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Principles and Practices

OF THE

BAPTISTS.



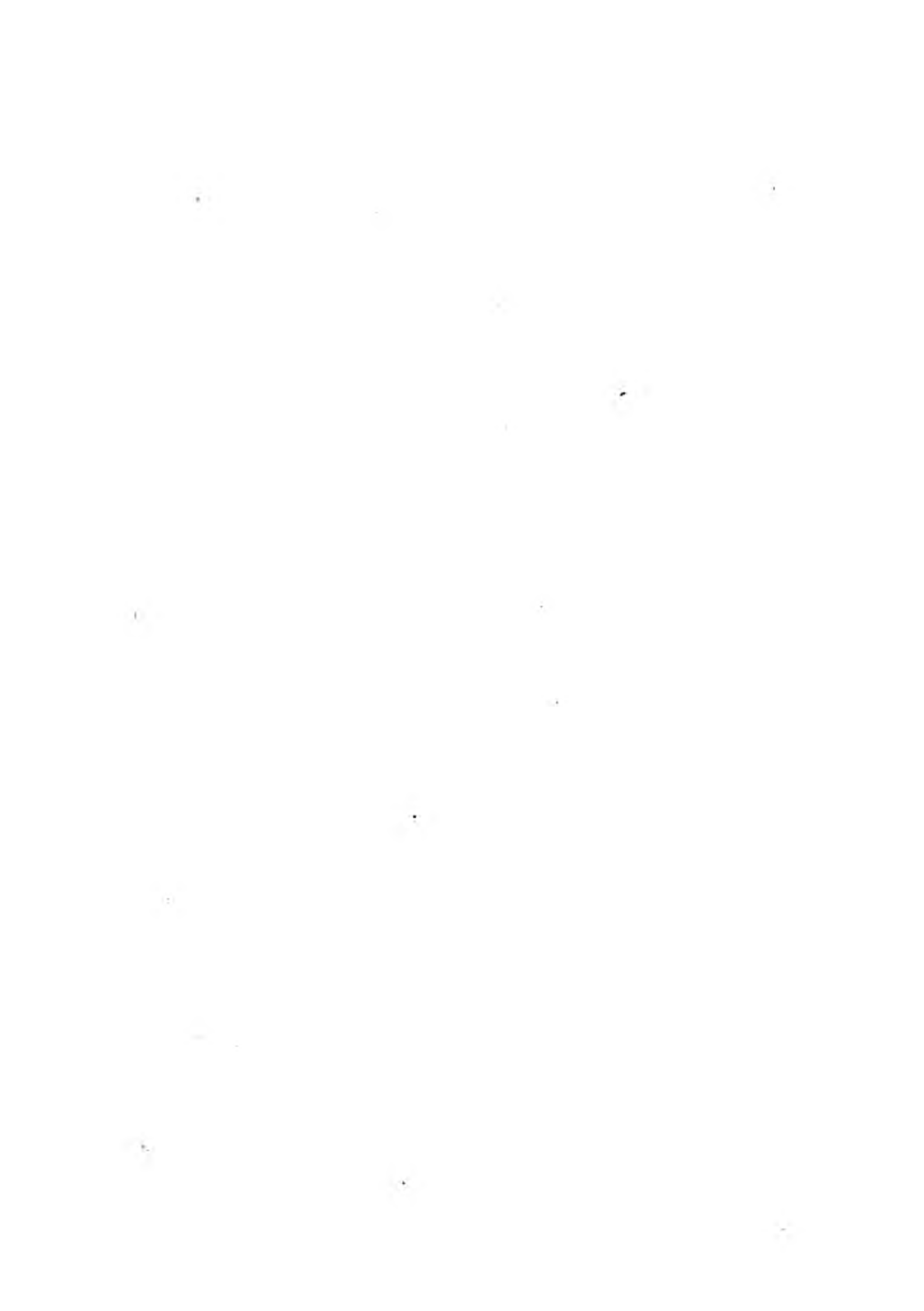
BY CHARLES WILLIAMS.



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THE  
PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES  
OF THE  
BAPTISTS.

A BOOK FOR INQUIRERS.

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BY CHARLES WILLIAMS,  
*(Of Accrington.)*

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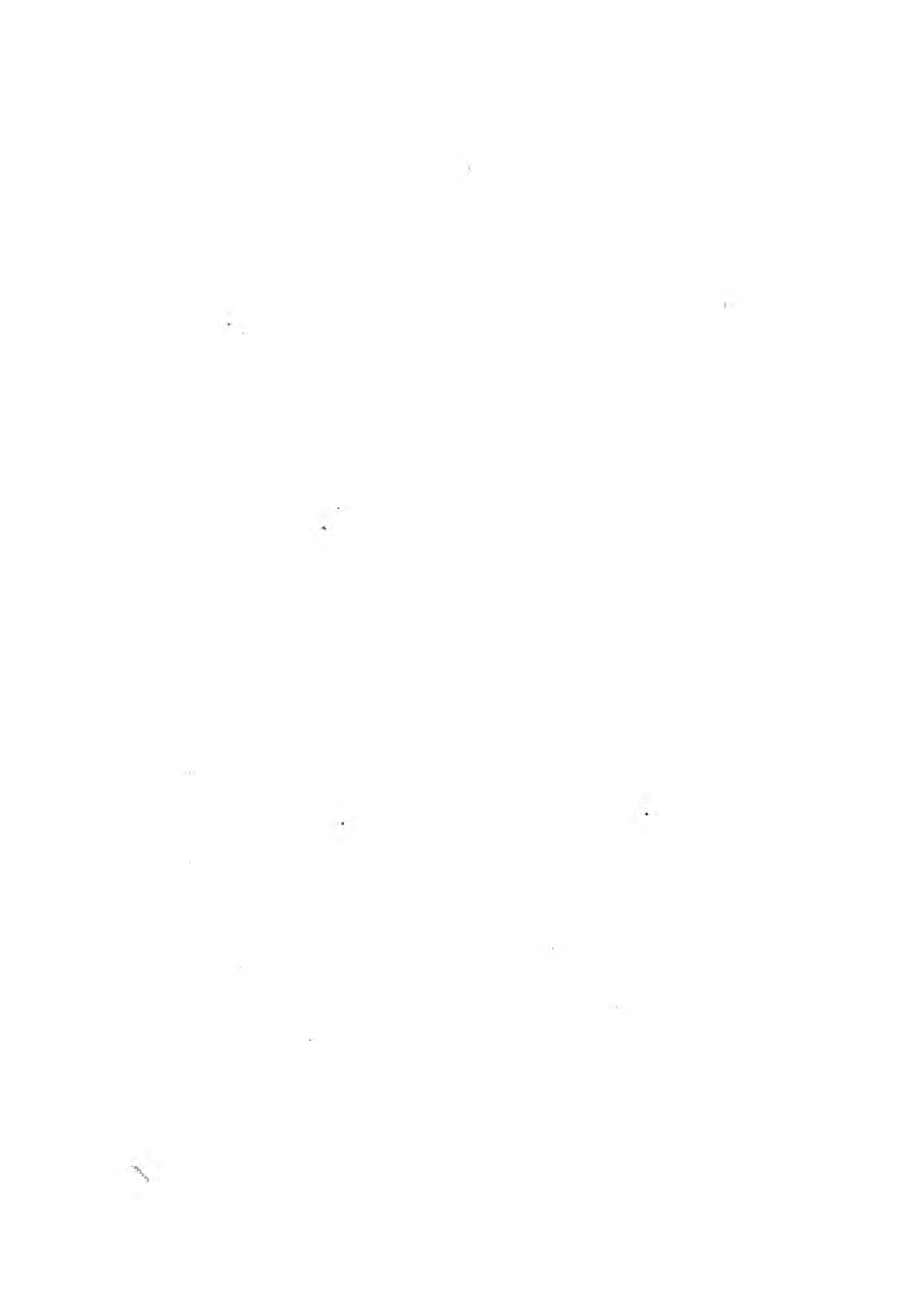
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# Table of Contents.

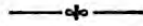
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	PAGE.
INTRODUCTION ... ..	i.
CHAPTER I.	
FIRST PRINCIPLES ... ..	1
CHAPTER II.	
CHRISTIAN BAPTISM ... ..	12
CHAPTER III.	
THE PLACE OF BAPTISM IN CHRISTIANITY ... ..	30
CHAPTER IV.	
THE LORD'S SUPPER ... ..	40
CHAPTER V.	
CHURCH ORDER AND DISCIPLINE... ..	52
CHAPTER VI.	
THE RELATION OF BAPTISTS TO THE STATE ... ..	70
CHAPTER VII.	
THE PAST OF THE BAPTISTS ... ..	81
CHAPTER VIII.	
THE AIMS AND PROBABLE FUTURE OF THE BAPTISTS	109
APPENDIX ... ..	123





## Introduction.



**T**HIS little work is expository, not controversial, in its object. It is, however, impossible to explain the belief of Baptists, without more or less discussion of the questions on which they differ from other Christians. Though there will be found less rather than more of such discussion in the following pages, when it may appear necessary to make a statement clear and intelligible to the reader, or to remove a prejudice, or to justify a conviction, reasons for the faith which is held by Baptists will be given, and evidence of the soundness of their conclusions adduced. But in every instance the proof or argument will be merely suggestive, never exhaustive: Neither the limits within which the writer must keep, nor his aim, will permit an adequate and complete treatment of the subject. Those who desire further information, or to understand fully all the evidence and arguments for and against the principles and practices of the Baptists, must consult larger works. The object of this book will be attained, if it should make every reader acquainted with the beliefs of Baptists. The reasons for "the faith that is in them" are given by Robert Robinson, Dr. Carson, Charles

Stovel, and others, in works which are remarkable for vast learning, ripe scholarship, intimate and full knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and rare singleness of purpose. A list of some of these books will be found in the Appendix, to which the reader is referred.

It is scarcely requisite to remark, and yet the remark may be desirable, that Baptists agree with, more than they differ from, other Christians. With Roman Catholics they believe in the existence of one God, the Father Almighty; and in his only begotten Son, who became incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth; and in the Spirit of God. They, like the Church of Rome, accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as divinely inspired books, rejecting however what is known as the Apocrypha, which they regard as a collection of writings that ought not to have been placed on an equality with the Pentateuch, the Psalms, the Prophecies, and the other books included in the English Bible. Like the majority of other Protestants, they challenge and deny the authority of the Church of Rome, or its Pontiff, to prescribe what Christians should believe; to change the customs of Christendom; and to exact obedience from the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. As Protestants, they acknowledge it to be their duty, for the performance of which they are responsible to God alone, to inquire for themselves after Divine truth, and to judge whether propositions submitted to or framed by them are true or false. In the discharge of this duty and in the exercise of this right they have, with Christians of many denominations, come to the conclusion that the Holy Scriptures are the one written Standard of Faith and Practice; that these Scriptures teach the Incarnation of the Divine Son of God in Christ Jesus; that the Lord Jesus is the only Saviour, having made expiation for sin, and by his sufferings and death brought in a full

and free redemption for the guilty; that a sinner is saved—that is, freed from the liability to punishment, made a new creature, and assured of all-sufficient grace to help in every time of need—on believing in Jesus Christ; and that the Divine Saviour is the “one Lord,” to whom all Christians owe allegiance, and the Exemplar of a perfectly holy life. So far as doctrinal beliefs are concerned, Baptists are thoroughly evangelical, being at one with the descendants of the Puritans, both in and out of the Church of England, especially with Congregationalists, from whom they are separated only by their views on Christian baptism; Presbyterians; and others.

From the nature of the case, Baptists can have no creed to which they all subscribe. There are County Associations of Baptist churches. The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland is a national confederation of churches. But these organizations impose no test. The probability is that any attempt to fix upon a denominational theological “Shibboleth” or “password” would fail. Baptists are characterised by strongly marked individualism. One has no mission to speak for another. Each professes to receive from the Lord, as he speaks through the New Testament, his beliefs; and every man claims independence that he may be wholly devoted to the Lord his Saviour. Paul would as readily have submitted to the dictation of Peter or James, as a Baptist, “fully persuaded in his own mind,” would permit even a brother Baptist to “exercise authority upon” him. This may appear to render the writer’s task exceedingly difficult. The difficulty is more apparent than real. Baptists have “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” Like Paul and Peter, they build on the foundation, other than which can no man lay, “which is Christ Jesus.” They find their faith within the covers of the same book. Each

resolves to contend earnestly "for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Without an act of uniformity, and because of the liberty claimed by and conceded to all—a liberty which has for its correlative loyalty to Christ, Baptists hold substantially the same beliefs, and there exists among them unity of faith. A like relation to the Saviour and to the Holy Scriptures produces a striking similarity in their creeds and customs. The task, therefore, of stating and explaining the Principles and Practices of Baptists is not so formidable as at first sight it seems to be. In devout dependence on the enlightening, restraining, and prompting influences of the Holy Spirit, whose mission it is to guide into all the truth, the attempt is made to explain and to justify the belief of Baptists.

# THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF THE BAPTISTS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### FIRST PRINCIPLES.

---

“There is one Lawgiver.”—Jas. iv. 12.

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**T**WO principles underlie, explain, and justify the beliefs of Baptists. One of these is negative, and may be thus stated:—No individual man, whether pastor or priest, prelate or prince—no community of men, whether ecclesiastical or political—can rightly claim authority to legislate in religious matters, to prescribe articles of faith, to ordain or change rites and ceremonies, or in any way to exercise lordship over the human conscience or the Church of God. This negative proposition is only the reverse side of a Divine and positive truth. The Lord God is the “one Lawgiver,” to whom every man owes allegiance, and whose will should be done on earth “as it is in heaven.” It will be found on enquiry, and we propose to show, that Judaism and Christianity alike forbid man to alter or to add to (amend he cannot) what the Lord God has ordained. In other words,

true religion consists in believing what God has revealed, and in observing all that God has commanded, "Should not a people seek unto their God? . . . To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."\*

In Judaism Moses was "instead of God" to man. The Lord spake to him, and he delivered the Divine revelation to "the congregation of the children of Israel." All supplementary legislation was expressly prohibited. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it," said Moses. Why? "That ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you."† No exception was allowed to this rule. It applied to minute and comparatively unimportant details of ritual as to "weightier matters of the law." Moses himself was not permitted to use his own judgment. In reference to the vessels of the sanctuary—and in this instance the less involves if it does not include the greater—the Lord directed him, "Look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount."‡ The prophets of Judaism were impelled and prompted so that they necessarily "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."§ Balaam prophesied, not as he wished, but contrary to his desire. He could not earn "the wages of iniquity." When the Divine afflatus was upon him, he was carried above and beyond himself; was under influences he could not resist; and, like the Æolian harp, answered faithfully because involuntarily to the breath of God. His lips were sealed when he essayed to curse the people of God. He could only open them to pronounce the blessing which he deprecated. The prophet

\* Isaiah viii. 19, 20.

