision, who came with Peter, are astonished, "because that on the Gentiles also is poured out the Gift of the Holy Ghost; for they heard them speak with tongues. Peter says, 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." In rehearing the matter to the Apostles and brethren at Jerusalem, Peter says, as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them AS ON US at the beginning; then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John, indeed, baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch, then, as God gave them the like gifts as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God ?

served, that, although Peter says the Holy Ghost fell upon them as he began to speak, yet, the narrative does not imply that he apprehended that by his preaching he communicated the Holy Ghost. He says, Acts xi. 15. "As I began to speak, the Holy Ghost Fell on them, as on us at the beginning;" and, again, v. 17, "Forasmuch, then, as Gon gave them like gifts as HE did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus, what was I, that I could withstand God?"

*The way in which Peter here uses the word water, I thought, implied that the ordinance itself, among the early Christians, was recognized by the term, water, and that Peter's question was equivalent to this—Can any man forbid to these Gentiles the usual token of admission into the Christian Church.

In this case, it appears, that after Cornelius and his friends were baptized with the Holy Ghost, Peter, under the immediate direction of THE HOLY SPIRIT, and agreeably to the word of the Angel to Cornelius, "He shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do," commanded them to be baptized with water.

The several clear and distinct evidences in this case, each proving the Divine authority for the conduct of Peter throughout this transaction, and all brought into a focus, probably have no parallel in Scripture. An Angel of God sent to Cornelius—God himself, instructing Peter;—тне Spirit commanding him to go with the messengers, declaring, "I have sent them;" the baptism of Christ, viz: that of the Holy Ghost falling upon Cornelius and his friends, while Peter preached; -and, lastly, the testimony of this inspired Apostle, as to the authority under which he acted, contained in the cogent query, "What was I, that I could withstand God,"—all taken together, I thought, afforded most indubitable proof, that water baptism is a Divine ordinance in the Christian dispensation: -that it is the baptism instituted by Christ, to be administered by man; not, indeed, by the baptism of which John emphatically speaks, as that which it is the prerogative of Christ, himself, to administer, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire." The two baptisms are here distinctly recognized, and so far from the baptism of the

Holy Ghost being intended to supersede the baptism of water, it is plain, that in this instance, the inspired Apostle makes the evidence of the reception of the baptism of the Spirit, the very ground for the propriety of administering the baptism of water to the Gentile believers, in the same way as the Apostles and their fellow-laborers had been accustomed to administer it to Jewish believers.

In a case so singular for its importance, being the first admission of Gentile converts into the Christian Church, and so strikingly marked by Divine direction, I could not but conclude, that Peter acted wholly under the authority of God, and, if under the authority of God, then in conformity with the commission of Christ.

Each of these three instances, it appeared to me, was a practical comment on that commission; and that taken together, they furnished a conclusive proof that the Apostles considered that water baptism formed a part of this commission. These cases repel every idea that water baptism was permitted in condescension to the Judaical prejudices, or the infantile state of the Apostles. They abundantly demonstrate that the Apostles acted under the full light of immediate revelation, and they show that, in the Apostolic Church, water

baptism was taught and practised under the authority of God. But if it was practised under the authority of God, it was, undoubtedly, in conformity with the commission of Christ, and, if a part of that commission, which was to continue to the end of the world, it appeared to me, the proof was unanswerable, that water baptism is a standing ordinance in His church.

With this evidence, I thought, that for any people to determine that water baptism formed no part of the Christian dispensation, would be to decide that the Apostles, acting under the Holy Spirit, were in error in directing it; and to set up an opinion in opposition to the inspired judgment of the Apostles, would not only be in the highest degree presumptuous, but would tend to destroy the whole authority of the Divine written revelation; for if one body claimed the right to say the Apostles were under mistake, when they gave the most miraculous proof of their Divine authority, another would have an equal right to set up their opinion, in opposition to any other doctrine which the Apostles taught, and thus the very fabric of Christianity would be destroyed.

If, then, it is proved, that water baptism is of Divine appointment, and a part of the Christian dispensation, it follows, of course, that every passage in Scripture, which refers to the subject, whether doctrinally or circum-

stantially, must be so interpreted as not to be at variance with this settled position.

I shall now only glance at each of the remaining cases of baptism, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, not so much for the sake of proving that water baptism is a part of the Christian dispensation, for that I consider to be established, as, that the reader may, at once, see the amount of evidence which they afford on two points, viz: 1st, whether to baptize with the Holy Ghost, in preaching, was delegated to the Apostles and ministers of the Gospel? and, 2d, whether the cases relate to

baptism with water?

The first is that of Philip baptizing the Samaritans, Acts viii. 5—16. Under the power of the Spirit, Philip preached Christ, and wrought miracles; the Samaritans believed and were baptized, both men and women. It is clear that Philip, in his preaching, did not baptize them with the Holy Ghost, for, in the 16th verse, it is said, "As yet, He (the Holy Ghost,) was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." But if Philip did not baptize with the Holy Ghost, it is plain that they were baptized with water, which, indeed, is implied in the words, "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." That Simon Magus should be baptized, in no degree proves, that the ordinance was not of Divine appointment; nor is it more

extraordinary, than that Judas should be

chosen an Apostle.

The next is the case of Saul of Tarsus, Acts ix. 3-19. The Lord Jesus said unto Saul, "Arise, and go into Damascus, and there it shall be told thee of all things that are appointed for thee to do." And we read, that Annanias, who was prepared and sent by the Lord Jesus, put his hands on him, and said, "the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared to thee in the way, as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." And, after stating the gracious design which God had, with regard to him, (see chap. xxii. 14-16,) we find, that what he told him to do, was in the following words, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." The text then says, "And, im-mediately, there fell from his eyes, as it had been, scales, and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." Did Annanias, in his preaching, baptize Saul with the Holy Ghost? The narrative, I thought, was conclusive, that he did not; and if it was not the baptism of the Holy Ghost, that is here spoken of, it is clear, that Saul was baptized with water; consequently, water baptism is a Christian ordinance, or Annanias misled the Apostle in directing it. The conclusion, that Annanias did what was contrary to the will of Christ, whilst acting under his direction, is too absurd to be admitted.

The next case is that of Lydia, Acts xvi. 15. It is related as follows, "And a certain woman, named Lydia, heard us—whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, &c.

The next is that of the jailor, at Philippi, Acts xvi. 27—34. Paul and Silas 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." In these two cases, there is no intimation that the Apostle and his companion, in their preaching, baptized with the Holy Ghost, and if not, then they baptized with water.

The next instance, is Acts xviii. It relates to the believers in Corinth. It appears, that when Paul was at Corinth, accompanied by Silas and Timotheus, he abode there a considerable time, and, at first, reasoned in the synagogue, every Sabbath, with the Jews: but when they opposed, he turned to the Gentiles. In the 8th v. it is said, "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord, with all his house, and many of

the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized." I thought it might be well to consider this passage, in connexion with what Paul says, in the i. chap. of first Epistle to the Corinthians. After alluding to divisions and contentions among them, v. 12—17, he says, "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or 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 had baptized in mine own name; and 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."

First. It appears, then, that Paul baptized certain individuals, men of eminence at Corinth, with his own hand—Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue;—Gaius, his host, and of the whole church, (see Rom. xvi. 23;)—and the household of Stephanas, of whom, in the xvi. chap. 15, 16, he speaks as being the first fruits of Achaia;—that they had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints, and to such he exhorts the Corinthian Church to submit themselves. That he baptized them with water, all will allow, and that it was under the influence of the Holy Spirit, I was

bound to believe.

Second. That the Corinthian believers were all baptized, is implied in the text, "Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized:"i. e. as many as believed were baptized. It is, therefore, plain, that Paul only baptized a few of them with his own hands, this part of the work of the Lord had devolved chiefly on his fellow laborers. The Apostle's query—Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?—furnishes another inferential proof, that all the Corinthians, whom he addressed,

had been baptized.

Third. In writing to the Corinthians, afterwards, when in their divisions and contentions, they had arranged themselves under different Heads, the Apostle thanks God that he had not baptized more of them; and the reason for his thanksgiving, on this account, he, himself, assigns, "Lest any should say I had baptized in mine own name." To put such a construction on the words of the Apostle, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel," as would amount to his condemnation of water baptism; or, to make him say more, than that this part of the work of the Lord did not specially devolve upon him, as the preaching of the Gospel did, as it appeared to me, would be to make him implicate himself, in having done, in his Apostolic character, that which he was not divinely authorized to do. It would make his language utterly inconsistent with his conduct at Philippi, in the two last preceding cases, and with the reverent manner in which he recognises the ordinance, v. 13, "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? Or, were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" and it would really be to slander the Apostle, if not the Holy Spirit also, under whom he acted.

In the whole case, there is not the least evidence afforded, of the Apostle's baptizing

with the Holy Ghost in preaching.

The next case relates to Apollos, Acts, xviii. 24-26. "A certain Jew, named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord, and, being fervent in spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the Synagogue: whom, when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God, more perfectly." It may be well just to notice the allusion here made to the baptism of John, which is now to be more particularly adverted to.

The last case of baptism, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, is in the xix. chap., 1—7. It is as follows:—The Apostle Paul "came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there

be any Holy Ghost, And he said unto them, 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. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve."

This instance furnishes fresh evidence, that Christian believers generally, if not universally, were baptized, according to the rite used in the Apostolic Church. This is implied in the question of the Apostle, "To what then were ye baptized?" a question evidently propounded on the presumption, that as they were believers, they had, of course, been baptized.