† Exodus xxv. 40.

‡ Deut. iv. 2.

§ 2 Peter i. 21.

explained this phenomenon to the prince who had pressed him into his service. "I called thee to curse mine enemies," Balak complained, "and behold thou hast altogether blessed them these three times." The answer expounds and illustrates the nature of prophecy. "Spake I not to thy messengers which thou sentest unto me, saying, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, *I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of my own mind*; but what the Lord saith, that will I speak."\* Evidently the ritual, the moral, and the doctrinal in Judaism, were designed by God to be wholly and exclusively Divine.

In after ages this prohibitory rule was disregarded. Men added to, and at the same time took from, the commandments of God. Rabbis, in their pride of office and lust of power, not content with discoursing on "the law and the prophets," produced scriptures other than those Divinely inspired, which soon became the rival, and ultimately the supplanter, of the revelation contained in the Hebrew Testament. Did these "traditions of the elders" increase or diminish the spirituality of those who observed them? Were they a help or a hindrance to devout worship and acceptable service? Was their influence good or bad on character and conduct? Did they strengthen or weaken the Divine authority? The answer to these questions is given in the state of Judæa at the time of the earthly ministry of the Son of God, in those descriptions of Scribes and Pharisees with which the four Gospels abound, and in the judgment on the effect of these traditions which the Lord Jesus gave again and again. Certain Scribes and Pharisees asked the Great Teacher, "Why do thy disciples transgress the traditions of the elders?" The question of the authority of learned

\* Numbers xxiv. 10—13.



doctors and high officials, whose maxims and precepts had been generally accepted, was thus distinctly raised. The answer leaves no room for doubt as to "the mind of Christ." His reply took the shape of a suggestive demand: "Why do ye also transgress the commandments of God by your traditions?" As a matter of fact, human traditions displaced Divine commandments. So demoralized were the Jews, that their worship was much worse than mere lip-service. The word spoken centuries before, was fulfilled: "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."\* The glosses of Rabbis were substituted for the precepts of the law. Human folly usurped the throne of Divine wisdom. Judaism lost its salt, and hence became corrupt; or rather the salt lost its savour, and the system became "good for nothing, but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men." Those who should have been models of piety—the men who sat in the seat of Moses—were "hypocrites," like "whited sepulchres . . . full of all uncleanness, a generation of vipers." This was the outcome of disregarding and violating the rule—"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you."

As might have been expected, Christianity, equally with Judaism, forbids human legislation concerning the relation of man to God. The apostles may have been "in Christ's stead" to men, as Moses was "instead of God;" but they, like the Hebrew prophets, were no more than messengers, the appointed and inspired messengers of Christ to men. They had no authority to "go beyond the word of the Lord, to do either good or bad of their own mind." "I delivered unto you . . . that which I also received," wrote

\* Matt. xv. 2, 3, 9.

Paul to the Corinthians, and he therein fulfilled his mission as an apostle.\* The apostles made known the truths which the Lord Jesus had taught them, and then explained and enforced these truths. They originated nothing. It was no part of their duty to frame articles of belief, to perfect a code of morals, or to decree a system of ritual. The Lord would not allow them to be called "Rabbi," or to "exercise lordship." "Be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ."† The commission under which the apostles acted, and from which they derived whatever authority they possessed, conclusively proves that the Lord Jesus did not intend them to be "lords over his heritage." "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Did the apostles share this sovereignty? The chief of them disclaimed so presumptuous a thought. When the impotent man, who for many years had been laid daily by friendly hands "at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful," was made whole, the people ran together to Peter and John, "in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering. And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?" The miracle had been wrought by the present yet unseen Prince of life. "His name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know."‡ The apostle Paul afterwards made a like disclaimer of authority in the domain of beliefs. "Not for that we have dominion over your faith," he said to the Church of Corinth, thus

\* Cor. xv. 3. † Matt. xxxiii. 8. ‡ Acts iii. 12, 16.

explaining that he had no "despotic control" over their Christian life, and was in no sense master of their faith, but that their faith was independent of him.\* The risen and ascended Saviour retains "all power in heaven and in earth." His authority gives validity to the commission: "Go ye, therefore, and disciple all nations, baptizing them into the name of" (that is, into obedience to) "the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things *whatsoever I have commanded you*: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."† If, then, the apostles could not rightly claim to be legislators, were not vested with the power to alter, or to abolish, or to add to the laws of Christ, surely none other man can rightly make this claim. "There is one lawgiver." "One is your Master."

A sentence or two will suffice to dispose of the assertion that the Church has authority to prescribe creeds and ceremonies. It is not pretended that "the congregation of the children of Israel" could at pleasure, in accordance with the Divine will, annul or amend the laws given through Moses. As little sanction in Holy Scripture is found for the pretension that "the congregation of the disciples of the Lord Jesus" can righteously, and in accordance with the Divine will, add to or change the commandments given through the apostles. The nature of the Church is inconsistent with the claim to legislate. Is the Church the flock of the Divine Shepherd? The Lord guides and governs "the sheep of his pasture," not as they will, but as he wills. It is his to determine whither and how they shall be led, where they shall abide, and everything else pertaining to the control and safe keeping of the flock. Is the Church "the body of Christ?" It is for the members to do the bidding of their Head. He

\* 2 Cor. i. 24. (See Stanley *in loco*.) † Matt. xxviii. 18-20.

thinks for them. They have no authority. The hand may not rule the foot, nor the foot the ear, nor one any other member of the body. As every member of the human body responds to and serves the man, whose the body is: so all believers should be loyal to Christ. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." Is the Church a household? The Father makes laws for his children and servants, not they for one another. Common love to the Father, oneness with "the firstborn of many brethren" in his resolve to do the Father's will, is the bond of union which binds together the members of "the whole family in heaven and earth." Is the Church the bride of Christ? The bride should obey the Bridegroom—Holy Writ declares "the Church is subject unto Christ"—and to him, not to her, belongs the right to legislate. Is the Church "the kingdom of God," and are its members citizens of the heavenly commonwealth? In this kingdom there is one Lawgiver," nor will he allow anyone to usurp his authority. It is for citizens in "the kingdom of God" to obey its laws, and not to act the part of legislators. The kingdom would not be God's if it were otherwise. It is so in every department of the kingdom of God. Man cannot repeal, as certainly he did not make, what are called "the laws of nature." They were in operation long before he discovered them. Their authority is absolute and their force irresistible. To live man must obey them. Disobedience is defeat, disaster, death. In the Church, the spiritual—as in nature, the physical—God acts independently of man, though in his interests. "He doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" The claim of a creature or of creatures to legislate for "the kingdom of God" borders on impiety.

The prohibition of legislation by man in "the things that are God's" is conservative of loyalty to the Divine will. Its object is to maintain the authority of God. Judaism was essentially theocratic; so is Christianity. Unhappily the chosen people shrank back from direct communion with God, and said to Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die."\* They desired a king after the manner of the nations round about them. "They have not rejected thee," spake the Lord to Samuel, who had long judged Israel, "but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."† Had the Divine will been done, visions from God would never have been rare, and the Lord, as often as occasion required, would have answered the inquirer "by urim and thummim." "The Lord reigneth," if Israel had not rejected him, would have been true in the same sense of the kingdom of Israel as it is of the kingdom of Nature. Is not Christianity a theocracy? "The kingdom of God" is a kingdom whose laws are Divine in their authority, whose subjects are loyal to the Divine King, and in which all "do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word." This kingdom has already come in the hearts of the children of God, it is within such as delight to please the Lord. It has yet to fill the world. The Lord Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."‡ In heaven the will of the Father is absolute and universal. And when his kingdom shall come, every human will shall blend with the Divine, and all mankind shall accept for their rule of life, "As thou wilt."

The example of the Lord Jesus agrees with the prayer he taught his disciples. "Lo, I come to do thy

\* Ex. xx. 19.

‡ Matt. vi. 10.

† 1 Sam. viii. 7.

|| Heb. x. 9.

will, O God,"|| was the word of "the only begotten Son," when he accepted the mission to save our fallen race. As he sat by Jacob's well, he forgot his hunger and was absorbed in the work he had undertaken. "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."\* Unique inability made disobedience or self-seeking impossible to him. "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."† His last petition in the garden of Gethsemane, immediately before his betrayal, was, "Not my will, but thine be done."‡ He who forms his character and shapes his conduct according to this model, accepting the Lord Jesus for his leader, will neither claim for himself, nor concede to any man or community of men, the right to prescribe what should be done or not done in the service of God. He will constantly endeavour to "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God," that he may do it "as it is done in heaven."

The Divine will is declared in the words, and exemplified in the life of the Lord Jesus. Not that Judaism was other than a Divine religion. "The Lord our God is one Lord." "The God of Jacob is our refuge." "They which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham." Still the New Testament, and not the Hebrew Bible, is the Christian's written standard of doctrinal belief, of ritual, of morals. He, "who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."|| And the words, with the life of the Son of God, so far as it was lived in the sight of men, are recorded by the evangelists, and reported by the apostles. Precisely as the Old

\* John iv. 34.

† John v. 30.

‡ Luke xxxii. 42.

|| Heb. i. 1.

Testament contains "the law and the testimony," which God gave to his ancient people to be "a light unto their path and a lamp to their feet," so the New Testament Scriptures contain the words of the Lord Jesus—words which are spirit and life to him who receives them, and which are the Christian's rule of faith and practice. The question is, What is the Divine will which Christ declared? And the only satisfactory answer to this question is found in the four Gospel histories; the book of the Acts of the Apostles; and the Epistles written by Paul, James, Peter, John and Jude. If the Hebrew Scriptures testified of Jesus, much more clearly do the Scriptures of the New Testament declare his will and make known his mind. "Search the Scriptures," is the Lord's own word. If men speak not according to, and as taught by, Divinely-inspired Scripture, "it is because there is no light in them."

It is strange that any other than a Divine guide should be sought or accepted in religion. All human guides are fallible, imperfect, sinful. The only light they have is borrowed from the Sun of Righteousness. Why is it that men refuse to follow Christ, or for a time forsake him for other masters? Who but he can say, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life?" Religion should be, in its origin and end, from first to last, Divine. Real faith is man's acceptance of the Son of God. True belief is man's assent to the word of God. Acceptable service is doing the will of God. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord

are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold; yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned, and in keeping of them there is great reward."\*. Not man, but God, not human tradition, but Divinely-inspired Scripture, should direct and control the Christian in his beliefs and conduct. Religion should be wholly and exclusively Divine.

On these two principles—that man may not legislate for the kingdom of God, that in this kingdom the Lord God is the "one Lawgiver"—Baptists rely for an explanation and justification of their faith and observances.

\* Psa. xix. 7—11.



## CHAPTER II.

## CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

---

“Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk in them; for I am the Lord your God.”

---

**T**HE most distinguishing peculiarity of Baptists is their doctrine of Christian baptism. They hold that baptism is an ordinance designed by the Lord Jesus to be administered to none save his disciples, and to them on a profession of their discipleship; that baptism is, and can only be, the immersion in water of the person thus confessing Christ. This, in their judgment, is Christian baptism, nor do they acknowledge either the obligation or validity of any other baptism. The subject, they believe, should be a disciple; the mode, immersion. The baptism of infants may have been practised from time immemorial, certainly for more than sixteen centuries; the overwhelming majority of Christians in the present day may accept infant baptism as both lawful and obligatory; the doctors of many churches and successive councils of ecclesiastics may have sanctioned and decreed the baptism of infants; the whole of Christendom even may condemn Baptists for their nonconformity, and adjudge them to be in error. None of these things move them. They refuse to receive as part of their faith, or to practise as part of their religion, what is not clearly taught in the New Testament Scriptures. Resolved that their faith shall “not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the

power of God," they appeal to Holy Writ, concerned only to know the answer to the question, "What saith the Scripture?" They fail to find the command to baptize infants in the words of the Lord Jesus, nor do they find that the apostles, to whom these words were at first spoken, baptized infants. On this ground they reject the dogma of infant baptism. For a similar reason, they do not follow other Christians in substituting sprinkling or pouring for immersion in baptism. Their desire is in this matter, not to please themselves, but to do the will of the Lord. Believing that the Lord Jesus was immersed by John the Baptist in the river Jordan, that the disciples made by Christ were immersed by the apostles, that the converts of the first century were immersed, and that the commission instructs those who act under it to immerse disciples into the name of the Triune God of salvation, Baptists can do none other, on their principles, than immerse converts on a profession of discipleship. They hold that sprinkling or pouring is no more baptism than it is immersion, that to baptize is to immerse.

Pædo-baptists cite the baptism of whole households by the apostles as favouring the baptism of infants. The facts are few and indisputable. Lydia "was baptized, and her household."\* The jailor at Philippi "was baptized, he and all his."† Paul "baptized the household of Stephanas."‡ It is urged, "There may have been infants in these households, and probably were; consequently it is fair to presume that Paul and Silas baptized infants." But to this it may be replied, "The circumstances, so far as we know them, point to a contrary conclusion. An examination of the narratives proves that the baptized were believers; consequently it is reasonable to assume that there were no infants in these households." How stand the facts?

\* Acts xvi. 15.      † Acts xvi. 33.      ‡ 1 Cor. i. 16.

The historian relates that the Philippian jailor rejoiced, "believing in God with all his house."\* If there were children in this family, they were believing children, and Baptists would baptize such. The family of Stephanas appears to have been of the same character. "Ye know the house of Stephanas," wrote Paul in the epistle which mentions their baptism, "that it is the first-fruits of Achaia."—Dean Alford understood the phrase to mean, "the first Achæan converts,"—"and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints"†—to some service of generous love for the benefit of the "sanctified in Christ Jesus." In this instance, as in the first, if there were children in the household, they were converted children, and children of an age to minister to the necessities of saints. It is not inconsistent, but in harmony with the beliefs of Baptists, to baptize young persons answering to this description. There remain Lydia and her household. Lydia was not in her own city, but at Philippi. It is not certain she was a mother; and, supposing it was, it is exceedingly improbable that she would take infant children with her on a business journey from Thyatira to the capital of Macedon. She was in Philippi as "a seller of purple," far from home, when she met the apostle Paul "by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made," the meeting-place of Jews and proselytes. In her household were servants or slaves, perhaps children; but not very young children. These doubtless worshipped with her on the memorable Sabbath, and also "attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." It cannot be imagined that any who had attained to years of discretion would be baptized unless they confessed Christ. And so the baptism of Lydia "and her household" does not necessarily militate against, it rather favours the

\* Acts xvi. 34.

† 1 Cor. xvi. 15.