It also offers another proof, that water baptism is a Christian ordinance. Let us consider the position in the church, which was occupied by the Apostle Paul. He was the acknowledged Apostle to the Gentiles. He knew that they were admitted to all the privileges of the Gospel, without the observance of any Jewish rite; and, that the truth of the Gospel might remain with them, he refused to give place by subjection, even for an hour, to those Judaising teachers, who were con-

stantly endeavoring to bring the Gentiles under the yoke of ceremonial observances. When we consider that the resistance of the effort of others, to mix Jewish ordinances with the Gospel, was the source of his deepest trials, we cannot suppose that this inspired Apostle was defectively taught, as to the spirituality of the Gospel, by that Divine Master, from whom alone he received it. But, if water baptism, as practised by the Apostles, was merely a Jewish rite, we are compelled to say, that by administering and sanctioning it, he betrayed the very cause which he was set by his Lord to defend. The first converts in Achaia, as we have already seen, he baptized with his own hands; and that the Corinthian believers. who received the Gospel under his ministry, were also baptized, is perfectly clear. have seen him at Philippi, with his companions baptizing Lydia and her household, and the jailor and his house; and now we find him at Ephesus, instructing the twelve disciples, and administering, either by himself or others, the Christian rite of water baptism, to those who had previously received the baptism of John.

This case appeared to me, to afford most conclusive evidence, against the unwarranted assumption, that water baptism in the Christian Church, and the baptism of John, were identical. As in the case of Cornelius, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, did not supersede the bap-

tism of water, so it is plain from this instance, that the baptism of John, did not supersede the Christian ordinance of water baptism. These two cases, so different in their features, are in perfect harmony with the practice of the Apostles, in receiving believers into the Church; and afford evidence the most conclusive, that John's baptism, and Christian baptism with water, are essentially distinct—and that water baptism is an ordinance in the Christian Church, and, that it is perfectly in accordance with the fulness and spirituality of the Gospel

dispensation.

Having now, I believe, gone through the whole of the cases of the administration of baptism, recorded in the New Testament, (excepting those in the Gospels that relate exclusively, to the baptism of John, and which are not relevant to the subject under consideration,) I remark, that in every instance, (except that of Apollos, which does not apply,) there appears to be either positive, or circumstantial evidence, on one or other of these points, and, in many of the cases, both of the positions are fully established, viz: 1st, That the Apostles in their preaching did not baptize with the Holy Ghost. And, 2ndly. That they did baptize with water. Nor do I believe one single instance can be produced, that furnishes evidence of a contrary bearing. The proofs seem to me as if they might be thus summed up.

1st. That the baptism of John was of Divine appointment, to make way for the dispensa-tion of the Gospel, and was in itself, distinct from any other baptism which is recorded in the New Testament.

2nd. That Jesus Christ did baptize with

water, though not with his own hands.

3rd. That water baptism has, by Divine appointment, a place in the Christian dispensation .- That baptism, with water, as practised by the Apostles, was not the baptism of John, but was administered by them according to the commission of Christ-that the miraculous powers which they exercised, are evidence, that they acted according to the will of their Divine Master; and that their having baptized with water, when acting under his commission, and the plenary inspiration of the Holy Ghost, proves, beyond all doubt, that water baptism is an ordinance of Christ, under the dispensation of the Gospel.

4th. That water baptism was instituted by Christ, to be administered by man, and is distinct from the baptism emphatically announced by John, as the prerogative of Christ, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and

fire."

5th. That there is no proof, either in our Lord's last commission, before his ascension, or in any other part of the New Testament, that he delegated to the Apostles to baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire, in teaching or preaching, but much circumstantial evidence that he did not; and, therefore, that the conclusion is altogether unwarranted by Scrip-ture, that ministers of the Gospel, in their preaching, do now baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire.

6th. That to entertain the idea, that water baptism was only permitted, in condescension to the infantile state, and Jewish prejudices of the Apostles, would be to destroy all confidence in the doctrines of the Apostles, inspired by the Holy Ghost, and to sap the very foundation of the Christian faith.

I shall not, at present, go into the deeply instructive allusions, which, in treating upon it doctrinally, the Apostles make to the ordinance of baptism, as in Heb. x. 22; 1 Pet. iii. 21, and, also, Rom. vi. 1-5; Gal. iii. 26, 27; Col. ii. 10—14. In reference to Eph. iv. 5, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," which text has sometimes been urged against the ordinance of baptism, I thought it would be well, in seeking for an interpretation, to consider the passage in connexion with Heb. vi. 6, where the Apostle speaks of the doctrine of baptisms [plural] as among the principles of the doctrine of Christ, which were so settled, that there was no need for him there to dwell upon them; and that it should also be borne in mind how fully the Apostle Paul, in some of the instances which have been adduced, acknowledges the Christian ordinance of water

baptism, as well as the baptism of the Holy Ghost. That the word, baptism, is sometimes used in a figurative sense, as in Matt. xx. 22,

33, Luke xii. 50, I need hardly say.

That water baptism is a Divine ordinance, under the Christian dispensation, I think, has been proved by a body of evidence, than which, there is none more conclusive in the Permit me, then, to entreat you to look at it, not simply as a rite, or ceremony, but to consider that which, in the very nature of the thing, it implies. As teaching is, under God, the appointed means for conveying the Gospel of life and salvation to man, so baptism is the appointed means, whereby man, in an overt act, avows himself a disciple of Christ. He testifies, that he believes the Gospel, and accepts the offer of that salvation which God has provided through his beloved Son. He renounces sin, and being saved from the guilt of past transgressions, through faith, in the atonement of Christ, so he looks for deliverance from the power of it, through the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, by whose aid, it is his purpose to lead a holy and godly life, and to walk as becomes a disciple of that Redeemer, who having died for his sins, and risen again for his justification, ever liveth to make intercession for him.

Less than this will not constitute a believer, in the Scripture sense of the term; and, less than this, is not implied in baptism.

Who, then, shall say, that such a renunciation of sin, by an overt act,—such a profession of discipleship,—such a dedication to Christ, deliberately and solemnly made, in obedience to Him, and in dependence upon the Holy Spirit, will be of no avail?—that it will not strengthen the believer in his Christian course? Would it not be awfully presumptuous, and dangerous to assert the inutility of an ordinance, instituted by God for man's help, because we might not see the adaptation of the means to the end? The case of Naaman should afford us an instructive lesson.

That the Lord may open your eyes, and mine, that He may incline our hearts to the full acknowledgment and reception of the whole Truth,—that he may bless you, my dear friends, abundantly, and delight to do you good, is the sincere desire, and prayer, of Your faithful friend,

ISAAC CREWDSON.

Ardwick Green, February 1st, 1837. Extract from a Minute of the Morning Meeting of Ministers and Elders, held in London, the 10th of 10th Month, 1836.

"Information has been now received, that an acknowledged Minister has submitted to the ceremony of water baptism, which was performed by a Minister of a

dissenting congregation.

"This Meeting thinks it right, to record its deep concern on the occasion; and its continued sense, that the practice thus adverted to, (against which our religious Society has uniformly believed itself called upon to bear a public testimony, as no part of the Christian dispensation) was not instituted by our Lord and Saviour, whom we have always acknowledged as the only and supreme Head of his Church."



REASONS

FOR

RECEIVING THE ORDINANCE

OF

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM;

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

Some Observations on the Lord's Supper;

IN A

Letter addressed to the Society of Friends.

BY ELISHA BATES.

WITH AN APPENDIX.



MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

DEAR FRIENDS,-

The relation in which I stand to you, as a member of the same society, and the Christian friendship which I have long felt for many of you individually, demand that I should, at the earliest period that circumstances would admit, inform you of a step, which I have believed it my duty to take, and of the reasons which have led me to it.

The subject of the *Ordinances* having for several years past engaged my attention, in the examination of the correctness or error of our peculiar views in regard to them, it becomes my duty to inform you, with all readiness and candor, the result of my inquiries.

I was, as many of you know, a member of this Society by birth-right: and I grew up in a strong attachment to the distinguishing doctrines and manners of our profession. And long did I maintain and defend those sentiments which I had imbibed as truth. In early life, I suffered many sore conflicts of mind, in besetments with temptations and

under powerful convictions of sin. The dangers to which I was exposed, and the distress into which I was often plunged, were greatly increased, by the lack of clear views of Christian doctrine; especially in regard to faith in Christ, and justification by faith, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the duty and

work of the Holy Spirit, and the duty and privilege of prayer.

It is not my intention to prolong this letter by discussions on these subjects. I mention them to show my early and strong attachment to the Society of Friends, and that through conflicts, which can never be described, I was brought to feel the importance of endeavoring to know, and to do the will of

God.

He was graciously pleased to regard me in my low estate, and gradually to open my un-derstanding, to understand the Scriptures, on those important points of doctrine, which have an immediate relation to the salvation of the soul—among which may be mentioned "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

'These points of doctrine formed prominent parts of the controversy, in which, a few years ago, I was engaged in my own country. That controversy, and subsequent events connected with it, through the providence and grace of God, were blessed to me, in being the means of directing my attention more closely to the Holy Scriptures, and

through the work of the Holy Spirit, extending my views of doctrines of fundamental im-

portance.

Having tasted the terrors of the Lord, I was engaged to persuade men. And in doing this, I did not seek for popularity, nor endeavor to adapt my preaching to the taste or the prejudices of my hearers. Many of you can bear me witness, that for preaching the great doctrines of the Gospel, without compromise, I incurred the displeasure of many, who had professed much friendship for me, and who, in various ways, have manifested that displeasure. But I felt bound to submit to the loss of friends, of reputation, or of whatever it might cost me, counting all but as dross, so that I might win Christ.

But while engaged in the maintenance of those blessed doctrines of the Gospel, for which I had been made a sufferer, my attention was called to subjects which had been passed over, as requiring no examination. An anxious inquirer asked me, what good reasons, or what were the best reasons, which we had for laying aside the ordinances? I give an answer, which though it did not satisfy the inquirer, put an end to the conversation on

the subject.

My mind, however, was directed to the Holy Scripture, to find some reasons in addition to those we had already advanced, in support of our peculiar views. The subject

of baptism first engaged my attention. But my disappointment can scarcely be conceived, when instead of finding additional arguments in favor of the disuse of the ordinances, I perceived that the very passages on which we had relied, did not support the conclusions we have drawn from them; but on the contrary, presented evidence of a directly opposite character. Disappointment increased the earnestness of my research. I still hoped to find something which would fully sustain us. And when again and again, every argument which I could frame to myself, was laid prostrate before the simple testimony of Holy Scripture, I determined to suspend my decision, sought for assistance and right direction in prayer, and returned again to the examination of the subject.

More than twelve months elapsed before I gave up the hope of finding sufficient evidence in Scripture, for believing that we had been

right in laying those practices aside.

But when at last, the conviction was forced upon me, that our predecessors were not warranted in the disuse of baptism and the supper, the difficulties in which they had placed us, by so doing, came fully into view. How to recover what they had thus abandoned, was, and is, attended with difficulties, which can be fully realized, only after the mind is convinced upon the primary question.

I need not notice those difficulties in detail,

on the present occasion. But it is proper to remark, that my mind was turned to the Lord, in frequent and fervent prayer for right direction. Few, if any, of my most intimate friends, knew the process through which my mind was led. For as I was not, and could not be, prepared, publicly to promulgate the doctrine, until I was enabled to meet it in a practical way, I found it to be my place, rather to seek knowledge for myself on these subjects, than to undertake to communicate it to others. Sometimes, however, the question arose in conversation, in a way that did not allow me to turn aside from the expression of my own judgment, so far as it had been formed.

But being fully convinced, in regard to the abstract question, I was bound to seek for the wisdom which is from above, to direct me in regard to the practical difficulties which arise from our peculiar position. These difficulties were at length removed, but not till the time of my last visit to London. My conclusions were not the result of personal influence, from any quarter whatever, but of the full convic-

tions of my own mind.

After several interviews with Dr. J. Pye Smith, I was baptized by him, at his own house, at Homerton, on the 15th inst. A few Christian friends were present.—But though I preferred to pursue a very simple course, in accordance with some of those deeply interesting examples, which are recorded of primitive

believers, I never wished the transaction itself to be regarded, in any degree, in the character of a secret. I am not ashamed of the profession I have made of faith in our Lord and Saviour, nor of the manner in which that profession was made. I rest on the authority of the commandment of our risen and adorable Redeemer, and the example of the believers in the purest age of the church. And while I most tenderly sympathize with my beloved friends, who may have been alarmed or pained at hearing of the step which I have taken, I do sincerely rejoice, in that sense of the love, and of the providence of God, which has been given me.

And now, in the feeling of brotherly regard, I will endeavor to remove from your minds, every painful impression which you may

have received on the occasion.

And, in the first place, I will remark, that being baptized, in conformity with the command of Christ, and the example of the apostles and primitive believers, I did not intend to abandon the Society of Friends; it being distinctly understood, that it was not an initiation into the particular society of which Dr. Pye Smith is a pastor. I shall leave it to my friends, in their official capacity, to say whether to walk as we have the apostles for an ensample (see Phil. iii. 17,) be totally inadmissible in our society or not.

In disposing of this question, let it be re-

membered, that there is not, and so far as my information extends, there never was, any rule of discipline touching the question. How then can you undertake to censure an individual, as having violated the discipline—in a case in which there is no discipline at all? If you think the discipline ought to prohibit those things, which the apostles commanded and practised, in the name of their divine Master—must you not have such a rule of discipline formed—and not leave it to individuals, to act in their own discretion, in such momentous cases? But in making such a rule, as it would be taking ground which never has been taken, you should seriously consider both the consequences of the measure and the authority on which you proceed.

As to the doctrinal writings of the society,

As to the doctrinal writings of the society, we know that they are not discipline. If they are to be regarded in that point of view, they must be taken so, in all their parts. But who would now be willing to be bound by all that early Friends have written on subjects of doctrine? There are declarations in their writings, and those not a few, which no pious Christian could adopt, in the common and obvious sense of the language. If they intended these writings to be taken as of absolute authority, no one could safely dare to accede to such an idea. If they did not, the advocates for their writings, cannot fairly draw from them such an inference.

The last Yearly Meeting in London declared, in the document which it embodied in the general epistle, that "the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God; that therefore the declarations contained in them rest on the authority of God himself; and there can be no appeal from them to any other authority whatever;" and "that no doctrine which is not contained in them can be required of any one to be believed, as an article of faith."

Now, if these declarations were really intended to be carried out in practice, how can you, on questions of doctrine, appeal to any other authority than the Holy Scriptures? And I ask you, my friends, where will you find, in all the Scriptures, that baptism, or the supper, as these were taught and practised by the Apostles, are unlawful, or afford just cause for church censure? If this be not in Scripture, how can you require it

to be believed, as an article of faith?

But I do not intend to place this subject merely on negative ground. For as every religious body, and every particular member of it, is solemnly bound to correct all errors, reform all abuses, and obey from the heart that form of doctrine which has been delivered us in the Holy Scriptures, I ask you, not merely for my sake, but for your own, calmly and dispassionately to review the whole ground, and search the Scriptures to see whether these things are so.

That our Lord, during his personal ministry, did authorize a baptism, by which his disciples were recognized, and by which they made profession of discipleship to him, is clearly proved by the 3d and 4th chapters of John. That this baptism, whatever might have been the form of it, or the manner in which it was administered, could not have been identical with that of John, is proved by the fact that there was a distinction plainly expressed between them, and also between the disciples of John and those of Jesus.

I wish it to be remembered, that baptism, simply taken, and without something in the context to change its obvious sense, does mean an outward and visible act. The application of the term, both to sufferings and to the affusion of the Holy Ghost, is figurative.

I state it also, as an undeniable fact, that the baptism embraced in the commission of our Lord Jesus Christ, after his resurrection, was not identical with the baptism of John, nor with any of the washings which had been practised by the Jews, nor with any other baptism which had preceded it. There is no evidence whatever, that a baptism "in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," had ever been instituted before. It was now, after the resurrection of the adorable Saviour, when he declared, "all power is given unto me, both in heaven and in earth"—that he gave this charge to his

disciples, "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 alway, even unto the end of the world. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned." Matt. xxviii. 19, 20: Mark xvi. 16.

As this was neither the baptism of John, nor any ritual of the Jews, so it is evident there could be no prejudices in favor of it.

We cannot suppose that our risen Lord intended to adapt either the preaching of the Gospel, or the initiation of the believers into the church, to the prejudices of the ignorant or vicious. He did not intend to let down the doctrines and practices embraced in the commission just recited—that by making some concessions to unregenerate men, they might be the more ready to receive the other parts of his doctrines. If we could for a moment imagine such an accommodation of the gospel, we should look for it, in the doctrines: because these were to precede the initiation into the visible church. And we must perceive that where the unregenerate heart is subdued, and a willingness is produced to receive the kingdom of heaven as little children, when the language is uttered, Lord what wilt thou have me do? the humble be-

liever would not presume to make his own terms in entering into the visible church.

But apart from this consideration, we must perceive, on impartial reflection—that the baptism of the 3,000 on the day of Pentecost, of Cornelius and his household, and of the apostle Paul, was under the direction of chosen instruments, specially qualified, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven-and not in compliance with any prejudices on the part of the baptized. What prejudices, for example, could there have been in the mind of the persecuting Saul, in favor of a baptism, which peculiarly marked the disciples of the Lord Jesus, when he was making havoc of the church, and when he was pursuing to the utmost extremities, both men and women, to pour down his vengeance upon them, and even compel them to blaspheme? We can readily suppose that the baptism, which recognized a faith he so thoroughly despised—could have had in it nothing pleasing to his mind-but on the contrary, that he would have considered no other act or evidence necessary, to render an individual an object of his most vindictive hatred, than simply to have received that baptism. No: he was first brought to be a believer in the Lord Jesus, and in such a manner, as to lay his prepossessions, as well as his person, prostrate in the dust. Feeling himself in the awful presence of the glorified Saviour, trembling

and astonished, he inquired, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" He was told to "arise and go into Damascus, and there it shall be told thee of all things which were appointed for thee to do." There, in the depth of humiliation, for three days, in which he ate nothing—struck with blindness, and the chastening hand of God upon him—the promise of the Lord Jesus was at length fulfilled to him. Ananias, an humble disciple, was specially sent, with immediate and extraordinary instructions from the Lord, to tell him what was appointed for him to do. And by this messenger, the contrite, broken hearted Saul, was directed to be baptized; and actually was baptized.

I cannot imagine a case more completely excluding all idea of the Jewish prejudices and prepossessions in favor of baptism than this. But this is not all. For the evidence of divine authority in the transaction is undeniable, and the apostle Paul himself, but a few days before his death, particularly mentions this circumstance, in giving an account of his conversion, and of the gracious dealings of God with him.—See Acts xxii.

That the apostles did understand the command or commission of our Lord, given after his resurrection, as recorded by Matthew and Mark, to include baptism, in the plain and obvious sense of the term, is evident from their practice under that commission.

I shall first endeavor to show, that they did not assume to themselves the power of baptizing with the Holy Ghost.