Baptist doctrine of Christian baptism. The baptism of entire households is known among the Baptists of England. The writer has baptized all the members of two households in the same service. It is not surprising that, in his wide and long-continued travels, the apostle Paul met with three households, all the members of which gladly received the gospel and became disciples; and that, on a profession of their discipleship, the whole of these converts—three complete households—were baptized. The wonder would have been if no such households had been met with.

It should be understood that Baptists do not refuse to baptize infants because they regard them in any sense as aliens from the kingdom of God. In this respect Baptists are not less but more liberal than the majority of Christians. The Church of England, immediately after the dis-establishment of the Pope and early in the reign of Edward the Sixth, taught the absolute necessity of baptism in all cases of salvation, declaring that "infants and children, dying in their infancy, shall undoubtedly be saved thereby, *and else not.*"\* In course of time these words, "*and else not,*" were omitted, and the unbaptized infants who might die in infancy were not mentioned. But the effect of the rubric in force to the present day is to produce the impression that only those infants who are baptized will be saved. At the close of the office for the public baptism of infants are these words, "It is certain by God's Word that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved." How about the unbaptized? The Church of England refuses them Christian burial, classes them with suicides and the excommunicated, and with painful emphasis

\* Procter *On the Book of Common Prayer*, p. 375. See also Mozley *On the Augustinian Doctrine of Predestination*, pp. 114, 123, 287.

pronounces that they have neither part nor lot in the glory of the resurrection. Baptists, on the contrary, maintain that all infants who die before they commit actual sin, whether baptized or unbaptized, "are undoubtedly saved." Many Baptists believe in the federal headship of Adam, and therefore in the liability of the human race to be punished on account of Adam's sin. But they also believe that the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus has atoned for the guilt of original or the first sin, and that no child of man will be called upon to endure the penalty of this sin which Christ has taken away. It is held that the infant who dies before committing actual sin will not be cursed because of Adam's disobedience, seeing that the guilt thereof has been cancelled by the Redeemer, and that such an infant will have a home in one of the "many mansions" of the "Father's house" through the righteousness of the second Adam. All Baptists look upon little children, in the days of their innocency, as, though possessing a nature depraved and vitiated by the Fall, objects of the love of the everlasting Father; lambs in the flock of the Divine Shepherd; and interested in the covenant of grace. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." The rejection of infant baptism is dictated by a nobler faith and larger hope than theirs who make baptism a condition of salvation, or suppose that the unbaptized are less to God than infants who have been baptized by priest or minister.

Though Baptists decline to baptize infants, they do not object to the baptism of children, nor do they accept "adult baptism" as a phrase accurately describing their faith and practice. They believe in the baptism of all those, and only those, who make a credible profession of their discipleship to the Lord Jesus. In the first age of the church the converts were as a rule adults, as they are in any country to which mis-

sionaries go with the "good news." The age of the converts is in every instance accidental. No one was baptized because he had lived a certain number of years in the world. Conversion, the acceptance of the Saviour, was the condition on which the apostles baptized those who sought fellowship with them. It is impossible to conceive of Peter, or Paul, or James, or John, refusing to baptize a child who had found in Christ a Saviour and a Friend, and desired to confess him. The believing are fit subjects for baptism; and young children have often been remarkable for faith in the heavenly Father, and in Jesus Christ His Son. There is nothing in the beliefs of Baptists to limit baptism to adults. These beliefs demand that every convert or disciple, though young as the child Timothy, or aged as his grandmother Lois, be baptized "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

The evidence in support of the proposition that Christian baptism should be administered to disciples, and to none but those who profess discipleship to the Lord Jesus Christ, is varied and conclusive. So far as the Son of Man is an example in this matter, it is clear that baptism should be an act of conscious obedience to God, the fulfilling of righteousness, a solemn consecration to the work which the Father has given the candidate for baptism to do. There is little information in the New Testament respecting the baptism of the followers of Jesus. This is singular, especially considering the striking description contained in the Gospel by the evangelist Matthew of John's baptism. But the few words bearing on the subject which are found in the Gospel by the apostle John are more than sufficient to justify the beliefs of Baptists. John the Baptist was informed that he to whom he had borne witness baptized; "and all men come to him,"\* it was added.

\* John iii. 26.

The Pharisees also heard "that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.)"\* The order is plainly stated—"made and baptized disciples." In the first instance men were made disciples, and afterwards they were baptized. The history is absolutely silent about the baptism of any except disciples. With this agrees the order presented in the commission: "Go ye therefore, and disciple all nations, baptizing them."† Baptizing whom? Did the apostles understand that they were to baptize "all nations?" They were called to preach the Gospel to every creature; their mission was to "disciple all nations." Can any reader of the Acts of the Apostles venture on the assertion that they attempted or desired to baptize "every creature," "all nations?" The apostles understood the Saviour to mean that those who became disciples should be baptized. In the commission, recorded in the Gospel by the evangelist Mark, this is brought out by the statement, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Belief precedes baptism, and is made its condition. That this was the interpretation of the words of the Lord Jesus by those to whom they were addressed, the manner in which they acted under the commission demonstrates. Peter on the day of Pentecost preached "the Gospel to every creature" within the hearing of his voice. All were not baptized. The record is, "They that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."‡ None but the penitent and believing, or those who professed repentance and faith, received Christian baptism. The greatness of the change which passed on them is placed beyond a doubt. Before their conversion Peter said to them as to the multitude, "Him," Jesus of Nazareth, "ye

\* John iv. 1, 2. † Matt. xxviii. 19. ‡ Acts ii. 41.

have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Afterwards "they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Those made disciples were baptized on the day of Pentecost. And so in Samaria, "when the Samaritans believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."\* They were believers before they were baptized, and were baptized because they were believers. Simon, the sorcerer, professed to believe, and "was baptized." Faith preceded baptism, baptism was administered on a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus. Every instance of baptism given in the Acts of the Apostles illustrates and confirms the fact that the twelve understood the commission authorizing them, first to disciple all nations, and then to baptize all they had made disciples. This is confirmed by what follows in the commission, "baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The Greek preposition here translated "into" suggested to Dean Alford a union peculiarly close, a new state, another and purely spiritual relation. In his note on the commission, he remarks: "Baptism is the contract of espousal (Eph. v. 26) between Christ and his church."† If so, notwithstanding the commentator's reference to the baptism of infants, the parties to "the contract" must know, believe in, and love each other. That would be to Englishmen a strange espousal, though unhappily familiar to the Hindoo mind, in which the bride was a child incapable of knowing him to whom she was given, and utterly destitute of affection for him. "Espousal between Christ and his church" is very unlike this. The bride has learnt the worth and preciousness of the Bridegroom, and, from

\* Acts viii. 12.

† *In loco.*



free and earnest choice, gives to Him her heart. The allusions to baptism in the Epistles look in the same direction. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death," wrote Paul to the Romans; "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life,"\* language difficult to comprehend on any other assumption than that the baptized persons were really converted, and in their baptism professed death "unto sin," and a new life, the life of faith in the Lord Jesus. The parallel passage in the Epistle to the Colossians is yet more explicit. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."† This faith, as Dr. Ellicott testifies, is the "subjective medium by which the objective grace is received," and Waterland is quoted as saying, "it may be and is the means by which peace is accepted or received."‡ And thus once again believing and baptism are linked together, the baptized being buried with Christ, and rising with him in their baptism "through faith." The words of the apostle Paul to his converts in Galatia, could only have been addressed to those who had been voluntarily baptized, and on a profession of their Christian discipleship. "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."§ The context suggests the preceding faith: "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." And being children of God, they were "baptized into Christ," and thus "put on Christ." Do not these words necessarily carry with them the conviction that the baptized were before their baptism "the children of God," became God's children "by faith in Christ Jesus," and in their baptism professed to be the brethren

\* Rom. vi. 4.

† Coloss. ii. 12.

‡ *In loco.*

§ Gal. iii. 27.

of the Lord, partakers of His nature, and united to Him ?

There is no need for further elaboration of the proof that the baptized in the apostolic age were professed disciples. It is allowed by many candid Pædobaptists. Dr. C. J. Vaughan, in discoursing on church life, bears witness that the ordinance of baptism “has two conditions; two features of mind which (in the case of an adult) must be formed before baptism; repentance and faith. First, you must change your mind as to your sins; regret, renounce, forsake them. Secondly, you must believe that Jesus Christ is the only and all-sufficient Saviour. . . . On these two conditions hang the benefits of Christian baptism.”\* Dr. Knapp, the candid and erudite author of *Lectures on Christian Theology*, admits that there is no express authority for infant baptism in the New Testament. “There is no decisive example of this practice in the New Testament, for it may be objected against those passages where the baptism of whole families is mentioned—viz., Acts x. 42, 48; xvi. 15, 33; 1 Cor. i. 16—that it is doubtful whether there were any children in these families, and if there were, whether they were then baptized. From the passage, Matt. xxviii. 19, it does not necessarily follow that Christ commanded infant baptism, . . . nor does this follow any more from John iii. 5, and Mark x, 14, 16. There is therefore no express command for infant baptism found in the New Testament.” (Sec. cxlii.) Dr. Harold Browne, the present Bishop of Winchester, in an article on baptism in Smith’s *Bible Dictionary*, summarises the arguments both in support of the views of Baptists, and against the views of Pædo-baptists:—“The silence of the New Testament concerning the

\* *The Church of the First Days*, vol. i., p. 76.

baptism of infants, the constant mention of faith as a pre-requisite or condition of baptism, the great spiritual blessings which seem attached to a right reception of it, and the responsibility entailed on those who have taken its obligations on themselves, seem the chief objections urged against pædo-baptism." These reasons lead Baptists to the conclusion that, not infants, but believers in the Lord Jesus should be baptized. Neander goes beyond Dr. Browne, and plainly states that there are no traces of the practice of infant baptism in the first century. "Baptism at the first was administered only to adults, as men were accustomed to conceive baptism and faith as strictly connected. There does not appear to be any reason for deriving infant baptism from an apostolical institution, and the recognition of it, which followed somewhat later, as an apostolical tradition, serves to confirm this hypothesis."\* Dr. Schmid, of Tübingen, testifies:—"With respect to the question as to infant baptism, this cannot be directly proved from the words of the Lord. . . . If we consider the combination of the word and baptism, which exists in the command to baptize (Matt. xxviii. 19,) and the promise (Mark xvi. 16,) we must see "that baptism of infants exists, at all events, in some different sense than in the case of adults."† Precisely so. The nature and conditions of infant baptism are not the same as the nature and conditions of the baptism of the commission; and hence, not infant baptism, but the baptism of believers is the baptism of the New Testament; nor did Christ ordain or the apostles sanction any other baptism. Accepting the Divine will, as revealed by Christ and made known in the New Testament, as their only standard of faith and rule of practice, Baptists are "shut up" to the conclusion that those

\* *Church History*, (Bohn's Edition,) vol. i., p. 430.

† *Biblical Theology of the New Testament*, (Clark,) p. 254.

professing discipleship, and none but such, should be baptized.

That is, immersed. It has been frequently suggested whether a union might not be effected between Baptists and Pædo-baptists, by the latter surrendering the dogma of *infant* baptism, and the former yielding baptism by *immersion*. Why not sprinkle converts on a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus? it is asked. Would not this be Christian baptism? In such a compromise, were it to be made, Pædo-baptists would concede more than Baptists. But Baptists could not, without doing violence to their consciences, and denying the "first principles" on which their beliefs are founded, accept what they regard as erroneous as the condition of victory over a greater and more mischievous error. They contend that to sprinkle is not to baptize, that the sprinkling of converts would not be an act of obedience to the Lord Jesus, and that to obey the commission the preachers of the Gospel or other ministers must immerse believers. Baptism with them is the immersion in water of a convert on his confession of Christ. Are they right in this contention? What is the meaning of the word? Liddell and Scott, in their *Lexicon*, thus define and illustrate the use of the word: βαπτίζω, "to dip under water; of ships, to sink them." Dr. Harold Browne, in the article on baptism in Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, from which an extract is given above, defines and illustrates the use of the word with great care and accuracy, and states his conclusion in the brief summary, "βάπτισμα properly and literally means *immersion*." Dr. Cremer, in his invaluable *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*, is not less decisive: "βαπτίζω, to immerse, to submerge. . . . The peculiar New Testament and Christian use of the word to denote immersion, submersion for a religious purpose = to baptize may be traced," &c. "The Apostolic Eastern

(the Greek) Church" might be expected to baptize in accordance with the literal meaning of the word. To its members who are Greeks, the word explains itself. The xxxii. article of "the orthodox doctrine" of this church is, "Baptism is a Sacrament in which, when the body is bathed in water, the soul of believers is washed by the blood of Christ." A note explains that "the candidate is immersed in water, and the minister recites these words:—'The servant of God is baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'"\* It is difficult to conceive how any unprejudiced student can arrive at the conclusion that the word does not mean what Liddell and Scott, Dr. Harold Browne, Dr. Cremer, and the Greek Church assert that it does mean. New Testament descriptions of, or allusions to baptism, agree with this definition of the word. Why was the river Jordan chosen as the place of John's baptism, if not that there the Baptist could without difficulty immerse those who came to him? "No common spring or tank would meet the necessities of the multitudes who, from Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan, came to him, confessing their sins." It was in the full river the forerunner of the Lord baptized the penitent, baptism "signifying to those who came to him, as he plunged them under the rapid torrent, the forgiveness and forsaking of their former sins."† Was it not such a burial in the waters of Jordan which suggested to Jesus the employment of baptism as figurative of His sufferings? "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"‡ was the exclamation of the Redeemer, as He neared the

\* *The Orthodox Doctrine, &c.*, (London: Whittaker and Co.,) p. 143, &c.

† Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 312.

‡ Luke xii. 50.

final conflict, and the consummation of the sacrifice of His life. Sprinkling with a few drops of water, or even pouring water on the head, does not adequately or truly symbolize the passion of Christ. He might have said, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." The baptism with which He was baptized was immersion in sorrows, sorrows which so encompassed Him about that he cried, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death;" "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The phrase, "buried with him in baptism,"\* has a similar meaning, and probably was intended to recall to the minds of Christians that they must share in the sufferings of the Saviour. In the Epistle to the Romans, Paul explains this reference to burial by saying, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him;" and he reminds the Colossians, in a like connection, of "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh." "Buried with Christ in baptism," is a figure only intelligible when baptism is understood to be immersion. John Wesley's note on Romans vi. 4, is, "Alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion." Even Albert Barnes acknowledges, in commenting on the same Scripture, "It is altogether probable that the apostle in this place had allusion to the custom of baptizing by immersion." An ordinary reader of the New Testament, unacquainted with the controversy on baptism, and uninfluenced by tradition, could not escape the conviction that the place of John's baptism, and the figurative use of baptism by the Lord and the apostle Paul, strongly support the conclusion that baptism in the days of our Lord and his apostles was immersion.