The first argument that I shall use, is the total absence of any claim whatever by the Apostles, to the exercise of such a power.

And secondly, that there is not such a term in the New Testament, or elsewhere in the Bible, as that of a *Baptizing Ministry*.*

And thirdly, that *Teaching* and *Baptizing* are not used as meaning one and the same thing—but on the contrary, they are mentioned with a decided and marked distinction.

In connexion with the first position here laid down, it should be remembered, that to baptize with the Holy Ghost, is spoken of Jesus Christ, and of Him only; and is one of the undeniable proofs of his Deity. It is placed on this very ground by John. "I, indeed, baptize you with water unto repentance; but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: HE shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost,

^{*} In making this statement, I wish it distinctly understood, that correcting this unscriptural mode of expression, does not at all detract from the doctrine of the immediate help of the Holy Spirit in the work of the ministry—nor from the work of the Spirit in carrying the doctrines of the Gospel to the hearts of individuals. I earnestly desire that these important doctrines may ever be maintained, as they are set forth in the Holy Scriptures. And that every departure, in these and all other respects, from Scripture testimony, may be most readily corrected.

and with fire." Matt. iii. 2. See Mark, i. 7, 8. Luke, iii. 16. And again. "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is HE which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record, that this is the

Son of God." John, i. 32, 33, 34.

Now it is clear, that baptizing with the Holy Ghost, is predicated of the Son of God, and of Him only. But this conclusion is not drawn from these passages alone. When Peter explained, on the day of Pentecost, the wonders, which then drew admiring crowds around them, he said, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days (saith God) that I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh," &c. Here let it be observed that it was God that should pour out of his Spirit. And, therefore, when the inspired Apostle applied this to Jesus Christ, saying, "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear,"—he not only explained the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, but he bore an undeniable testimony to the Deity of Jesus Christ.

The terms baptizing with the Holy Ghost and with fire, occur in the testimony of John the Baptist. And on the day of Pentecost we have the *entire* fulfilment of the prediction; when "there appeared cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Now while we may confidently affirm that this prediction was literally fulfilled, even in reference to the fire, on that particular occasion, it will be freely granted—nay insisted—that the baptism of the Holy Ghost was not confined to that occasion. But I shall insist also, that it was spoken of Christ, and of Him only, as the baptizer with the Holy Ghost—because the Holy Ghost himself is God. And as the Prophet testified that it was God who would pour out of his Spirit, upon all flesh, so the Apostle applied the prophecy to Christ, that He being by the right hand of God exalted, had shed forth what constituted the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

That they did not understand that they were to baptize, by preaching the Gospel, or that baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost, were one and the same, is proved by

many undeniable facts.

On that wonderful event, when cloven tongues like as of fire, sat upon each of the disciples, they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Peter was certainly not less eminently gifted than any of the rest, when he was hon-

ored by the Head of the Church to be the chief Speaker on that memorable occasion. He was then filled with the Holy Ghost, and thus qualified, he preached the Gospel; which was made effectual to the conversion of 3000 souls that day. Now if he had understood this to be baptizing, he would not have told them afterwards to be baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the work would have been already done. And if the gift of the Holy Ghost had been one and the same with that effectual preaching, or had been conferred by it, he would not have placed it apart from the teaching they had heard, and from the baptism he had unhesitatingly told them to receive. The teaching, baptizing, and gift of the Spirit, are here all brought to our notice, as clearly distinguished from each other.

The same thing is even more strongly marked in the conversion of the Samaritans. There they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, and then they were baptized, both men and women. Here the preaching, and the baptism, were evidently not one and the same thing. And the gift of the Holy Ghost was not identical with either. For when the Apostles heard that Samaria had received the word of God, (plainly the Gospel message,) they sent unto them Peter and John, who, when they were come, prayed that they might receive the Holy Ghost, for as yet he was

fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Now I ask you, my friends, if these three things, teaching, and baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, could be placed more distinctly, as not being identical, than they are in this passage?

That baptizing was not to be performed by preaching the Gospel, or, as we say, by a baptizing ministry, is further proved by the words of the Apostle Paul, who declared, that Christ sent him not to baptize but to preach the Gospel.* Baptism then was taken in its

^{*} Will any one presume to condemn the Apostle Paul. either for being baptized himself, or baptizing others, or sanctioning it on the broad scale? Baptizing being connected with teaching, is included in that commission which covers the whole ground of the ministry, in which there was a diversity of gifts, a difference of administration, and a diversity of operation. That the Apostles themselves did not generally baptize, but that it was usually performed by subordinate ministers, appears from the strong probability, that Peter did not baptize either the 3000 on the day of Pentecost; or Cornelius and his household, whom he commanded to be baptized. Paul baptized a few-but he certainly sanctioned the baptism of the jailor and his family, Lydia and hers-the many Corinthians mentioned, Acts, xviii. 8; and the 12 Ephesians, ib. xix. 5. It may be further remarked that Crispus, the chief ruler of the Synagogue, believed and was baptized by Paul himself, at the same time that many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized. See Acts. xviii. 8, comp. 1 Cor. i. 14, 15, 16. Thus while he baptized only a few, many were baptized by others. It should be remembered also, that Philip, who was a deacon, bap-

simple and obvious sense, and is clearly distinguished by the Apostle from preaching the

Gospel.

It is to be observed that the baptism which Peter commanded on the day of Pentecost, which the Samaritans received, and which was administered to the twelve Ephesians; (all which were cases of baptism in the obvious sense of the word,) were all in the name of Jesus Christ. Now that we cannot construe the terms here, in a mystical sense, to mean the power, is evident, because the baptism itself was plainly an outward one. And in all these cases, the gift of the Holy Spirit was not conferred till afterwards. In the case of the Samaritans it would seem to have been some days after this baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus. That it was not the form of words used in Baptism, appears by the commission of our Saviour, see Matt. xxviii, 19. 20, compared with Acts, xix. 2, 3, "And he said unto them, have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, unto what then were ye baptized? and they said, unto John's baptism."

tized the Eunuch and the Samaritans. The baptism of Crispus, and the many Corinthians, appears to have been not less than TWENTY years after the crucifixion: according to the chronology of the Bible, published by the Bible Association of Friends of America.

As soon as they had said they had not heard whether there were any Holy Ghost, Paul perceived there had been [a defect] in their baptism. For if they had been baptized according to the directions of Jesus Christ, they must have recognized the Holy Ghost, as well as the Father and the Son.

The fact, then, is, by their being baptized in the *name* of the Lord Jesus, we are to understand that it was not only into discipleship to him, but by his *authority*—as when an individual is commissioned to transact any business for another—it is properly said to be done in the *name* of him who gave such authority. This single form of expression, taken in this sense, which it necessarily must be, establishes this outward, initiatory baptism to be absolutely of divine authority—administered by the special direction and commandment of Jesus Christ.

But it may not be amiss to remark, that if any, from habits of thinking or otherwise, cannot at once relinquish the idea, (erroneous as it is,) that the name here means the power, it will not in the least avert the force of the conclusion, because it would assume that this outward baptism, was administered in the power of the Lord Jesus, which would preclude all idea of its being unauthorized by him.

The case of Cornelius and his household, whom Peter, specially sent and qualified for the work as he was, commanded to be bap-

tized, shows that even those who had received the Holy Ghost, and spiritual gifts, and had spoken in the exercise of those gifts, were

commanded to receive this ordinance.

The baptism of the Eunuch shows not only that it was the mode of acknowledging the admission of believers into the fellowship of the Church, but that it was administered with great care, that the initiated person should be a fit subject, that is a believer with all the heart.

The case of the twelve Ephesians shows, that no other than the one Christian baptism, which Christ had commanded, and which was constantly recognized as being administered in his name or by his authority, would do for the initiation of disciples into the visible Church.

The reader will please to take notice, that this case of administering Christian baptism, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to persons who had received another baptism, occurred at Ephesus: and about the year 57. The Apostle Paul remained in that vicinity about three years, and then after a short visit to some neighboring places, he sent for the elders of this very Church, where this example had been set of the Apostle's care in regard to the one initiatory baptism. To these elders he appealed, as knowing how he had been among them "from the first day" he had been in Asia, including the time of this re-

markable transaction, that he had kept back nothing that was profitable unto them—that he had not shunned to declare unto them the whole counsel of God—and then impressively admonished them to remember that by the space of three years he ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

Not the least intimation is given of any change of view which the Apostle had come to during this period, but directly to the contrary, he recognizes the whole course of Christian instruction which he had given, from the first day he came among them till then.

These facts very forcibly illustrate that passage in the 4th chapter of the Epistle to this very Church, in which he says: "There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord: one faith: one baptism: one God and Father of all, who is above all, through all, and in you all."

With such on example as he had set before their eyes, in causing the twelve who had received John's baptism, to receive the one initiatory baptism appointed by the Lord Jesus, and constantly recognized as being administered in his name, this passage in the Epistle must have been very forcible—used as it was, to show the close and intimate relation in which they stood to each other, and to admonish them to labor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

The first chapter of 1 Corinthians has

a strong bearing on this part of the subject. There they were in danger of division, from party preferences to favorite ministers of the Gospel. Some were for Paul, some for Apollos, some for Cephas, &c. Against these divisions he very strongly reasoned and admonished them. "Is Christ divided?" said he; "was Paul crucified for you? or, were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" Here their having been baptized in this one Christian baptism, in the name of Jesus Christ, or into discipleship to him, and by his commandment, is used as an argument against division and contention. It was on this very ground that the argument derived from their baptism, was advanced; and it was for this cause that he thanked God he had baptized so few, lest it should be said he had baptized in his own name, and thus the idea of another baptism be introduced, and with it the most dangerous consequences.

In addition to these reasons for the meaning of the passage in Ephesians iv. it may be observed that that passage cannot be construed to apply to the Holy Spirit; because when baptism is mentioned without something in the context, to give it a different sense, its common and obvious meaning is to be taken. And there is nothing in the context to turn it from that meaning. It cannot be taken in that constrained sense, as applied to the Holy Ghost, and denying the existence of any other, be-

cause it would not, in that sense, be true; for the outward baptism of the believers was then in practice, as had been demonstrated before the eyes of these very persons to whom this Epistle was written. And sufferings, to which our Lord figuratively applied the term, were still to be endured.

The meaning which Friends have attached to the expressions of the Apostle, in thanking God that he had baptized only Crispus, and Gaius, and the household of Stephanus, is totally unwarranted by the text. From the passage before us, as well as from Acts, xviii. 8, it is perfectly evident, that the Corinthians had, like other believers, been received into the Church by baptism. And the discontinuance of the practice was not at all under consideration. On the contrary, he draws an argument from that mode of initiation, against the divisions to which they were inclined. And his thanking God that he had baptized only those whom he named, was not to convey the idea, that the practice of the Church, which had then lasted more than a quarter of a century, should be changed: but that it should мот be changed. His meaning is explicit, "Lest any should say, that I had baptized in my own name," and thus introduce another baptism. And I feel bound to confess, for myself, and to say for others, that we ought not to have set aside the meaning which the Apostle so clearly declared himself, nor have imposed upon the passage one so very different, which the inspired writer did not express.

In the 12th chapter of the same Epistle, the Apostle writes to them "concerning spiritual gifts." Not the least idea is suggested here, any more than in the first chapter, of unsettling the long continued order of the Church, in receiving persons into visible connexion with it. This was a subject not brought into question.—The doctrine immediately under the notice of the Apostle, was, "the diversity of gifts," and the source from which they were derived, and with all this diversity, the gift of the one Spirit, which was the privilege of all true believers. After enumerating various gifts, but all by the same Spirit; and testifying that "a manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal," he says: "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." -1 Cor. xii. 11, 12, 13.

As in the first chapter he had admonished them against divisions, and used the *Baptism* they had received, as an argument against their party distinctions, so now he refers to

the One Spirit, as giving vitality to every part of the body, composed of many members, each having its appropriate place and each respectively helpful to the whole. He shows that there was to be, not only an outward and visible union of the members of the Church, but such a spiritual relation that if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it: and if one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. And if, by showing that the various gifts which he enumerated, were by the same Spirit, he did not set aside the formal acknowledgment of those gifts by the Church, which it is evident he did not; much less did he, in declaring that by one Spirit they were all Baptized into one body, change or set aside that Baptism, by which persons had been admitted into visible connexion with the Church. and which had been administered in the name or authority of the Lord Jesus from the day of Pentecost till then.

But taken in its common and strictly proper meaning, as the mode of initiation of believers into the Church which our Lord Jesus Christ appointed after his resurrection, and which the Apostles commanded and the believers received in his name and there was but the *one*.

And, however, the circumstances of the believers might be varied, or however widely they might be separated, whether Jews or Gentiles, there was but one body and one Spirit, even as they were called in one hope of their calling, one Lord, one Faith, one (initiatory) Baptism, one God and Father in all, who is above all, through all, and in all.

That our arguments for the disuse of baptism and the supper are unfounded, is proved by the fact, that while the use of these ordinances was undoubtedly commanded and practised by the Apostles and are carefully recorded by divine authority, there is no evidence on record, that they ever were laid aside during the Apostolic age. And as the Scriptures show these things in the established order of the Churches, superintended as they ever were by the Apostles, so Ecclesiastical History finds them in the Church, and traces them down to modern times, though greatly perverted and abused in some instances.

However our predecessors might have been influenced by these abuses, to lay the ordinances aside, that measure was wholly unwarranted by the Holy Scriptures. They should have avoided abuses, and not abandoned the institutions of Jesus Christ "and the commandments of the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour."

The idea that the Apostles themselves were under Judaical prejudices, in commanding and practising these things, has had a very mischievous affect.

To assume such a position, in reference to their government of the Churches, endued for that office, as they were, by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, is highly objectionable, and if carried out, must totally lay waste the authority of the Holy Scriptures. For if they were mistaken while preaching, why not as liable to be mistaken while writing? And if so, are we not brought to the result, of taking just so much of their doctrines as we please? Now that this objection does go to their writings, as well as their oral discourses, is evident, because we know nothing of their oral teaching, but by what is written, so that the uncertainty would fall directly and at once upon Scripture.

The notion that we or our predecessors, have had clearer views than the Apostles, is highly presumptuous, and always fraught with incalculable danger. And of that danger we have had among ourselves the most humilia-

ting evidences.

The practical effects of laying aside the ordinances have been of a very injurious character, and intimately connected with defection on fundamental points of doctrine. I shall briefly mention a few of these effects.

Besides the general tendency to weaken our sense of the authority of Holy Scripture, the disuse of Baptism, has thrown us more into the condition of a social compact than of a Church. The Apostolic Church was composed of Believers. This is the term by which the members were of it were designated. Faith

was essential to this privilege; and they individually made profession of it by baptism. And those who administered this initiatory ordinance in the name of the Lord Jesus, exercised a care that the persons so joined to the body should be fit subjects, that is believers. Those also who received the Holy Ghost, and who under his constraining power, had magnified God (see Acts x. 44 to the end,) were not exempted from this general regulation, which rested upon the command of Christ. It meets us at the very formation of the Church as respects the individuals by whom it was successively composed.

We have abandoned all this, on the professian of more pure and spiritual views. And our Society is made up in a totally different manner. Is it then any cause of admiration, that when the great doctrines of the Gospel which originally were recognized on the initiation of believers into the Church, are brought into discussion, so many of our members should be found unprepared to acknowledge them?

In reference to the Lord's Supper, which was the memorial of the dying Saviour's love, the laying of that ordinance aside has been not less injurious than the rejection of baptism.

The practice of the Christian Church, in

The practice of the Christian Church, in both these cases under the immediate care of the Apostles, I believe was of divine authority, and therefore, should not have been abandoned by us.

We ought not to forget the time or the circumstances, which marked the Last Supper that was eaten by our Lord, with his disciples. It was at the very juncture when he was about to be offered on the cross, a sacrifice for our sins. A recurrence to that time, and to those events, should ever produce an hum-bling effect upon our hearts. That he intended to recall the minds of his disciples to these things, after they had taken place, by the use of lively symbols of his body that was broken, and of his blood that was shed for them, is shown by the language which he employed. took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them saying, This is my body, which is given for you: this do in remembrance of ME. Likewise, also, the cup of supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed for you." The reverential remembrance of his Love, and what he has done for us, and his gracious designs in it, is connected with the highest obligations that can rest upon intelligent creatures. He who knew what was in man and how to help us, in the midst of our manifold infirmities, was pleased to take hold of this communion with him, the same night in which he was betrayed; and to say " This do in remembrance of me."

The passover, which was instituted on the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage, prefigured the death of

Christ. His crucifixion being at the time of that feast, more strongly marks the application of it to him. And the awful consequences denounced against those who should neglect to sprinkle the blood of the Pascal Lamb on their dwellings, is a most solemn admonition of the necessity of the sprinkling of the Blood of Christ on our hearts by Faith.

But the Lord's Supper differs essentially from the Passover in several important particulars. It is connected historically, not with the deliverance of the Israelites from bondage, but with the last supper which our Redeemer took with his disciples immediately before his death, for their and our sakes. over pointed beforehand, obscurely to Christ who was to come; without explaining who he was, or when we would come. The supper was to bring to remembrance (of course in after time) both the Lord Jesus himself personally, and his death, and the shedding of his blood, upon the cross, as a sacrifice for our sins; and to remind us by the figure of eating and drinking (which are the natural means of sustaining life) the immediate relation which the very body and blood of our crucified Saviour, has to our spiritual life, support and sustance.

That He who "is Lord of all," who is given to be "Head over all things to the Church," whom all the angels of God are commanded to worship, had power over the whole law, to retain or to abrogate whatever part He pleased, no one can dare to deny. But that the baptism which he commanded after his resurrection, and the Supper which he instituted immediately before his death,—as those ordinances were understood and maintained by the Apostles, were not mere fragments of the ceremonial law, is proved by the very institutions themselves, the times at which they were commanded, and the objects which they commemorated.

The Apostle Paul, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, (which was written about the year 59,) so far from laying this practice aside, places it in the strongest point of view. He plainly calls it "the Lord's Supper," and says, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do, in remembrance of me. After the same manner, also, he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament of my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man

examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 1 Cor. xv. 23 to 29. He had, in the preceding chapter, said: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" And to show the near relation in which they stood to each other, he proceeds: "For we being many, are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." And then he proceeds: "Behold Israel after the flesh; are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What say I then? that the idol is any thing? or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils." 1 Cor. x. 16 to 21.

Let it be considered, that twenty-six years after the Supper was instituted by our Lord, the Apostle brings it in this impressive manner into notice. Being himself, at the time of its institution, not even a disciple, but afterwards converted to the Christian faith, and made the Apostle of the Gentiles—as one that was born out of due time, he was permitted

to see the Lord—to receive the doctrines of the Gospel by revelation of Jesus Christ: and from him also he received this institution of the Supper, which he had delivered to the Corinthians.