Baptists may not appeal to authority other than Christ and his apostles, as their testimony is given in

\* Rom. vi. 4, &c.

the New Testament. But they may cite witnesses, whose evidence, though insufficient in itself to establish an article of belief or a Christian ordinance, can confirm conclusions drawn from Holy Writ. Ancient baptisteries answer to this character. The word "baptistery," according to Liddell and Scott, signified originally "a bathing place, a swimming bath." And when the place of baptism was called a "baptistery," the name bore witness to the convenience provided by the church for immersing candidates for membership. Dr. Cote has collected and collated, with equal learning and ability, all that could be discovered of or respecting baptisteries in Europe and Asia. He has shown that in the catacombs, as every visitor to Rome can verify for himself, a baptistery existed, and it may still be seen, far larger than was required for sprinkling or pouring, and the depth of which, (three feet and a half,) is sufficient for immersion. It appears that baptism was administered there by the candidate bending forward under the hand of the minister till the whole of the body was immersed in water.\* What is called the "Baptistery of Constantine," near the church of St. John, of Lateran, was obviously designed for immersion, its size and steps clearly demonstrating the object of its builders.† In the fifth century, therefore, the date of the erection of this baptistery, the church at Rome practised immersion. Ancient Saxon baptisteries and Norman fonts even were capacious enough to admit of the immersion of infants. The modern little basins seen in ancient large fonts tell the story of the change which has taken place in the practice of English Churchmen. It is no doubt true that so soon as the error of baptismal regeneration, or salvation by sacraments, crept into the church, the process began which has issued in the substitution of sprinkling for immer-

\* *Archæology of Baptism*, p. 152, &c. † *Ibid*, p. 164, &c.

sion. Before the rise of this error, in the wiser days when Christians held the doctrine of salvation through Christ Jesus, a weakly woman or aged penitent might die, and the survivors had no reason to reproach themselves for neglecting the means of their salvation if they had directed them to the Lamb of God. But this was no longer the case after baptism was supposed to be a necessary condition of salvation. Then to be saved, it was thought, a person must be baptized. How could a dying woman or a dying man be immersed? To meet the difficulty, sprinkling or pouring was allowed. The Church of England still retains the concession in its rubric, which directs, "Then the priest shall take the child into his hands, and shall say to the godfathers and godmothers, Name this child. And then, naming it after them, (if they shall certify him that the child may well endure it) he shall dip it in the water discreetly and warily. . . . But if they certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it." Thus the Church of England, like the Greek Church and the Church of Rome, bears its testimony to the truth that the right mode of administering baptism is by immersion. One other witness is brought forward. The late Dr. Halley was a champion who fought bravely and chivalrously the battle of Pædo-baptism, Dr. Carson being the Baptist champion he encountered on the field of controversy. In his Congregational Lecture on the Sacraments, Dr. Halley, after a sharp passage of arms, rests from the conflict, and reckons up what he has gained by it. And this is his conclusion:—"We believe that βαπτίζω is to make one thing to be in another by dipping, by immersion, by burying, by covering, by superfusion, or by whatever mode effected, provided it be in immediate contact." The Doctor simplifies the statement of the difference between him and those he opposes. "It may simplify the



matter to say that Baptists explain the word as uniformly meaning to put the thing baptized into the liquid; we contend that it means to make the thing baptized to be in the liquid, however it be done. To put a thing into water is, as they say, to baptize it; this, we say, is the truth, but not the whole truth; for to put the water over the thing is also to baptize it."\* If the discussion has been narrowed to so small a point, there is nothing left to contend for. On the assumption that the above account of the word is accurate, the apostles baptized either by immersing converts in water, or by covering converts with water, so as to make them be in it. If any man were commanded to baptize certain persons—that is, “to make the person baptized be in the water”—how would he accomplish it? By pouring water on these persons till it covered them so that they were completely under water, or by dipping them in water? The question answers itself. It was only natural for Dr. Halley to suppose an inquirer pressing him with the demand, “What do you gain if you prove your assertion, for your sprinkling is not covering with water?” His reply does his memory honour. “I care not what we gain, or what we lose, so that we find the truth.” In this instance the truth is that the Lord Jesus Christ commanded disciples to be baptized, to be made to be in water so as to be wholly covered with water, and the only way in which this was done, according to the New Testament, was by immersing the disciples, nor can the reader conceive any other manner in which baptism, as defined by Dr. Halley, could have been administered by John the Baptist in the Jordan, and by the apostles elsewhere.

For the reasons assigned in this chapter, and for many others which cannot be stated without exceeding the limits prescribed for this book, Baptists refuse

\* *The Sacraments* (2nd ed.,) vol. i, p. 275.

to baptize any person except on a confession of their faith in Christ, but baptize all who come to them professing discipleship to the Lord Jesus, and in baptizing immerse the candidates in water, holding that baptism is immersion.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE PLACE OF BAPTISM IN CHRISTIANITY.

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“He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much.”—THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

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**I**T is confessedly a difficult task to keep Christian baptism in the exact place which the Saviour has assigned to it; to attach neither more nor less importance to the ordinance than this place requires and allows; and to avoid error of excess or defect in discussing its nature and claims. Even though it be conceded (which it is not) that baptism is the least of the commandments of Christ, the New Testament forbids us to infer from the comparative insignificance of the ordinance that we may trifle or tamper with it. It does not occupy a lower place than the least commandment of “the law and the prophets” occupied. Such was the Divine estimate of the value of obedience to the precepts which appeared to be of little importance that the Master taught: “Whosoever shall break one of the least of these commandments” (of the law, or the prophets), “and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be calle

great in the kingdom of heaven." Surely the place of baptism in Christianity is not lower or of less importance than was "one jot or one tittle," the very least commandment, "in the law." The disciple may not disregard the ordinance of baptism because it is not essential to salvation, or because it belongs only to the ritual of religion. Should he take so great a liberty with what he deems a small matter, the Lord will mark his disapproval of such conduct by esteeming him "the least in the kingdom of heaven."\* To please the Saviour the believer must "observe all things," the least with the greatest, "whatsoever He commanded" his apostles.

In the four Gospels baptism is not made prominent. Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God and the Saviour of sinners, is the central figure on the canvas of the evangelists. He fills the foreground. The attention of every reader is fixed on "the Word," and on "the man Christ Jesus" in whom "the Word was incarnate." His blameless life; the works of mercy He wrought; His sayings about the Father in heaven, the way of salvation, and what God requires of man; the perfect obedience He rendered to the Divine will; His sacrificial sufferings, atoning death, and glorious resurrection; and His appearances to the disciples before his ascension into heaven, make up the gospel. All else is incidental. The Lord Himself has shown by His example, which speaks with more authority and influence than can be put into words, that baptism is part of the righteousness which should be fulfilled. The plea which He urged why John the Baptist should baptize Him, "Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness," most conclusively proves that neglect of baptism in His case would have rendered His obedience to the Father imperfect. Baptism there-

\* Matt. v. 19.

fore must not be slighted. But while there should be submission to baptism, its importance ought not to be exaggerated. Baptism has a place in the Gospels, though relatively the place is not prominent. The baptism of the disciples of Christ is recorded. But only a momentary glimpse is obtained of it. It is seen in the distance, through the opening afforded by two sentences, and these in no more than one of the four books. "Rabbi," said his disciples to John the Baptist, "He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to Him." "When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples), He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee."\* This is all the four Gospels contain about the baptism of the disciples of Christ during His three years' ministry, sufficient indeed to prove that those, or at least some, who became His disciples were baptized, and showing with equal distinctness and emphasis that the place of baptism in the estimation of the evangelists was a subordinate one. In the ministry of the Great Teacher, as in the books of the evangelists, little was said of baptism. No allusion whatever is found to baptism in the sermon on the mount; the conversation with the woman of Samaria; the many discourses spoken by the Lord Jesus in synagogues, from ships, on the wayside, in houses, at Jerusalem. It is supposed by many that the words, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,"† allude to baptism. The reference is doubtful. It is possible that "water" would be understood by Nicodemus as the symbol of moral cleansing, of that purification without which there could be

\* John iii. 26; iv. 1—3. † John iii. 5.

no access into the holy place. In any case, this one and indirect, and therefore indefinite, allusion to water-baptism is an exceedingly small part of the ministry of the Lord. One other mention of baptism occurs in Luke xii. 50. But this was not a baptism with water, but a baptism of sufferings, and took place in the garden of Gethsemane, not in the river Jordan. Is there any other allusion to baptism in the three years' ministry? If not, it is very surprising that any learned or devout disciples should have come to the conclusion that the Lord Jesus has made the baptism of the believer in water as essential to salvation as His own sacrificial sufferings. Nor is baptism made prominent in the discourses of the apostles. The sermon preached by Peter on the day of Pentecost contained nothing about baptism, though in answer to the question, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" the apostle commanded baptism as well as repentance. A like remark holds good of the second sermon preached by Peter in the temple, and of the defence which he and John made before the Sanhedrim. The Apostle Paul does not include baptism in the theme of his preaching. "The Jews require a sign, the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified." "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."\* The records in the Acts of the Apostles are consistent with these declarations. In the brief abstracts or notes which the historian gives of the discourses of Paul, there is no reference whatever to baptism.

On the principles of Baptists, the explanation of this fact is not far to seek. But if baptism were a condition of salvation, or a sacrament by which souls might be regenerated, if thereby a man or child could become a Christian, and if the ordinance were so essential that

\* 1 Cor. i. 22, 23; ii. 2.

apart from it there could be no assured acceptance with God, would not the comparative reticence of the Prince of preachers and His apostles on the subject of baptism in their ministrations of truth to the world be inexplicable? Baptists could not expect baptism to be made prominent in preaching to the lost! With them, baptism is not part of the gospel which Christ has commanded to be preached in all the world and to every creature, but an ordinance intended only for those who repent of sin and believe the gospel. The Gospel is glad tidings of great joy which are to all people, good news to perishing sinners, the offer of deliverance to those who have fallen into "the snare of the devil," the proclamation of peace to the enemies of God. Baptism is for those who "gladly receive the word," for those who confess and forsake their sins, for those who renounce the devil and all his works," for those who sue for peace at the throne of grace. The gospel, therefore, is for all mankind; baptism only for men who choose the "one thing needful," take Christ's yoke upon them, and are the children of God. Any ministry which is evangelistic in its character—and the Saviour was sent "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and He sent His apostles to a lost world—is necessarily concerned with the message of mercy and the way of salvation, not with baptism, which is for none but disciples, the pardoned and the justified. Not till men are pricked in their hearts, and know assuredly that God has made the crucified Jesus both Lord and Christ, should a word be said to them on the subject of baptism. The gospel should be preached to every creature, baptism to converts. The commission runs, "disciple all nations," and hence the risen and redeeming Lord should be proclaimed in all the world; but those who disciple others are to baptize them (those made disciples,) and consequently to enjoin baptism on

them, teaching them (the baptized,) to keep the commandments of Christ. Baptism then being, not for the impenitent, but for the contrite ; not for hearers only, but for the doers of the word ; not for the multitude of the unregenerate, but for those whose hearts the Lord opens, it is no strange thing that discourses and messages intended for the whole world should contain nothing about baptism. The first and chief thing is to persuade men to be reconciled to God. This accomplished, and the authority of Christ accepted, baptism should be taught as among the things which the Lord has commanded His disciples to observe.

This view of the place of baptism in Christianity is illustrated and confirmed, by the statement that "Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples." Had baptism been a saving ordinance, or a sacrament by which or in which men and children could be regenerated, would not Jesus have baptized ? He touched the leper, made clay and anointed the eyes of the blind, took the dead by the hand. The Lord Jesus, during His earthly ministry, did not work miracles of mercy on the bodies of men by deputy. Nor would He have left baptizing to His disciples, if by baptism He could have communicated spiritual blessings to mankind. The Saviour of sinners never baptized—"Jesus Himself baptized not." Is not the suggestion irresistible, that baptism cannot be a saving ordinance ? It appears probable that the Lord abstained from baptizing disciples, lest it should be imagined that baptism was other than a rite in which the candidate professed his discipleship. On the supposition that the profession of the candidate is the essential thing in baptism, that which answers to its design, the delegation by Christ to His ministers of the work of baptizing, is easily understood ; but on the contrary supposition, that baptism is intended for the communication of grace to the candidate, why



“Jesus Himself baptized not” cannot be comprehended. The apostle Paul, though not for the same reason as the Lord, seldom baptized. He did not consider baptizing as part of his work. “Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.”\* And he was thankful that he had baptized but few of the members of the church at Corinth, lest any should say that he had baptized in his own name,” or into obedience on a profession of discipleship to himself. Peter, like Paul, seems to have looked upon baptism as an ordinance which he was not called upon to administer. When he declared that Cornelius and his company were entitled to baptism, “he commanded them to be baptized”—did not baptize them—“in the name of the Lord.”† Baptism was generally administered, it is fair to infer from these facts, not by the apostles, but by their ministers, men like Mark and others, which at least proves that the apostles did not regard it as a saving ordinance.

That sinners may be saved without baptism, is evident by what the Lord said of the woman, who had been a sinner and was penitent, but unbaptized, “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven;” and to her, “Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace;”‡ and by the acceptance in the hour of death of the thief upon the cross, to whom the Lord promised, “To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.”|| That baptism does not save, is proved by the case of Ananias and Sapphira; by its failure to deliver Simon Magus from “the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity;” and by the departure of those baptized ones, who went out from the church because they were not of the redeemed: “For if they had been of us,” wrote the apostle John, “they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that

\* Cor. i. 17.

† Acts x. 48.

‡ Luke vii. 47, 50.

|| Luke xxiii. 43.

they were not of us.”\* That baptism is simply a profession of discipleship, is proved by the letter and scope of the whole New Testament. These three propositions indicate the place of baptism in Christianity.

Baptists bear their witness to these truths by refusing to baptize any who fail to make a profession of their repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus. They cannot, without doing violence to their own principles, ascribe to baptism any cleansing efficacy, or regenerating influence, or saving grace. Asking evidence of contrition on account of sin, and some few signs of a change of heart and of discipleship to the Lord Jesus, as the condition-precedent to baptism, they effectually guard the ordinance from exaggeration. Before they baptize candidates, the candidates are held to be “members of Christ,” and “the children of God by the faith that is in Christ Jesus.” Professedly regenerated and redeemed, converted and made disciples before baptism, it is impossible that candidates should fall into the error that baptism regenerates or redeems, converts or disciples, or even assists in or perfects the process by which “a child of wrath” is made “an heir of glory.” And thus the beliefs of Baptists keep baptism in the place assigned to it by the Lord Jesus. On the other hand, the principle of unreserved loyalty to Christ, which is shown in an earlier chapter to be a first principle with Baptists, will not permit them to slight or neglect the ordinance. Seeing that Christ commanded that disciples should be baptized, and that apostles, acting under the Great Commission, baptized all who professed discipleship, Baptists consider that obedience is due to this commandment of Christ. It would be disloyal on their part not to obey. They reason that, to follow Christ worthily, they must “fulfil all righteousness;” and, like their

\* 1 John ii. 19.