The manner in which it is treated, the persons to whom it is addressed, and the time at which the Epistle was written, all combine to prove conclusively, that it was an institution of Jesus Christ—that afterwards it was communicated to the Apostle by the Lord himself, to be delivered to the Gentile believers, and was in use among them when the Epistle was written: and finally, that as oft as the believers eat this bread and drink this cup, they do show the Lord's death till he come.

The terms "till he come," have received a forced construction, to favor the laying aside of this memorial of the Lord's death. Instead of taking these terms to have a meaning as decidedly future, now, as it was when addressed to the Corinthians, the idea has been entertained, that it has been fulfilled, and of course that the memorial is no longer to be observed.

Now it is very certain, that the argument will amount to nothing, unless it can be proved that he has now come, in a sense in which he had not come, when the Epistle to the Corinthians was written. For if the coming of the Lord, spoken of by the Apostle, is future now, as it was then, the end of its observance, mentioned by him, has not yet arrived. What,

then, I ask, is that coming of the Lord, which we have supposed has put an end to this ordinance? Without pretending to answer for others, I can only say for myself, that I formerly considered it as pointing to the introduction of the Spirituality of the Gospel. But I have long been fully satisfied that this is not

the meaning of the terms.

On this point, however, the argument cannot be sustained. Because it may be confidently said, that the Spirituality of the Gospel never has been enjoyed in the Church since the days of the Apostles, in a more eminent degree than it was during the first quarter of a century after the day of Pentecost. And, therefore, as it was after this period pressed upon "the Church of God which (was) at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours," we cannot consistently lay it aside on the claims of greater Spirituality, or clearer views of Christian doctrine. We should remember the extraordinary gifts which were then bestowed upon the Church; and that the Apostle, in the Epistle before us, says: "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance and in all knowledge." 1 Cor. i. 4, 5. And at a much earlier period it is declared, "Then

had the Churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multi-

plied." Acts, ix. 31.

Thus we find the Lord's Supper in the Church of Corinth, in the year 59: some abuses which had found admission, corrected—the most important practical considerations in regard to it, enforced, with this notice from an inspired apostle—"the rest will I set in order when I come."

There is no record in Scripture that it was abandoned in the Church; but on the contrary, established in this decisive manner, the practice descended to succeeding ages, where ecclesiastical history finds it, however it may, in the apostacy, have been abused or vitiated.

The practical effects of this ordinance are in no small degree illustrated by the Apostle.

It was to bring the Lord Jesus and his sufferings and death for us, into remembrance, as that on which our Spiritual life and all heavenly consolations depend; and to show forth the Lord's death, as a powerful appeal to our hearts, for that gratitude, and love, and filial obedience which are ever due from us to him who laid down his life for us. And also to lead to a close and humbling examination of ourselves, that we may not bring on ourselves the awful condemnation of being guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Thus we may

perceive an evident design to comfort, sustain, and animate the humble believer, with a renewed recurrence to those blessings which we receive through Jesus Christ—and, on the other hand, to serve as a solemn warning, against those things which would prevent our

coming to the Lord's table.

Such has been, and is, the Divine economy in all the provisions, for the edification and improvement of the Church and its individual members, that every neglect of provisions which have been given to the Church by its Holy Head, is attended with an inevitable loss. But the wilful neglect of those things designed for our good, cannot be without direct condemnation. This result is necessarily connected with the government of Christ in the Church. We cannot turn from a question of this nature with indifference; nor when we have discovered the will of God, as recorded in the Scriptures, either indifferently put it from us, or balance between the authority by which it is enjoined, and that by which it is forbidden.

One reason, on which we have defended our non-observance of the Lord's Supper, ought not to be entirely overlooked. It is that very mystical view which we have taken of the Body and Blood of Christ, in which we have supposed that we were to eat the Spiritual Body and drink the Spiritual Blood of Christ. But however some of us may have

held that mystical doctrine of the body of Christ, it is not difficult now to perceive, with what facility it has been carried out, into what we have denominated Hicksism. If the body and blood of Christ be taken as something really in ourselves, the door is completely thrown open for the denial that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing we may have life through his name. To divert our attention from him who actually died upon the cross, a sacrifice for our sins; who was raised from the dead, and is on the right hand of God, our ever living and glorified High Priest and Advocate with the Father; and to consider the body and blood of Christ merely an inward principle, is a most dangerous departure from Scripture doctrine. And how far the disuse of the Lord's Supper, may have contributed to this departure, is worthy of serious consideration. If we look no further back than the beginning of the present century, we shall find the Society in Ireland almost broken up by a modification of this very doctrine. Scarcely had these difficulties subsided, when another rupture took place in New England, evidently originating in the same causes. This was immediately succeeded, on a more extended scale, by that which has been called the Separation in America, in which more than thirty thousand persons were disunited from the present body, holding these very views of the body and

blood of Christ, and claiming to hold the original doctrines of the Society. And now the same thing lies at the root of our present difficulties.

We must of necessity take the whole broad ground of Christian doctrine, both as to Faith and Practice. We must come directly to the Holy Scriptures, without admitting an appeal to any other authority whatever. It is, however, a lamentable fact, that while the Society has recently made some important declarations of the paramount authority of Holy Scripture, the practical course pursued is, to rest on the authority of our own writings. This, as has been often repeated, must lead to a further examination of that authority.

In the mean time, I wish my dear friends impartially to weigh the subject, as in the sight of God. If we have been mistaken, that mistake is against ourselves. If we persevere in error, when the investigation is fairly opened before us, we incur a condemnation of a

fearful character.

On the subject immediately before us, I have acted on purely conscientious ground; and with a desire to obey, from the heart, that form of doctrine which is delivered in the Scriptures.

I love the Society, and would willingly spend and be spent, in the promotion of its best interests. And this can only be effected by the maintenance of sound Christian doctrine, both as to Faith and Practice. And I freely confess, that I believe a reformation in these re-

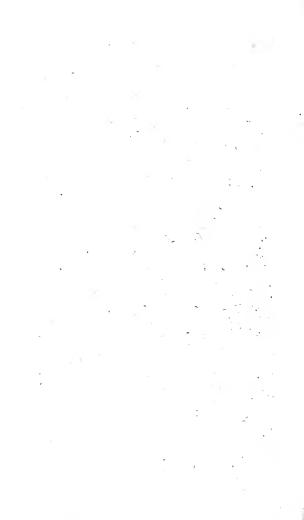
spects is much wanted among us.

We have seen, in the late controversy in America, and in subsequent investigations, that there is much in the writings of our accredited authors, which cannot bear the test of Scripture authority; even in regard to doctrines of fundamental importance. I have, in the recent numbers of the Repository treated this subject with some freedom. I am confirmed in the belief that our own writings cannot be taken as the standard of doctrines, not only for the plain reason of the paramount authority of Holy Scripture, but because of special reasons to be deduced from those writings themselves. Should we be pressed for these reasons, they will be given. In the meantime, I entreat, my dear friends to "let brotherly love continue." "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

I am,

With love, your friend, Elisha Bates.

9th Month, 1836.



APPENDIX.

Correspondence between Elisha Bates and others, on the subject of his having been baptized.

ADVERTISEMENT.

A FEW days before Elisha Bates embarked for America, he received, through the hands of Josiah Forster, clerk of the Morning meeting of Ministers and Elders, an official copy of a minute of that Meeting, in reference to his having been baptized. This Minute, together with some correspondence relating to that act, and to the Minute itself, forms the subject of the present publication.

After consulting with the few friends, to whom he then had access, it was his and their united judgment, that this document as well as the whole correspondence above referred to, ought to be laid before the public, unless something should be done, on the part of those who are, either individually or collectively, implicated in it, which might render such a step unnecessary. As, however, it was out of

the question for Elisha Bates to remain upon the spot to receive a reply to the last letter in the series, copies were left with me to use

as circumstances might dictate.

Its immediate publication was not deferred from any strong expectation that such steps would be taken, by those who have been instrumental in this proceeding, as would preclude the necessity of adopting that course; yet it was, nevertheless, deemed advisable to wait for a short period, in order to afford them time for re-consideration. That time has now been afforded, and no intimation has been given of their intention to offer any explanation of an act which is to say the least of it very remarkable in more than one respect. Under these circumstances, therefore, and after taking the opinion of some of those Friends who are acquainted with the case, I consider it to be my duty to carry into effect the charge left in my hands.

Whilst expressing no opinion of my own, upon the act itself, which has occasioned this correspondence, I may perhaps be permitted to say, that I fully accord with my valued friend Elisha Bates, in the judgment that it should be published. For, when those who are filling the most prominent stations in the Society, are thus presuming, in the exercise of one of its subordinate functions, to issue unqualified declarations upon a question whereon we differ, not only from the understanding and

belief of the Λ postles themselves, but also of the Primitive Christians and all other sects, from the day of Pentecost down to the present day-when, acting upon these declarations, they are doing all in their power, and using all their influence to bring down upon an individual the censures of the church, and that, too, in a case wherein it is not pretended that any law exists—it is time that the members of the Society generally, should be apprised of what is going on—it is time that their attention should be seriously called to the subject. Though, at first sight, it may appear to be an affair only of individual interest, yet truly, it is one of general interest, when viewin all its bearings. It involves a principle—a principle of which the pernicious operation has been abundantly exemplified in the history of the Church of Rome—a principle, into the abuse of which, the character of recent proceedings amongst us, in this neighborhood, most incontestibly shows, that we, as a Society, are but too prone to slide.

ROBERT BENSON.

Liverpool, 11th Mo. 2d, 1836.

CORRESPONDENCE.

London, 10th Month 4th, 1836.