Master, they include baptism in "all righteousness." And, therefore, they retain the ordinance as it was delivered to the first Christians. Baptists do not think that they are at liberty to change the ordinance. Not a few scholars, whose lives forbid the supposition that they are consciously disloyal to the Lord, plead that, though Christ unquestionably commanded the immersion of converts, and though this was the only baptism in the age of the apostles, they and other Christians have the right to substitute the sprinkling of infants for the immersion of converts. So far as the mode of baptism is concerned, this right is claimed by Dean Stanley in a well-known passage, in which he graphically describes how "the little fonts" have taken the place of the "vast baptisteries," and adds, "The plunges beneath the water diminishing to a few drops, which, by a wise exercise of Christian freedom, are now in most churches the sole representative of the full stream of the descending river."\* But who gave this freedom? Or has it been taken without warrant and authority? If he might, the disciple should not change any one of the Lord's ordinances. His choice should be to please and to obey the Lord. But no permission is granted. The New Testament lends no sanction to the licence claimed to change the commandment of Christ. Baptists dare not substitute their will for the Divine. "He that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much." They are "faithful in that which is least," that they may not, at a supreme moment and in a crisis of temptation, be other than "faithful also in much." It is sometimes urged that this scrupulously exact obedience, while observant of "the letter," is alien from "the spirit" of the Lord's command. The answer to this plea is that conscious disregard to the letter of a precept is and must be a flagrant violation of its

\* "Sinai and Palestine," p. 313.

spirit. He who said, "The letter killeth: the spirit giveth life," said also to scribes and pharisees, after discoursing of small things and "the weightier matter of the law," "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." The Lord requires that the letter be observed in the spirit of loving loyalty to Himself; and this loving loyalty is consistent only with a painstaking and faithful obedience to His commands. It is not for Baptists to judge others—to their own Master they stand or fall; but they are constrained alike by a sense of duty and love to Christ—by what they owe to Him who has bought with His own blood the right to reign over them—to keep baptism in the place assigned to it by the Saviour. Baptism with them is thus a profession of discipleship and a test of loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE LORD'S SUPPER.

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“This do in remembrance of Me.”—*The Lord Jesus at the Holy Supper in the upper room.*

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**I**N baptism the candidate professes once and for all time his discipleship to the Saviour. This discipleship, like the relation of a wife to her husband, is assumed and intended to be for life; and therefore baptism, like the formal act of marriage, is not repeated. There is no instance of a second baptism mentioned in the New Testament, nor is there a text which can be construed into a justification for baptizing a man twice on a profession of his faith in the Lord Jesus. The Lord's Supper differs in this respect from baptism. “As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come,” wrote the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians, from which it is evident that the first Christians frequently participated in the Lord's Supper, thus willingly and lovingly obeying the command—“This do in remembrance of Me.”

Baptists do not believe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper is a sacrament. Many of them would not allow it to be a sacrament in the patristic sense of that word, for they do not regard it as a mystery. The service is simple, and its meaning clear and obvious.

All Baptists agree in declaring that the Lord's Supper is not a sacrament in the ecclesiastical sense of the word. They hold that it is neither the cause nor the vehicle of grace. With one voice, they repudiate the dogma of sacramental efficacy, and disclaim the opinion that any virtue necessarily inheres in, or is derived from, the ordinance. Herein they differ from Catholics, whether Roman or Anglican, and in this difference they agree with other Protestant Dissenters and with Evangelical Churchmen. They do not believe the Roman dogma that, when the prayer of consecration is offered, the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ, so that what was bread becomes the Lord's body, and what was wine becomes His blood. Their exposition and interpretation of the words of the Redeemer at the institution of the Supper, "This is my body," proceed on the same principles as their exposition and interpretation of such scriptures as the following:—"The Lord is my rock, and my fortress . . . . my buckler . . . . and my high tower." "I am the vine, ye are the branches." "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." The Anglican doctrine is less gross but not more scriptural than the Romanist. This doctrine appears to be that, after or during the prayer of consecration, Christ Himself, the personal Saviour enters into, so as to be in, the bread and wine. The bread and wine, it is said, continue, in substance as in appearance, what they were before the prayer, but within them, as behind a veil, the veritable body and blood of Christ, the living Lord, are present. Not that Anglicans teach a physical presence. They acknowledge that the visible body of Christ is in heaven; but they also affirm that His body is in the bread in a spiritual fashion, that the presence is "ghostly," which is the word they use. The Romanist contends that the bread is changed into and becomes

the body of Christ, while the Anglican insists that the bread is made a habitation for the body of Christ. The former boldly pleads for the presence of the literal body and blood of the Saviour; the latter, as if conscious of intellectual difficulties, to refrain from alluding to other and less honourable motives, limits his meaning by saying that the body and blood of Christ are present in the elements, not in the sense of being physically there, but in a spiritual and "ghostly" sense. The two schools come to one conclusion, that the victim is there upon what is called the altar, the bread either being or containing the very body of Christ, and that consequently the sacrifice is offered and the Lord adored whenever the ordinance is duly administered. All this Baptists disbelieve. They have the Lord's Table, around which they gather to partake of the Lord's Supper; but no altar, on which is "the Lamb of God." The bread and wine with them are signs and memorials of the body broken and the blood shed for them, not the broken body itself and the shed blood. Their ministers do not pretend to possess the power, or by any act or words to secure the exercise of the power, which changes bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, or places the body and blood of Christ within the bread and wine. To Baptists, the Lord's Supper is a service designed to bring the love of their dying Saviour, and especially Himself, to remembrance, and so to aid the believer in his communion with the Lord.

It is noteworthy and suggestive that the Christians at Corinth, so far from regarding the Lord's Supper as a sacrament, in the ecclesiastical sense of the word, looked upon it as a social meal. They transferred to the church a custom of the Grecian clubs, whose members met for intercourse or discussion or other purposes, each bringing with him his basket of provisions. The Christians, like their heathen neighbours, occasionally,

perhaps frequently, supped in common, when the richer took before the poorer the provisions they had brought, and thereby, in the contrast between the plenty of the very rich and the empty-handedness of the very poor, shamed those who had brought nothing. These Corinthians seem to have thought that this was the Lord's Supper. The apostle Paul was careful to explain to them, "When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper."\* If the apostle Paul had delivered unto them what Catholics call a sacrament, if he had taught a dogma resembling the view held of the subject by a Romanist Cardinal or an Anglican Bishop, the Corinthians might have fallen into the sin of idolatry; but they never would have supposed that the Lord's Supper was no more than a social meal. On the supposition that the apostle Paul had represented to them that the Lord's Supper was both spiritual and social in its nature, spiritual because its object was to keep Christ in remembrance and to increase the love and loyalty of believers to Him, and social because it also proposed to bind believers together by a common relation to "the one Lord" and equal interest in "the common salvation," the change from the purity of apostolic precept to the corruption of the customs of the Corinthians is easily accounted for. The church at Corinth was carnal. The apostle could not speak to its members "as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal." "Are ye not carnal?" Paul demanded. What more natural than that the carnal should have less taste for the spiritual than for the social, and that gradually, as the influence of the apostle waned and counter-influences waxed stronger, they should neglect the spiritual and exaggerate the social in Christian ordinances? In process of time all

\* 1 Cor. xi. 20, 21.



that they retained of the Lord's Supper was "a meal in common." The spiritual was wholly discarded or forgotten. And in its absence, the Holy Supper sunk below the level of "a common meal," in which all share alike as equals, or brothers, or friends; and was perverted into something very like a heathen club feast, a meal in common, in which every one took before other "his own supper," and the rich despised and shamed the poor members of the church.

Avoiding either extreme, as far removed from the superstition of Catholics as from the worldliness of the Corinthians, Baptists aim at preserving both the spiritual and the social in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. They observe it as a commemoration by a company of believers of the love of their dying Saviour, a memorial of His sacrificial sufferings and atoning death. The body which Jesus gave that it might be broken for His disciples, the blood which was shed for many for the remission of sin, the salvation wrought in Gethsemane and completed at Calvary, the Redeemer who laid down His life for the sheep, is present to their minds when they eat the bread and drink the wine of the Holy Supper. They do this in remembrance of Christ, of His "agony and bloody sweat, His cross and passion, His precious death and burial." The ordinance deepens their sense of the love which prompted the offering of the one and sufficient sacrifice for sins; increases their gratitude to the Lord who bore their sins in His own body on the tree; and intensifies their loving and loyal devotion to the Saviour who has bought them with His blood. This is the primary object of the Lord's Supper. It is essentially and mainly a memorial service. The reference to the broken body and the shed blood is retrospective, points back to the distant past and does not so much as hint at a repetition of the sacrifice. In thus thinking of what the Lord Jesus did and suffered

for them, and opening their minds and hearts to the influence of His all-conquering love, Baptists strive to eat and to drink worthily, "discerning the Lord's body," their faith passing the bread and wine, and looking to Him whose body and blood they symbolize. This is the spiritual aspect of the ordinance, its chief import, that which makes it Christian, and in the absence of which it would surely and speedily become a common meal, and not the Lord's Supper. The ordinance is also social. Baptism was sometimes, as in the case of the treasurer of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, administered to one person only in a service. There is nothing in the nature of baptism to require that more than one should be baptized in the same service. It is not a social institution, but concerns the individual, is a confession of his faith in the Lord Jesus. The Lord's Supper is unlike baptism. The Lord's own household, His family, met in the upper room, His apostles sat with Him at the table, when He "took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My body;" when He "took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it."\* The three thousand converts, added unto the disciples on the day of Pentecost, "continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." They met "daily with one accord in the temple," and there had opportunities to preach Christ to the multitude; but they also were constant in "breaking bread from house to house,"† taking the Lord's Supper in companies, and keeping in remembrance all He had suffered for their salvation. The accident which befell Eutychus has probably preserved for all ages the fact that at Troas, "upon the first day of the week . . . the disciples came together to break bread."‡ And in

\* Matt. xxvi. 26, 27. † Acts ii. 42, 46. ‡ Acts xx. 7.

his epistle to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul does not deny, though such a denial if it had been possible to him would have been an effective exposure of the error into which the Corinthians had fallen, but reaffirms, the social character of the Lord's Supper: "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? For we being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread."\* While therefore the Lord's Supper was designed to keep believers in remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ, it was intended to keep believers at one with each other, to remind them that they are all one in Christ Jesus, and "should have the same care for one another" as for themselves. The Lord's Supper resembles the Passover. That feast might not be eaten by an individual alone. It was a feast for the household, and if a family was too small an addition from neighbours had to be made to it. A company met around a common table, ate the passover, and took the cup. And so a household of believers, the children of God as a family, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, meet at the Lord's Table to partake together of the Lord's Supper. The service impresses them with the truth that they have one Saviour and share in "the common salvation; that they are nourished by the same "bread from heaven," and drink out of the same "cup of blessing;" that they have "one Lord, one faith;" and that their relation to Christ the Head makes them members of the same body. Such an ordinance may be more spiritual than social, for the spiritual in it pervades and sanctifies the social; but it is as really social as spiritual, for in bringing all who take part in it nearer to the Lord Jesus Christ it brings each nearer to every other. "This is my command-

\* 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

ment," says the Master to His disciples, "that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

The remark made about baptism, that it should be observed by those who unfeignedly believe the gospel and have become disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, is equally true of the Lord's Supper. This ordinance is private, not public. The public met for worship and for hearing discourses in the temple, and thither the disciples resorted "at the hour of prayer;" but the first Christians broke bread "from house to house." At Troas "the disciples," not a promiscuous crowd, "came together to break bread." The Lord's Supper is meant for believers only. "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils." The converts at Corinth were wrong in supposing that those who were "partakers of the Lord's table" might conform to the customs of the heathen world. The taking of the bread broken and the cup blessed at the Holy Supper is in itself a solemn declaration, in the classical sense of the word a sacrament, that is, a vow and promise, an oath, a pledge of loyalty to the Saviour, who wears the crown because he bore the cross, and claims allegiance on the ground that He made atonement for our sins. But all disciples should observe the Lord's Supper. The apostles were charged to teach converts "to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded them," and among these commandments was the word, "This do in remembrance of me."

This quotation opens up the question of the terms of communion, respecting which Baptists differ, a section of the denomination believing it to be the will of Christ that communion at the Lord's Supper should be restricted to baptized disciples, and another section believing it to be the will of Christ that the fact of a

disciple not being baptized should not necessarily deprive him of the privilege of communion at the Lord's Supper. The latter plead that the command to partake of the Lord's Supper is binding upon every disciple; that it is the will of Christ that all believers should, in remembrance of Him, eat the bread and take the cup which He appointed as memorials of His broken body and shed blood; and that, when a disciple asks to partake of the Lord's Supper, to take the bread and the cup in remembrance of Christ, he should not be refused the opportunity of obedience. Baptists who do not make baptism a necessary term of communion at the Lord's table admit that the Lord has commanded every convert to be baptized, that is, to be immersed in water (or, as Dr. Halley would explain, so to be covered with water as to be in it); but they do not think that the neglect of one duty, being baptized, and especially when that neglect is due to errors in judgment or the influence of traditionary beliefs, justifies the church in denying to a disciple the right to perform another duty, partaking of the Lord's Supper. Their judgment is, that it would be better if all communicants had been baptized before coming to the table of the Lord, and yet that one act of neglect or unconscious disobedience does not involve permission to neglect or disobey a second commandment, and that a disciple, even though he may not have been, or be willing to be baptized, is less faulty in disregarding one ordinance than he would be in disregarding two ordinances. And so the unbaptized are not forbidden to come to the Lord's table. They are rather invited. Holding that communion at the Lord's table is "the communion of the body of Christ," and believing that many Pædo-baptists are as truly members of that "one body" as themselves, these Baptists give a welcome to all those whom they consider to be "members of Christ." With them the

term of communion is not baptism, but discipleship. The faith which entitles to baptism no less entitles to a seat at the Lord's table. It is affirmed that there is no such connection between baptism and the Holy Supper as to make participation in the latter conditional on the acceptance of the former. The two ordinances are looked upon as distinct, each instituted by the Lord, both alike to be observed in obedience to the authority of the Lord, and either possessing the same sanction as the other. There is no reference—so it is pleaded—in baptism to the Lord's Supper, or in the Lord's Supper to baptism. Baptism is a profession of discipleship to the Lord Jesus Christ, is concerned with an act of the person baptized. The Lord's Supper is a memorial of the sacrificial sufferings of the Saviour, is concerned with the love, and broken body, and shed blood of the Redeemer. Consequently Baptists, who do not restrict communion at the Lord's table to the baptized, on the same principle that they baptize only professed disciples, but all disciples who seek baptism, admit to the Lord's Supper only those who see in Jesus the Lamb of God, their Saviour, but all who ask permission to commemorate the love of their Lord and Redeemer.