Dear Friend Elisha Bates,

Our friend Samuel Gurney has communicated to us the contents of thy letter to him of the the 22nd of last month and we feel it to be our place, in brotherly love, before thou leaves this country to unite with him in offering a few remarks on thy course of proceeding.

We heard with much much concern after thou left London, that thou hadst thought it right to undergo the rite of water baptism, and cannot but deeply lament so painful a symptom of alienation from those spiritual views of the gospel dispensation which our Society has ever thought it right to uphold.

We should be very sorry to condemn the conscientious feelings of a brother—to our own Master we must each stand or fall; but we would affectionately observe to thee, that having been acknowledged as a minister amongst Friends, and having written in support of their well known doctrines and testimonies, with the concurrence of thy brethren in religious profession at home, it seems to us to have been peculiarly incumbent on thee to be open and candid with the Friends of thy own Monthly Meeting, before thus acting in

violation of opinions which they must, we suppose, have considered thee to entertain.

We are aware of what thou hast written, in the last number of thy Repository, on thy book "On the Doctrines of Friends." This does not, however, meet the question as regards thyself, and thy Monthly Meeting, in the way in which we think the subject demanded. And is there not an obvious inconsistency in

And is there not an obvious inconsistency in thy acting as a minister in our Society whilst thy sentiments are at variance with those of

the body to which thou belongs?

And we would further submit to thee, whether it was not an infraction on the views of our Society, in submitting to water baptism, to have recourse to ministers of other denomina-

tions for its performance?

Our own attachment continues to the uniformly professed sentiments of the Society of Friends, on the nature of the Baptism of Christ our Lord; and much do we desire that the importance of the spiritual character of the Gospel of our holy Redeemer, as set forth in the Scriptures of truth, may be upheld amongst us, intimately connected as we consider it to be with the disuse of water baptism, which is in our apprehension a practice to which the language of our Yearly Meeting's epistle of 1835 applies—"that no shadows, in the worship of God, were instituted by our Lord, or have any place in the Christian dispensation."

It is no more than candid to inform thee,

that whilst thus communicating to thee our views, it seems proper also to write to thy friends at home on the subject.

Accept the assurance of our affection and

interest, and believe us to remain,

Thy sincere friends,

(Signed)

JoSIAH FORSTER. SAMUEL GURNEY. GEORGE STACEY.

Kendal, 10th month 8th, 1836.

My dear Friends,

JOSIAH FORSTER, SAMUEL GURNEY, GEORGE STACEY,—

Your letter of the 4th instant came to hand this morning, and with all the readiness which the nature of the case demands, I shall give you some of my thoughts in relation to it.

And in the first place I will take the liberty of asking you very seriously, In what light do you view the documents, I mean the three paragraphs, embodied in your last general epistle? Are we to take those declarations contained in it, in regard to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, to mean what they say? If it was so intended, how can you appeal, not to the Scriptures, but "to those spiritual views of the gospel dispensation

which our Society has ever thought it right to uphold," or to your epistle of 1835 on a question of doctrine? And I would respectfully suggest for your consideration, whether I shall act consistently with that document, if, when I am called to account on a point of faith or practice, I insist on being tried by the Scriptures, without allowing an appeal from them to any other authority whatsoever? I should be obliged if you would give me simple and direct answers to to these questions.

I should like also to know, where, in the New Testament, I can find that water baptism, as it was practised in the early Christian church, was forbidden or declared to be unlawful; nay, further, I would take it kind, if you would show me, where the receiving, or even administering of it is declared to disqualify a minister of the gospel for that

work.

As to my having abandoned opinions that I have once advocated, I can assure you, that I am not insensible of the influence of the pride of opinion; and that I have been enabled to cast off that influence in any degree, and to be willing to be accounted a fool for Christ's sake, I do not attribute to any strength of my own.

The idea of laying before my own Monthly Meeting my impressions of duty in regard to being baptized, I confess is one that I had never thought of. And as there is nothing,

either in the discipline, or in the Bible to have suggested it, you will excuse me for not having thought of it before I met with it in your letter. It might have been a suitable way of bringing my friends to think seriously of the subject. What more they could have done, according to discipline, I am not yet able to discover; but this I hope they will do, from the manner in which it will be laid before them.

The questions you suggest, I shall be most ready to answer, should you think proper to reply simply and unequivocally to those which I have offered to your consideration. It is perfectly useless to discuss subjects without

having first settled the premises.

Your attachment to "the uniformly professed sentiments of the Society of Friends on the nature of the baptism of Christ our Lord," I can readily conceive; and I can assure you that I have felt that attachment myself as strongly as any of you can have felt it. And in saying this, I wish it also distinctly understood, that I do as earnestly "desire" as you, "that the importance of the spiritual character of the gospel of our holy Redeemer, as set forth in the Scriptures of truth, may be upheld amongst us." But I would ask you to reflect on the obvious bearing of the clause which you have connected with the words just quoted. "Intimately connected," as you say you consider it to be, "with the disuse of

water baptism." These expressions undoubtedly throw upon you the proof of the disuse of water baptism in the Christian church. But this is not all: for it involves you in a most serious imputation on the Christian church during the whole period (whatever that period may have been) in which water baptism was certainly used. I trust you will not, for a moment, hesitate in admitting, that if the sentiments of the Society (however uniformly they may have been professed) in reference to any point of faith or practice, have been in error, the Society is bound to relinquish that error. I place it hypothetically; and this is all that is necessary to open the door for a strictly scriptural discussion, according to the pledge that was given by your last Yearly Meeting. I am far from inviting a controversial correspondence, but if you wish it, I shall meet it with all readiness.

It may possibly be some satisfaction to you to know that, immediately after I was baptized, I wrote to the clerk of Short Creek Monthly Meeting, authorizing and requesting him to inform the Monthly Meeting, from me, of what had taken place. And it is my intention, as soon as possible, to return home, and place myself at the disposal of my friends, so far as respects my rights of membership. These rights I still value; and if the relation in which I stand, as to the Society, is to be changed at all, I shall leave it to the Society

itself to change it. Still loving the Society and the members of which it is composed, and many of them especially, yourselves included in the number,

I remain your sincere friend,

ELISHA BATES.

P. S. I expect to embark for America in the packet of the 16th; but the facilities of communication between the two countries, I trust, will afford me the opportunity of readily receiving and replying to any communications, either public or private, which may claim my attention.

A letter of reasons for the step I have taken is in the press, and will be out in a few days: I hope you will give it a calm consideration.

Tottenham, 10th Mo. 11th, 1836.

My dear Friend,

As clerk to the Morning Meeting, I forward the accompanying minute agreeably to its directions. I have sent a copy to the care of Isaac Parker and Ben. W. Ladd as correspondents for the meeting of ministers and elders of Short Creek Monthly Meeting, in accordance with the terms of the minute. In letters to my old correspondents Jonathan Evans and Samuel Parsons, I have informed them of the concern felt by Friends of England at the course which thou hast thought it right to pursue.

On my return from London yesterday evening, I met thy letter of the 8th instant. In it thou observes, "I am far from inviting a controversial correspondence; but if you wish it, I shall meet it with all readiness." I do not wish it; and I should think that S. G. and G. S. would not wish it, (I intend of course showing thy letter to them) I, therefore, refrain from replying to some inquiries in the early part of thy letter: they would in my view almost necessarily lead to controversy. Our design was, in brotherly kindness and openness, to cast before thee our thoughts and feelings: having done so, we there leave the subject. I incline, however, to add that recent circumstances have led me to, I hope, a calm and patient examination of Holy Scripture on the subject of water baptism. I thought I was satisfied before, but the result has been my confirmation of the soundness of the views which our Society has ever held on this point. At thy request, it is my intention to give a calm consideration to thy pamphlet when it comes into my hands.

I used to like a little argument and disputation on religious topics: I have still a pleasure in conversing with my friends for my own instruction, on those subjects which are indeed to us all of the highest moment; but my love for controversy is very much gone, I am unfit for it. It is not unfrequently my wish for those I love (and allow me my dear

friend to include thee among them) as well as for myself, that we may indeed adopt the language, "So teach me to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom." In this application of heart, in humble reliance on a gracious Saviour, may it be our prevalent desire, now, and during the remainder of our pilgrimage, to be led to the green pastures, and still waters of life, where Christ the good Shepherd feeds and gathers his flock.

I remain

Thy sincere and affectionate friend, JoSIAH FORSTER.

Broad street, London, 10th Mo. 12th.

I have seen Samuel Gurney, and read him thy letter of the 8th, and the above; he says he could have signed this. He desires his affectionate love to thee. Again farewell.

J. F.

MINUTE OF THE MORNING MEETING OF MINISTERS AND ELDERS,

Enclosed in the foregoing letter from Josiah Forster, dated 10th Month 11th, 1836.

At the Morning Meeting of Ministers and Elders, held in London, the 10th of 10th Mo., 1836,—

Information has now been received that Elisha Bates, an acknowledged minister of the Ohio Yearly Meeting, who came over to

this country in the spring to attend to some business, has, since this meeting was last held, during a short residence in the neighborhood of this city, submitted to the ceremony of water baptism, which was performed by a minister

of a dissenting congregation.

This meeting thinks it right in much Christian love for Elisha Bates, to record its deep concern on the occasion, and its continued sense that the practice thus adverted to, (against which our Society has uniformly believed itself called upon to bear a public testimony, as no part of the Christian dispensation) was not instituted by our Lord and Saviour, whom we have always acknowledged as the only and supreme Head of his Church.

The Clerk is directed to forward a copy of the foregoing Minute to Elisha Bates; and to the meeting of Ministers and Elders of the Monthly Meeting of which he is a member.