Baptists who restrict communion at the Lord's Table to the baptized hold that the apostles and evangelists were charged to baptize converts before teaching them to observe the Lord's Supper as commanded by the Saviour. Candid opponents of their views admit that this was so. The order unquestionably was as is alleged. So far as the great commission goes, it prescribes (1) discipling all nations to Christ; (2) baptizing those made disciples; (3) teaching them obedience to the commands of Christ; and (4), as part of this obedience, the partaking by the baptized and instructed disciples of the Lord's Supper. Those who restrict

communion at the Lord's Table to the baptized further plead that the New Testament does not afford a solitary instance of the admission of a disciple who had not been baptized to the Lord's Supper. Again candour exacts concession from opponents. Is there a Scripture which justifies the conclusion that any disciples refused baptism, that even one convert sat down with believers at the Lord's table without or before baptism, that the apostles practised communion in the Holy Supper with the unbaptized? All the evidence shows that there was no difference in the apostolic age respecting baptism, that every convert was baptized immediately after conversion—the Philippian jailor “the same night in which he believed”—and that the order uniformly was as set forth in the commission and described above. Thus much is matter of fact, which the reader can easily verify by searching the New Testament to discover “whether these things are so.” All Baptists are agreed up to this point. But those who restrict communion at the Lord's Table to the baptized have other pleas by which they urge assent to their principles and customs. They contend that what is not directly and expressly commanded or sanctioned in Holy Writ is, not merely not binding on Christians, but not lawful. Their position is, that they dare not go beyond the written Word to say or to do “either more or less of their own mind.” And as they find no precept authorizing the admission of the unbaptized to the Table of the Lord, nor the record of an instance in which the apostles admitted the unbaptized to such communion, they can do none other than restrict communion to the baptized. In this conclusion they are borne out by what are called the Catholic Churches, the Churches of Rome and England, and the Greek Church; by the Lutheran and Presbyterian Churches; by the various sections of the great Methodist community;

and by Congregationalists. These churches, with more or less distinctness, insist on a person being baptized before his admission to the Lord's Table. They recognize infant sprinkling as baptism, which Baptists do not; and consequently they regard certain parties as baptized, who are regarded by Baptists as unbaptized. But, in restricting communion at the Table of the Lord to the baptized, these Baptists follow the same rule as the rest of Christendom, and are as charitable in their principles, and as catholic in their practice as their brethren of other communities. Does the Lord require baptism of a believer before he partakes of the Lord's Supper? "Yes," reply nearly all Pædo-baptists, "and hence we allow only those who are baptized to commune with us at the Table of the Lord." The Baptists whose views are under consideration give the same answer, and therefore adopt the same rule.

Baptists are agreed in the belief that the Lord's Supper is a spiritual and social ordinance, designed primarily to keep believers in remembrance of Christ and His atoning death; but also intended, secondarily, to promote the communion and fellowship of Christians with each other as with their Lord. They differ on the terms of communion; some holding that the baptized alone should have a seat at the Table of the Lord, and others, that every disciple, even though he be not baptized, should be encouraged to partake of the Lord's Supper. But all Baptists agree that both baptism and the Lord's Supper are for believers only, for none but disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some Baptists commemorate the Lord's Supper weekly, come together every first day of the week "to break bread;" others meet for communion at the Table of the Lord only on the first Sunday in each month; but "as often as they eat this bread, and drink this cup," be it every week, or monthly, Baptists "do show forth the Lord's death till he come."



## CHAPTER V.

## CHURCH ORDER AND DISCIPLINE.

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“The church, which is Christ’s body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” “The Churches of Galatia.”—*The Apostle Paul.*

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**B**APTISTS apply to the order and discipline of a church their first principles, viz., that no individual man or community of men can rightly claim authority to prescribe what believers shall do or leave undone in the service of God, but that the disciples of Christ should render complete and unreserved obedience in all matters pertaining to the conscience and to their relation to God, to their one and only Lord and Master. They attempt to form their churches in accordance with the instructions which are given in the New Testament and after the model of the churches originated and founded by the apostles. How far they have been and are successful in this attempt, the reader must judge for himself, after becoming acquainted with the order and discipline of a Baptist church.

A Baptist, with as much truth and earnestness as the Romanist or the Anglican, can say, “I believe . . . in the holy Catholic church.” There is a church of Christ, one and indivisible, more comprehensive than the church which acknowledges the authority of the Bishop of Rome, and which answers to the description, “the holy church throughout all the world,” for it includes every child of God, “the whole family in heaven and earth.” This is the city, the residents in which “are built upon the foundation of the

apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone ;" the church, " which is Christ's body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all ;" the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven for which the Saviour " gave himself," and which He will " present to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but . . . holy and without blemish." This Church, like its Head, is above and beyond all sects and denominations. It is neither Episcopalian, nor Presbyterian, nor Congregational. Romanists, such as Bernard the monk, such Anglicans as John Keble, Nonconformists of the spirit breathed into the saintly fathers of all the sections of dissent, and godly men and women who have never united themselves to any organized church, are members of this communion. The universal church embraces all of every age and country that have loved God and kept his commandments, that believe in Christ and walk in his footprints, that now do the will of the everlasting Father whether in heaven or on earth. This is the holy Catholic church, out of which there is no salvation ; for all " the ransomed of the Lord " belong thereunto, and without are the unworthy only. Baptists humbly hope that they are members of this church, but they are not so presumptuous as to claim that their churches and this church of the Lord Jesus Christ are identical and co-extensive. They rejoice to believe that what the Good Shepherd said to the Jews might be spoken to them, " And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold : them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice ; there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd." Every disciple of the Lord Jesus is a sheep of this " one fold." The church in this sense is unorganized. All who are Christ's are members of it, and he alone admits to or excludes from it.

The New Testament makes frequent mention of churches which were local, not universal, and which, therefore, should not be confounded with the church which is "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." Such churches exist in the present day. Baptists believe that their churches resemble the churches which were planted by the apostles, and of which Paul wrote as "the churches of Christ." They do not believe that the Lord Jesus Christ or His apostles intended that there should be national churches corresponding to the Church of England or the Church of Scotland. There is no mention of the Church of Judæa, or of the Church of Galatia, but "the churches of Judæa"\* and "the churches of Galatia"† are mentioned, as are "the churches of Macedonia."‡ There were "seven churches" in Asia,§ not one church for the whole of Asia Minor. The narratives and epistles clearly and undeniably show that the apostles did not understand the Saviour to command, nor is there a word of the Lord Jesus which can be construed into the command, to found national churches. A national church is unknown to the New Testament. On the other hand, it must be allowed that there was not, so far as can be gathered from the authoritative history, and the no less authoritative apostolic epistles, more than one church in a city. "The church at Jerusalem"|| is spoken of; but though the converts must have been numbered by the thousand, "the number of the men was about five thousand,"¶ after which "the number of the disciples was multiplied,"\*\*\* there remained but one church in the city of Jerusalem. Nor does it appear that there was more than one church in Antioch,†† or Corinth,‡‡ or in any other city. There were probably many companies—

\* Gal. i. 22.      † 1 Cor. xvi. 1.      ‡ 2 Cor. viii. 1.  
 § Rev. i. 4.      || Acts viii. 1.      ¶ Acts iv. 4.      \*\* Acts vi. 1.  
                  †† Acts xiii. 1.      ‡‡ 1 Cor. i. 2.

congregations, as they would be now called. In Jerusalem, it seems most likely because of the impossibility of all the disciples meeting in one place where they could secure the quiet and privacy so essential to the due observance of the Lord's Supper, the Christians broke bread "from house to house." But those who met in these several companies were all alike members of the same church, "the church (not the churches) at Jerusalem." If Christians still had "one faith, one baptism," as well as "one Lord," and were loyal and loving, there might be no more than one church in one city in the present day. Disloyalty and lack of charity are the cause of schism. The demon of discord, or self-will in preferring the human to the divine, disturbs and breaks up the harmony of Christians, and causes their separation from one another, and thus prompts the division which is deplored. It cannot be said that in this matter Baptists uniformly follow apostolic precedent. In all large towns, and even in some comparatively small places, there are more than one church. To divide into companies would be to conform to the practice of the apostles. It is doubtful whether it is equally apostolical to have churches independent of each other in the same town. Small churches as well as large existed in the first century. Baptists can plead in justification of their small village churches the fact that there were churches whose meeting-places were private houses." The apostle Paul, after sending greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, added, "Likewise, greet the church that is in their house."\* In another epistle he salutes Nymphas and "the church that is in his house."† A multitude was not required to form a church any more than to constitute a Jewish synagogue. The believers or disciples in any given place who agreed to meet together for the worship of God and the observance of

\* Rom. xvi. 5.

† Coloss. iv. 15.

the commandments of Christ, whether few or many, were a church. A church in the age of the apostles was occasionally so large that all the members could not assemble in one building for the breaking of bread, and there were churches so small that a room in a private house could contain all the members.

It will have been gathered from what is stated above that Baptists limit, so far as possible, membership in their churches to disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are painfully aware that some who profess to believe in and to be followers of the Saviour do not justify the profession made. Like the apostles and evangelists of the church of the First Days, they may and sometimes do admit to their number those who are self-deceived, whose subsequent character and conduct prove them to have been stony-ground hearers; for they "have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time." Now and then, though more rarely than an on-looker would suppose, Baptists are imposed upon by those who from improper motives, and for sinister ends, seek membership with them. Their rule is to require of such as desire to join their fellowship a credible profession of repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus, such a sense of sin as is incompatible with a sinful life and such trust in the Redeemer as constrains to a loving obedience to His commands; and on this profession, when they accept it as sincere, they comply with the request to be admitted to membership in the church. Such a custom as this involves inquiry, deliberation, election. It is the practice of the Baptists to appoint well-known and respected men or women to visit candidates for baptism and church fellowship, and their duty is to satisfy themselves that the candidates have truly repented and unfeignedly believe. In some few instances the testimony of the minister or a deacon, or even a communication from the applicant, is con-

sidered sufficient; but generally messengers are sent to visit candidates, and they report to the church the results of their visit. This report is presented at a meeting of the members duly convened by public notice on the previous Sunday. The meeting has the right to accept or to reject the candidates; and only by resolution, regularly moved and seconded, and carried by a majority of the votes given (the voting being not by ballot but by show of hands), is any professed disciple received into the membership of the church. In support of their practice, Baptists cite the case of Saul of Tarsus. On his first visit to Jerusalem after his conversion, "he essayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple," declined his overture for fellowship, and refused association with him. "But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of the Lord Jesus:" in other words, Barnabas reported favourably of Saul, and commended him to the confidence of the church. "And he was with them, coming in and going out at Jerusalem"\*—was numbered with the disciples. The church, that is, the assembly of the disciples in any one place, had the control of the membership, determined whether an individual should remain a member. Paul, rejected for awhile and afterwards received by the church at Jerusalem, wrote, to another church, "Do not ye judge them that are within? . . . Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."† These Scriptures appear to Baptists clearly to teach that the church as a whole has the right, and that therefore it is its duty, to decide the question of its own membership, to say yes or no to the proposal that any individual

\* Acts ix. 26—28.

† 1 Cor. v. 12, 13.

should be included in or excluded from the number of its members. In the discharge of these obligations, however, Baptists disclaim being "a law to themselves." They do not consciously act as if their own caprice or pleasure could justify the votes given and the decisions come to, "being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ." Churches should be scrupulously careful to obey the Head, to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded them. And consequently, in determining questions affecting membership, a Baptist church is avowedly loyal to the Divine will as declared by the Lord Jesus and done by His apostles.

Baptist churches do not, except in very few instances, interfere with the freedom of a minister in baptizing those who ask for baptism on a profession of their discipleship. It is granted that no church decided that the profession of faith by the Ethiopian was credible, and that Philip baptized the convert without authority from a church; that Ananias does not appear to have consulted the church at Damascus as to the baptism of Saul of Tarsus; that there is nothing in the nature of baptism to make the consent and approval of the church necessary to its validity; and that evangelists may properly claim the right, which was unquestionably exercised by evangelists in the apostolic age, to baptize any individuals who may make to them a credible profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus. Baptist ministers frequently baptize men and women who worship with churches of other denominations, and their own churches admit that in so doing they act in accordance with the mind of Christ, and do not violate any law of the church. There are churches among Baptists which admit the unbaptized to membership; but these churches are comparatively few in number. The overwhelming majority of the churches make baptism a condition of membership: some on the ground that a

Christian church is an organized assembly of baptized believers, and that the unbaptized disciple has no right to membership, as the Roman who would not take the oath could not be numbered with the soldiers of the republic ; and others, on the ground that in these days of denominations it is for many reasons desirable and preferable that every Christian should unite with the company of disciples whose faith and customs are most in accordance with his own convictions, and that a Baptist church should be a church consisting of Baptists only. These differences, it may be noted, do not affect the general principle, which is accepted and acted upon by all Baptists, that a church has a right and ought to determine its own membership.

The officers of a Baptist church are of two classes, pastors and deacons. A pastor is president of the church, its presiding elder ; minister of the congregation, charged with the duty of conducting public worship ; and preacher of the gospel, whose work it is to publish the glad tidings of great joy to all who will come to hear, to those who perish for lack of knowledge. Baptists identify the presbyter and bishop of the New Testament as one and the same, and contend that their pastor holds the same office as presbyter or bishop filled in the churches founded by the apostles. Paul from Miletus "sent to Ephesus, and called the elders (presbyters) of the church." And when they had come to him he charged them, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (bishops)."\* There is certainly not a tittle of evidence that a bishop had any authority over or official position in more than one church. The Epistle to the Philippians is addressed "to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons."† An examination of the passages in the

\* Acts xx. 17, 28.

† Phil. i. 1



New Testament bearing upon the subject will be found to show that, in the age of apostles, so far from a bishop officiating in two or more churches (and a church in those days never extended beyond the boundaries of a city or town), there were two or more bishops in one church as at Jerusalem,\* Philippi, Ephesus, and other places. A plurality of elders, or bishops, or pastors can be met with, and such plurality points to the thoroughness with which a church should be watched over and tended; but there is not a solitary case of a plurality in the other sense, one bishop ruling several churches. Each church was a diocese in the first age, and its limits were conterminous with the limits of the church, just as the parish of an evangelist, as of an apostle, is the world. A bishop or pastor is called to "take care of the church of God,"† and must be "able by sound doctrine (instruction) both to exhort and convince the gainsayers;"‡ and should moreover be "an example to the flock."§ These directions imply that a pastor ought above all things to be "a man of God," a true and loving disciple of Christ, and "thoroughly furnished unto all good works."|| Formerly Baptists, as much from choice as from compulsion, demanded little more from candidates for the pastoral office than that they should be eminently devout in character, possessing an intimate knowledge of Scripture. Their young men were excluded from the National Universities. For some time after the restoration of the Stuarts to the throne of England, their learned men were not permitted to teach private schools. But the fact that in the Established Church there was much learning and little piety was most influential in producing the opposite extreme among Nonconformists, in the rank and file of whose ministry there was much

\* Acts viii. 1.      † 1 Tim. iii. 5.      ‡ Titus i. 9.  
 § 1 Peter v. 3.      || 2 Tim. iii. 17.

piety and little learning. There were some scholarly and erudite pastors, and chiefly through their counsels "academies" and "colleges" were founded for the training of candidates for the pastorate. In these institutions and at the Universities (happily now open to men of every faith) young men receive instruction in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, in philosophy and history, in Biblical exegesis and theology, and in other subjects. While the entrance to Baptist colleges is jealously guarded, lest any not called thereto by God should find their way into them, those admitted are trained by tutors whose object is to send them forth as workmen who will have no cause for shame on account of the quality of their work, but whose acquirements will enable them to use their gifts to the profit of the churches, and to make "full proof of their ministry." A church, the pastoral office in which is vacant, invites a student from one of the colleges, or any minister it may please, to preach for two or more Sabbaths; and if his ministrations are approved by the members, and they believe him to be in character, capacity, and culture suitable for the office, they elect him to be their pastor. The appointment is made by the church. No external organization has voice or vote in it. The consent of other than the church is not asked, though frequently the counsel of neighbours, in whose knowledge and wisdom the church has confidence, is sought and obtained. It is maintained that this election by the members of a church of its own bishop or pastor, is directly sanctioned, if not expressly commanded, by the New Testament. The whole of the disciples, not the eleven apostles only, voted in the election of Matthias to the place made vacant by the fall of Judas.\* True, the election was afterwards set aside by the Lord Jesus calling Saul of Tarsus to the apostleship. There were

Acts i. 15—26.

twelve, not thirteen, apostles. The twelfth was Paul, not Matthias. Obviously the church had no right to appoint an apostle or a successor to an apostle. An apostle is one called and sent directly by the Lord Jesus Christ without the intervention of a church or churches. But the incident proves that among the first disciples, when appointments were made, they were made by the whole church. A second case of election is more to the point. The Holy Ghost said to the church at Antioch, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."\* And the church did as commanded. They appointed Paul and Barnabas for this special missionary service. In this instance there was the call by the church as well as the Divine call. Who should appoint pastors? If the apostles were still living, the Scriptures quoted suggest that they would refer the appointment to the church. And if the Holy Ghost would not call an apostle to a mission to distant cities without the concurring voice of the church, how much more would the Spirit of God say to a church, "Separate me" such an one "for the" pastorate "to which I have called" him? For these and similar reasons Baptists teach and exercise the right of the members of a church to elect their own pastor. It is not thought derogatory to the independence of pastors that they should be paid a stipend, and thus be placed in a position in which they can devote their whole time to the work of the ministry. The apostle Peter said that bishops should take the oversight of the flock of God, "not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind"†—a pointless remark if bishops in those times received no pay. The Lord Jesus himself was supported by voluntary contributions, the free-will gifts of those who prized his ministry.‡ When he sent forth the seventy, he would not allow

\* Acts xiii. 1—3.

† 1 Peter v. 2.

‡ Luke viii. 3.

them to take with them the money required to purchase daily bread. "Carry neither purse nor scrip," was part of their instructions. They were to receive what the people might give, "For the labourer is worthy of his hire."\* In conformity with the principle and practice here enjoined, Baptists provide maintenance-stipends for their pastors. The pastors, thus appointed and provided for, hold office, nominally "during good behaviour," unless a special agreement is made, but really at the pleasure of the church. Those who make can unmake a bishop, as Queen Elizabeth reminded a bishop of Ely. And when a majority, or a large minority, of the members desire a pastor to retire, his removal is only a question of time. Notwithstanding its supremacy, the church has no authority to prescribe to the pastor what he shall preach. As a minister of the Gospel, he is a steward of Christ, and accountable only to Him. The liberty of the pulpit is as dear to Baptists as the authority of the church. And they prefer that their pastors should be faithful to the Lord and to conscience, honest and outspoken in their pulpit ministrations. At the same time pastors are not regarded either as authoritative teachers or as priests. Their sermons and addresses are respectfully and often reverently listened to; but every Baptist forms his own opinions, and exercises his own judgment as to the meaning of the word of God. Pastors are helpers, not masters, of the faith of their hearers. Priestly functions, other than such as belong to the youngest and feeblest member of the church, are denied to the pastor. His duty and perogatives may be summed up in a few sentences. He is called of God, and elected by the church, to fill the office of president; to teach and to preach Jesus Christ; to lead the flock into the green pastures and beside the still waters provided by the

\* Luke x. 4, 7.

Great Shepherd; and in all things to minister, by word and example, to the spiritual well-being of "the flock of God," to which he is an overseer.

Deacons form the other class of officers in a Baptist church. The origin of this office is sought for in the setting apart of Stephen and six others to attend to the "daily ministration" to the poor of the church at Jerusalem. "There arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration." Till then the apostles seem to have superintended the distribution of the bounty of the church. With characteristic wisdom, so soon as complaints were made, they resolved to refer the whole business to the church. "Then the twelve called the multitude together." Their proposal was: "Look ye out among you seven men of honest report, whom we may appoint over this business." Henceforth, they added, "we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." "The saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicholas, a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set before the apostles."\* It is not unreasonable to conclude that the office, thus created to meet the case and to supply the needs of the church at Jerusalem, extended to other places, and that the deacons at Philippi and elsewhere were charged with duties similar to those performed by these "seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." This conclusion is strengthened by the qualifications which the apostle Paul declared to be necessary for the office. There is no ministry requiring more shrewdness of judgment, more disinterestedness, more tender sympathy, or greater delicacy, than minis-

\* Acts vi. 1—6.

tering to the wants of the widow and of the very poor. The men who engage in it must be "not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;" but should hold "the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience," and be reported because "found blameless."\* Theoretically the office of deacon among Baptists is concerned with the administration of the moneys collected and given for the poor members. And on the assumption that the nature and duties of the diaconate are adequately described in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, its rights and duties are limited to this one service. Practically the deacons of Baptist churches are not thus restricted. Their office places them next to the pastor, and they form his council. They, to a large extent, prepare and conduct the business of the church. Not only the fund whence the needs of the poor are supplied, but all other funds—except the church, by a special resolution, decides that another shall fill the office of treasurer—are administered by them. In matters pertaining to the pastorate, to the admission or exclusion of members, deacons, by virtue of their office, exercise considerable influence, if not authority. Whether the office itself justifies this state of things is a moot point. But apostolical precept and precedence may be urged in defence of it. Precisely as, in the case cited above, when occasion arose for remitting the relief of the poor to capable and trustworthy men, the church selected whom they would, so any other business, demanding superior intelligence, sound judgment, and purity of motive as of life, may be committed to those in whom the members confide. It cannot be gainsaid that, when deacons answer to the apostolic ideal, being "men of honest report, and full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," and being no less remarkable for unselfishness, self-

\* 1 Tim. iii. 8—10.

government, and a conscience void of offence towards God, the church does well to trust and to follow them as leaders. Deacons of Baptist churches answer to their name rather than to the original intent of the office they fill. They are "the servants" of the church, and the service they render is as manifold and varied as the requirements of the church from time to time demand. It will be seen that these deacons occupy a position very different from that occupied by "deacons" in the Church of England, who are what a distinguished Baptist would call "clerical apprentices," and that their functions are alike spiritual and secular. In an increasing number of churches deacons are elected for a term of years—for three or five years; but till lately the universal custom was, and the custom is general still, to elect a deacon for life, the election being by ballot as a rule, and every member having the right to vote.

The discipline of Baptist churches differs little, if at all, from the discipline of the churches known as Congregationalist. It is contended that none but honest believers, real disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, converted persons who are "born of the Spirit" and "created anew in Christ Jesus," have right to membership, or ought to remain in the church. As the man who "had not on the wedding garment" was cast out from the king's house "into outer darkness," he who does not wear the garments of salvation should have no place in the church of God. A wicked person, one openly disobedient and rebellious against the Lord and Saviour, has neither part nor lot in the kingdom of heaven. He is "of the world," and should go "to his own company." Baptists, reluctant as they are to pass adverse judgment on any man, hold that it is the duty of a church to separate from them a member who is not a Christian. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, and the law

is unrepealed, "not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or, a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."\* This scripture describes characters, those who habitually cherish evil passions and do evil things. The presence of such should not be tolerated in the church: they ought to be excluded from fellowship. But there is another class of offenders who are "overtaken in a fault," who fall without premeditation and by the force of temptation into sin. David was unlike himself—the real man was asleep, and all but dead within him—when he lived for awhile in sin. Peter was false to himself when he denied his Lord. In course of time the saint awakens to the exceeding sinfulness of his sins, and pours out his heart in penitential psalms, or weeps bitterly. In the present day also there are those who fall, who backslide, who leave the narrow way for by-paths and enchanted grounds and the broad road, who have root in themselves, and yet present the appearance of fruitless and withered trees. Baptists endeavour in their discipline to distinguish between those who never passed from death to life, and yet have a name to live, and those who were "quickened together with Christ," and yet seem to be dead. With the apostle Jude, they are anxious not to confound the one with the other. Such as "walk after their own ungodly lusts," who are "sensual, having not the Spirit," they would "put away from them;" but they remember the saying of Jude, "Of some have compassion making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."† These latter should be recovered "out of the snare of the devil," should be restored "in the spirit of meekness," should be dealt with as the Lord, and Mary the

\*1 Cor. v. 11. † Jude 8—25.



mother of Jesus, and the disciple whom Jesus loved dealt with Peter. They did not excommunicate him. An enemy or a rebel may be expelled, an erring brother should be brought to penitence. "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth," wrote James the apostle, "and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."\* But the fallen should not without condemnation be restored, lest sin should appear less heinous than it is. And so it ought to be (and to some extent is) the practice of Baptists to mark their sense of the evil of sin by censuring it in a formal manner when a member falls into it. The pastor by the direction of the church, and in its name, addresses to the offending member words of caution and encouragement, reproving him before his fellow members, and exhorting him to walk with God in the time to come. "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear,"† is one of Paul's directions to Timothy. The object of discipline in Baptist churches therefore is, or should be, two-fold: to make the church what it professes to be, a company of believers, loyal disciples of the Lord Jesus; and to maintain purity of life in believers, consistent obedience to Christ in his disciples. It is feared by some Baptists that "godly discipline" is falling into comparative neglect, especially in its corrective and helpful aspect. This is greatly to be deplored. But whatever the practice, the belief of Baptists unquestionably is, that it is the duty of every church to guard against impurity in its membership, to expel from the church the unregenerate, and to seek the expulsion of evil from the children of God and their perfecting in the Divine will. All discipline, equally with the ap-

\* James v. 19, 20.      † 1 Tim. v. 20.

pointment of officers, is controlled by the votes of the members, and their decision is final.

To prevent the possibility of misunderstanding, it is added that Baptist churches are not, as is often represented, republican in character. Their members do not claim the right to make, to amend, and to abrogate laws. The church is, strictly speaking, a kingdom, in which the Lord Jesus Christ reigns as an absolute sovereign. Baptists acknowledge His authority. The laws by which their community is governed were made more than eighteen centuries ago. Their statute book is the New Testament. They allow no appeal except to Holy Writ, and by its sentence they profess and attempt to abide. "Under law to Christ," the church aims at doing His will. And when, as is frequently the case, there is no literal precept or written commandment which directly and without doubt applies to the question under consideration, the members of the church ask for Divine guidance, that they may act as the Spirit of Christ prompts. In this imperfect state there are many faults and short-comings in every church. Baptists confess that they also "in many things offend, and in all come short." But they can also affirm that their earnest desire is to make their churches answer to the ideal presented in Holy Scripture, and constantly within them to do the will of one Master, and so be living churches of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE RELATION OF BAPTISTS TO THE STATE.

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“ Wherefore ye must needs be subject (to the civil power), not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake.”—*The Apostle Paul.*

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**B**APTISTS have never enjoyed exceptional privileges, nor has it been their lot at any time to be by name exempted from the operation of persecuting laws. But on several occasions, when the Legislature has resolved to relax the stringency of law in the interests of Nonconformists, Baptists have been excluded from the benefit, on the ground, it is to be feared, that they were more obnoxious than other Dissenters to the State. Even in the time of the Commonwealth, though against the protests of John Milton and contrary in all probability to the mind of Oliver Cromwell, Baptists were proscribed alike by the Church and the Legislature. They were refused representation in the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and a petition presented by one of their number in favour of “ full liberty of conscience ” was denounced by all parties, by Philip Nye and Thomas Goodwin as by the most persecuting of Presbyterians. In 1648 the Parliament enacted that any man affirming “ that the baptizing of infants is unlawful, or such baptism is void, and that such persons ought to be baptized again, and, in pursuance thereof, shall baptize any person formerly baptized, shall be imprisoned until he gives security that he will not publish or maintain the said error any more.”\* And

\* Works of Bunyan. (Offor's edition.) Vol. iii., p. xli.

subsequently, when negotiations were entered into by Presbyterians and Independents with the Prince of Orange, in 1688, a project of church comprehension was favourably entertained which, however, if carried out, would have left in all their force tests which Baptists could not have accepted.\* This state of things has altogether passed away. In the present day Baptists are placed in precisely the same relation to the State as other Nonconformists. They enjoy the same privileges, are under like obligations, and cherish a similar loyalty to the crown and constitution, as their brethren of the Congregational or Presbyterian or Methodist community. Happily all Protestant Dissenters are equal before the law. Neither favour nor disfavour is shown to Baptists or Methodists because of their religious faith. So that, as compared with one another, Nonconformists already possess equality, and there remains little more for the State to do than to extend the application of this equitable principle to Episcopalians. All, therefore, that is said of the relation of Baptists to the State is true of other Protestant Dissenters.