(Copy.)

Signed,

WILLIAM MANLEY.

Lodge Lane, 10th Month 14th, 1836.

My dear Friend, Josiah Forster,

The document of the Morning Meeting, with thy letter enclosed in it, was handed to melast evening by our mutual friend, James Foster. The free remarks which I shall make

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on the correspondence and the Minute, thou wilt please to lay before thy colleagues, Samuel Gurney and George Stacey, and also the

Morning Meeting.

When I received Samuel Gurney's letter, and replied to it with all the frankness and freedom that so very friendly a letter demanded, I did not suppose, nor do I now, that he intended to found upon those letters any combined or official proceedings. Nor have I at any time wished the subject to which they related to be regarded as a secret. Of this, no stronger proof need be given than the fact that I immediately communicated to Clerk of Short Creek Monthly Meeting information of the step I had taken—and that, as soon as circumstances would admit, I published here a Letter of Reasons for my change of opinion. In giving information to my friends at home I have wished it understood that I did it on the ground of respect and love for them, and not from any idea of its furnishing occasion for disciplinary proceedings. For where there is no law there is no transgression.

When your joint letter was received I confess I was somewhat surprised at the connexion which it professed to have with the two letters to which I have alluded. And now the document seems to be but the carrying out of the intimation which was given in the joint letter. And in addition to this thy last informs me that thou hast written to Jonathan Evans and Samuel Parsons on the subject.

After such a course of practice, you must expect that I should call upon you, and that publicly, to sustain the ground you have taken and the steps which you have pursued. If you can maintain the first I shall not be tenacious in regard to the last.

In my reply to your joint letter I gave you to understand, that though I did not invite a controversial correspondence I should meet it with readiness. For I certainly did not incline to press you with discussion if you did not feel disposed to enter into it. If you did not wish to pursue the subject any further, I did not wish to carry you further. But I certainly had a right to expect that having gone as far as you had, you should have candidly answered the few plain questions which I proposed to you. But having pursued the subject as you have done, it seems to me most unreasonable to decline to give the simplest answer which the nature of the case imperiously demanded, under the plea that the "love for controversy is very much gone." And I candidly think it is out of time and out of place, after having put such powerful machinery into operation, officially and unofficially, to work upon an individual, to talk to him in the way in which thou concludes thy last letter to me. No, my dear friend, as I must necessarily defend myself against the information which you have sent

abroad in the Society, officially and unofficially, I must so far interfere with your quiet as to ask you again, "Where in the New Testament, I can find that water baptism, as it was practised in the early Christian Church was forbidden or declared to be unlawful?" I call upon you for a plain, direct and unequivocal answer. As you have gratuitously entered into this business, without any necessity laid upon you—and that too to make a brother an offender,—and in a case in which there is no rule of discipline at all, you certainly are bound to show that the step I have taken is unlawful, or honestly to acknowledge that you cannot.

While I shall insist that you shall meet me at this point, and prove, if you can, the unlawfulness of the practice of water baptism, I have an undoubted right to point out some of the improprieties into which you have gone.

You say in your letter of the 4th instant, "And much do we desire that the importance of the spiritual character of the Gospel of our holy Redeemer, as set forth in the Scriptures of truth, may be upheld amongst us, intimately connected as we consider it to be with the disuse of water baptism." In making such a declaration, I do not see how you can avoid the inference that you do not believe the Apostles and early Christians, who both administered and received it, did uphold the spiritual character of the Gospel of our holy Redeemer.

For as water baptism was undeniably used in the days of the Apostles, have you not either charged them with not upholding the spiritual character of the Gospel of our holy Redeemer, or really advocated another Gospel? I see no medium for you between these two points.

The Minute of the Morning Meeting, (which, as thou art the Clerk of that Meeting,

I presume was written by thyself,) declares—

"This meeting thinks it right, in much Christian love for Elisha Bates, to record its deep concern on the occasion, and its continued sense that the practice thus adverted to, (against which our religious Society has uniformly believed itself called upon to bear public testimony as no part of the Christian dispensation) was not instituted by our Lord and Saviour." &c.

Now, on the ground taken by thyself and some others in the Yearly Meeting in objecting to the proposition from Westmoreland, if the Society has clearly expressed its sense on this subject, the expression of it now was uncalled for. But if the judgment of the body is now called forth, and a course of proceedings commenced—novel as respects the Society, and unheard of in the Christian world—why should the Morning Meeting, composed of the ministers and elders of the Quarterly Meeting of London and Middlesex, gratuitously take upon itself this highly responsible measure? The Morning Meeting, in recording "its deep concern," its continued "sense," and sweeping censure in regard to the practice adverted to, must naturally throw the whole weight of the influence of that body on the side of prompt measures against such as receive the ordinance of baptism.

I think the Meeting did not duly consider how much of the writings of the Society, in reference to the subject, proceed on the assumption that baptism has ceased in point of obligation, or notice the difference which there is between this and a practice being absolutely wrong in itself. But not considering this, or not satisfied with it—and least of all regarding the declaration of the Yearly Meeting, in referring to the Holy Scriptures, without allowing an appeal from them to anyother authority whatsoever-you now come to the determination that public testimony is to be borne against that which most evidently was practised in the Church when she was most eminently favored with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and which was again and again declared to have been done in the name of the Lord Jesus. Now, if you really do intend to make it manifest to the world, that Quakerism and Primitive Christianity are totally at variance, and that the latter cannot be tolerated in the former, you have only to go on in the course in which you have set out.

I entreat you to bear with the freedom of

these remarks; you have compelled me to it. But I must repeat that while you rest your objections to baptism on the *testimonies* of Friends, you not only fail in rendering to the Revealed Will of God that regard which is imperiously demanded; but you show that the most important declarations ever made by the Society, recognising the doctrines contained in the Scriptures as resting on the authority of God himself, and there can be no appeal from them to any other authority whatever,

are to be used merely at discretion.

Thou knowest, my dear friend, that one of the heaviest charges against the Church of Rome, is that of her undertaking to decide important questions of doctrine by church authority, and not by the Scriptures. The assumption involves the claim to infallibility, of Now I ask if it is desirable for the Morning Meeting, or any other Meeting in the Society of Friends, at this day to try that often-repeated, but abortive experiment? And yet in what other can we regard the document which you have recently issued? In one single sentence, you have undertaken to decide an important point of doctrine by your own simple assertion, without the least shadow of proof from Scripture. To say without proof "that the practice thus adverted to, was not instituted by our Lord and Saviour," places your decision solely on the ground of church authority, and we are called upon to believe as the church believes, under the penalty of her displeasure. And that penalty is not to be determined by any specific rules of discipline, but by her own discretion. To you, who happen just at present to have this power in your own hands, it may seem to be both safe and salutary. But as thou, and some others of you, do not agree with all that early Friends have written, you cannot tell how soon some more consistent advocates of Quakerism may dispense to you the measure you are now dispensing to others. Of one thing you may be certain—you must go the whole length of advocating all that early Friends have written, or you will be no longer safe than you can keep the reins of power in your own hands.

more consistent advocates of Quakerism may dispense to you the measure you are now dispensing to others. Of one thing you may be certain—you must go the whole length of advocating all that early Friends have written, or you will be no longer safe than you can keep the reins of power in your own hands. But to return to your assumption, that baptism was not instituted by our Lord and Saviour, you ought to remember, that you are not likely to know the meaning of Christ, in the commission which he gave in his own person to his disciples, any better than they did while acting under it, endued with the Holy Ghost, sent down from heaven. On the day of Pentecost, when they were all with the Holy Ghost, sent down from neaven. On the day of Pentecost, when they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake as the Spirit gave them utterance, after the Gospel had been effectually preached, the question was asked, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" The reply was, "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. Then they that gladly received his word, were baptized." Here then was an exemplification of the meaning of the commission in both its parts; teaching and baptizing being performed in the common and obvious meaning of the text. That the baptizing was strictly under the commission, is proved by the Apostle Peter, who commanded it; for he explicitly stated it to be in the name of Jesus Christ. Now I ask thee, my friend, if an agent, having received a commission for transacting some important business, should perform an act, or direct it to be performed in the name of him whose commission he bore, would not every man of common sense understand him to claim the authority of his employer, in that particular act? Surely the answer cannot be doubtful. But I will go farther, and inquire, if any one were to deny that such an agent were authorized in a case so represented, would it not virtually be an impeachment either of his honesty or of his understanding? I leave thee to answer the question, and to make the application. I do think it is to be regretted that you should have placed yourselves in so unhappy a situation.

I could say much more, but I must draw to

a conclusion, and with love to thyself and the

others concerned, remain

Thy friend,

E. BATES

Pressed with engagements, I have written hastily, and have used a "manifold writer" for the purpose of saving time. Thou wilt please to make the necessary allowances.

I cannot satisfactorily suffer this letter to pass out of my hands without a word or two more on your denial that baptism was instituted by our Lord and Saviour. It places the subject in a point of view which involves the most serious consequences. It casts on the apostles themselves the imputation of having taken up the practice without authority, and consequently of being altogether in error!! Another remark: there being no discipline prohibiting baptism, I question your right to meddle with it in any official character whatever. And considering the highly objectionable ground which the Morning Meeting has taken, I do think that meeting is bound to retrace its steps; and I would suggest that it trace its steps; and I would suggest that it should be immediately convened for the pur-

You must see that your document and the letters you have written to Friends in America have taken the business entirely out of a private character. The letters which have passed between us and the document must,

therefore, be published.

In making any communication by letter to me, you will please to enclose it to Robert Benson, open to his inspection.

With love, thy friend,

E. BATES,