There is nothing in the First Principles of Baptists to determine the form or sort of civil government which they should prefer. It is well known that one of the chief authors of the Constitution of the Republic of the United States of America regarded the constitution of a Baptist church as a model to be copied in framing rules and regulations for the conduct of civil government. On the other hand it might be pleaded that Baptists acknowledge the absolute authority of Jesus as King; that they disclaim the right of making or altering laws for the government of the church or the individual conscience; and that their faith and practice are perfectly con-

\* Skeat's History of the Free Churches, p. 98.

sistent with loyalty to an earthly sovereign. As a matter of fact or logic Baptists can, without the least inconsistency, be Republicans or Royalists, nor is there any peculiarity of their faith which tends to make them other than patriotic citizens, whether they live in America, or England, or Germany, or Italy, or Japan. In common with all reasonable men, Baptists hold that civil government of some kind is necessary to the preservation and protection of life, freedom, and property. With most Englishmen they believe that the form of government should be in accordance with the declared will of the people; that the majority have a right to decree what shape the government shall take, whether monarchical or republican. Baptists generally, so generally that the exception is difficult to discover, prefer a limited monarchy, or government by sovereign and a parliament representing the people, to any other form of government. They are intensely loyal, and ever have been, to the reigning house. From 1688 to the present day Baptists have been uniformly and enthusiastically devoted to the cause of the crown and the constitution. When influential members of the Established Church wavered in their loyalty, Baptists were true to the throne. There are historians who affirm that the fidelity of dissenters preserved the crown for the House of Hanover. They have been no less faithful to the constitution. With other Nonconformists Baptists supported the seven bishops, in the reign of James the Second, in their protest against substituting a royal declaration for an Act of Parliament, and though the declaration proposed to give them liberty of conscience, they would not take their freedom because not granted in a constitutional manner. In all their agitations and political movements the Baptists have acted upon the principle of loyalty to law. They have never swerved in their

allegiance to the crown or constitution from the day that the throne was established on the foundation of statute law. They are willing and loyal subjects to the powers that be, "not for wrath only, but also for conscience' sake."

Not that Baptists render unreserved obedience to the civil power. They believe that such power "is ordained of God" for the protection of life, freedom, and property; that its province is or should be secular only; and that whenever it passes beyond its proper sphere and enters the domain of religious faith or spiritual service, it is guilty of usurpation and ought to be resisted. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were loyal and faithful subjects of king Nebuchadnezzar; but when their royal master claimed authority over their consciences, they promptly replied: "Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Daniel was evidently devoted to Darius, and would have obeyed him in any secular matter. His sense of duty impelled him, notwithstanding strong personal attachment, to refuse submission to the king when he prohibited prayer to any god or man save of himself for thirty days, and to disregard the decree that he had signed. From the beginning of their history till now Baptists also have been of this mind. In all matters pertaining to the conscience they have, like the apostles, hearkened unto God rather than unto men, disclaimed all loyalty save to the Divine King. Within the legitimate limits of man-made law, in all matters purely civil and political, Baptists cheerfully acknowledge and maintain the authority of the State; but they pay as little attention to the commands of rulers, when rulers assert authority over the conscience, as prophets and apostles did. They render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things

which are God's. And as the State cannot remit the penalty of sin, cannot release from the obligation to do the Divine will, cannot answer for the individual at the judgment-seat of Christ, and cannot distribute rewards and punishments in the world to come, Baptists conclude that the Lord God never intended the State to exercise authority in matters of faith and worship; and that to submit to such authority when exercised is to serve the State instead of God, and, so far as that can be done, to substitute the State for God as the sovereign of the soul. It is their desire so to serve the State by an efficient discharge of all their civil duties, and at the same time so to serve their God by doing His will, and no will but His, in all matters pertaining directly to Him, that their enemies "shall not find any occasion against them, except they find it against them concerning the law of their God." This single-hearted loyalty to the Heavenly King in spiritual affairs is favourable to patriotism and devotion to the crown. It is a mistake to suppose that Baptists draw a deep and sharply defined line between the secular and the spiritual, excluding Divine authority from the former and human authority from the latter. While contending that man should not rule in religion, they claim that God's "kingdom ruleth over all." In serving an earthly sovereign they obey the King of kings, and in performing their political duties they act as citizens of the Heavenly Commonwealth. It is their conviction that civil government is "the ordinance of God; that to resist it is to incur condemnation; and that the Lord of lords is well pleased with loyalty to His own ordinance. In their case therefore the solemn sanctions of religion are added to the ordinary obligations of citizenship, and they do their duty as those who must give an account to "the Judge of the whole

earth." These sentiments promote patriotism ; they are friendly to incorruptible integrity of character, to unselfish and conscientious pursuit of the well being of the community, and to steadfastness of purpose. What Divine religion did for godly Hebrews it does for consistent Christians. The Book of Psalms is as full of patriotism as of piety. And a like love of country, a kindred enthusiasm in its service, has ever characterized Protestant Dissenters, and Baptists have shared as largely as any in this earnest and devout patriotism.

Not in return for services rendered, but as a right inherent in citizenship and belonging to every subject, Baptists claim liberty to worship God, and to teach his truth "without let or hindrance" from the State. In the exercise of this liberty, they claim, moreover, the protection of law. They gratefully allow that in this respect they enjoy all they can justly claim. The Act of Toleration, though the word is offensive and implies disapproval of the thing tolerated, secured to them freedom of worship. Law has made public service at the chapel as legal as the service at the cathedral itself. The only difference is, it prescribes one and permits the other ; but it unquestionably legalizes both. Nor does the State in any way limit the discretion of the worshipper. Of course it forbids in the meeting-house, as in every place, speech or deed that is subversive of the constitution. Within the wide limits suggested by this necessary and proper restriction, Dissenters can sing what psalms or hymns they please, pray as the Spirit or their own hearts move and prompt them, preach what doctrines they list, and instruct old and young in their religious views. There is no interference with them. In the Sunday-school, as in the place of worship, they enjoy perfect liberty. Should any evil-disposed or fanatical person



molest or disturb them in their worship or preaching, the law provides for their protection. Brawling in a chapel is, equally with brawling in a parish church, a punishable offence. And so universal is the respect paid to the liberty of Nonconformists, that they are even less liable to interruption in their worship than are congregations connected with the Established Church. They attend their own meeting-houses, none daring or desiring to make them afraid. In this connection it must with thankfulness be allowed that the State has removed disability after disability. To-day there is no provision in any statute for the exclusion of a dissenter from municipal offices, or the magistracy, or parliament, or the immediate service of the sovereign in one or other of the chief secretaryships of State, with the exception only of the office of Lord High Chancellor. Here and there, in the Universities and a few other institutions, Baptists are reminded that there are Christians—those of the Church of England—more favoured than themselves. But remembering that the Test and Corporation Acts were repealed little over fifty years ago, and that the present generation has seen Protestant Dissenters in high offices of State and sitting as Her Majesty's judges in the chief law courts, the wonder is, not that a little remains to be accomplished before Nonconformists enjoy perfect freedom, but that so large a measure of liberty has been obtained, and Dissenters are so nearly on an equality with Conformists. It is noted with gratitude that they possess, guaranteed to them by law, liberty of worship and of teaching; that this liberty is protected by the State; and that there are few offices or positions in the Commonwealth from which they are necessarily, legally, and because of their religious faith, excluded.

The State also secures for them the sure and peaceable enjoyment of any property, whether in the shape

of buildings or endowments, they may have devoted to religious uses. Baptists cannot enforce contributions to their funds. Whatever property they have has been created by the free-will gifts of their own friends. They are by choice, as by circumstances, voluntaries, relying only on the willing contributions of their co-religionists and sympathetic brethren of other denominations. Requiring places in which to meet, and some of them believing that endowments are helpful, Baptists have set apart property for religious uses. The endowments are extremely few in number, and insignificant in value. This is not the case with places of worship and their adjoining school-buildings and lecture halls. All such property is vested in trustees, whose duty it is to insist upon the prescribed use of the property according to the terms of their trust. Church and congregations cannot legally hold property. Property can be held only by individuals in their own right; by corporations, which are creations of the state; and by trustees, who administer the property as directed by the donor or other legal authority. If an Act of Parliament were obtained, creating every church or society which registered itself as such a corporation for the purpose of holding property, trustees would be no longer needed. As the law is, it is by trustees Nonconformists hold their buildings and endowments. When a property has been created, the church proceeds to put it in trust; the members can make the trusts what they please; and so long as the terms of a trust are not in contravention of the law of the land, or inimical to the public weal, the State accepts whatever trust may be agreed upon. The members determine what doctrines shall be preached and taught by the minister; what form of government shall be adopted; what method of procedure shall be followed in the election of officers, or the appoint-

ment of trustees. The Government of the day has no more legal right to interfere in making the trust than it has in deciding when, where, and what the leader of the Opposition in the Commons House of Parliament shall speak during the recess. Baptists are untrammelled in the preparation of their trust deeds. And in the selection of trustees, they "look out from among them" men in whom they have confidence, on whose judgment and firmness they can place reliance, and appoint them trustees. Their own solicitor prepares the deed. Nor is the deed submitted for approval to any authority; it does not require the sanction of the crown, or magistrate, or any other official, to give it legal validity. The signatures of the parties to the document complete it for all practical purposes, and henceforth its provisions can be enforced by process of law. A trust once thus settled cannot be altered. No organic change in it can be effected. There have been decisions, which, apparently condone departure from a trust, but such decisions have been based on the assumption that by the deed was given to the church the right of exercising authority on the point at issue. Practically, however, the church has no legal power to alter or to modify a trust; and legally, the property is held for all time on the trusts, and for the purposes set forth in the deed. A recent Act of Parliament settled a long pending question by enacting that undisputed enjoyment of property for a certain number of years entitles to possession, the express terms of a trust to the contrary notwithstanding. Thus the State has enabled Dissenters to prescribe to what uses their property shall be set apart, and secures the observance of any trusts they may create.

There is neither State patronage nor State control in these arrangements. The State exists—that is, some thousands or millions of people constitute themselves an

organized community—as much for the protection of the rights of men in property, as for the protection of their life and liberty. To exempt property from the protection of the State would be to destroy the illegality of depredation, alienation, or destruction, so far as that particular property is concerned. In guaranteeing to a Baptist church the enjoyment of a property its members have created or purchased, the State does no more than in guaranteeing to a merchant the use of a warehouse he has built, or to a peer the quiet enjoyment of the mansion and park his ancestor bought or provided. There is no patronage here. The State simply performs its duty, does that which it exists to do, and for the doing of which it is maintained. Much less is there State control in these arrangements. If the trusts of a Baptist chapel, like the Thirty-nine Articles and the Book of Common Prayer, were legal because they had been expressly approved by and appended to an Act of Parliament; if these trusts derived their validity from the consent of the crown and endorsement of some officer of State in each instance; if the State in any way interfered with the doctrines preached and worship celebrated in these trust-buildings, the idea of State control might be admitted. But from first to last the church does what it pleases—creates its own trusts, appoints its own trustees, makes its own provision for its own needs. The one and only thing the State does is to ensure that the property shall be devoted to the purposes for which its owners originally and by declaration designed it.

It is the belief of Baptists that, if all Christians stood in similar relations to the State, it would be helpful alike to the churches and to the civil power. They revolt from the thought that the State, of which they form a part, should prescribe any form of faith or worship; should exercise any authority in religious

matters ; should offer bribes or premiums which tempt to infidelity to conscience and to God. They therefore advocate the separation of Church and State, that the State may protect more efficiently the life, liberty, and property of its subjects, and that the churches may obey more unreservedly their Divine and Heavenly Head.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE BAPTISTS OF PAST AGES.

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“Of whom the world was not worthy.”—*The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews.*

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**I**T is impossible to give, within the narrow limits of a short chapter, even a brief outline of the history of the Baptists. No more can be attempted here than the recital of a few illustrative facts, which may at least serve the purpose of indicating the character of Baptists, and of stimulating the desire to know more respecting them. The student is met on the threshold of the subject with a considerable difficulty. “As concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it” was, if it is not now, “spoken against.” Ecclesiastical histories, memorials of particular periods, and notices of men and communities that have propagated and practised the principles which are peculiar to Baptists, have, till of late years, been written by opponents, or by learned authors who have had no sympathy with Baptists. What Romanists did for Martin Luther, and believers in the Divine right of kings for Oliver Cromwell, the majority of writers of church history have done for Baptists. And yet, notwithstanding the open hostility of many, and the lack of sympathy in such as were not avowedly hostile, sufficient can be gleaned from the records to prove that the Baptists of past ages were men of God, simple in their faith, holy in their life, and faithful unto death. It is doubtless the fact

that there were, in every century, those who adopted and advocated Baptist principles, whose faith cannot be approved and whose works were not worthy of the Christian name. For them no apology is made. But a like remark is true of every section of the Church of Christ, of certain members of apostolic churches in the life-time of the apostles. It may serve the object of partisans to hold up the rare exception as a sample of the whole. The candid reader will know how to discriminate between the one black sheep and the rest of the flock; between the fanatic and his reasonable co-religionists; between the man driven mad, it may be, by oppression and the thousands who retained in times of persecution the self-possession which kept the intellect clear, while trust in God enabled them to "withstand in the evil day, and, having done" and suffered all, to "stand." The concession that there have been Baptists, whose opinions and conduct are not endorsed by Baptists in the present day, is quite consistent with the claim that Baptists generally were devout and godly disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

FROM A.D. 1, TO A.D. 100.

The first period of church history stretches from the ministry of John the Baptist to the death of John the Apostle. It is contended that during this period the whole of Christendom in every part of the world was Baptist. Seeing there is no record of the baptism of an infant in the New Testament, and that there is not so much as a hint that sprinkling or pouring of water was accounted baptism, that all the cases of baptism mentioned are of believers on a profession of faith, and that the word itself and the use of it necessarily involve immersing in water, the apostles, the first confessors, the earliest Christians are regarded as Baptists, whether rightly or not can be settled by an appeal to the New Testament.

## FROM A.D. 101 TO A.D. 200.

From the close of the apostolic age to the end of the the second century, may be taken as the next period. How far the churches of the second century were Baptist, let History testify. Mosheim, describing the ministers of the church and the form of its government in this century, says: "One inspector, or bishop, presided over each Christian assembly, to which office he was elected by the voice of the whole people. . . . During the greater part of this century, the Christian churches were independent of each other, nor were they joined together by association, confederacy, or any other bonds but those of charity. Each Christian assembly was a little state, governed by its own laws, which were either enacted, or, at least, approved by the society." Dean Stanley, in his instructive volume on the Eastern Church, affirms "that for at least four centuries, any other form" (of baptism than immersion) "was either unknown, or regarded, unless in the case of dangerous illness, as an exceptional, almost a monstrous case." That infants were not baptized in the first half of the second century is as evident as a negative statement can be made. The only allusion to the practice of infant baptism, which even the most zealous Pædobaptists can find in the writings of the Fathers living in this time, is in the works of Irenæus. The passage in question, which occurs in Book II., chap. xxii. and par. 4, of the work against Heresies, does not treat of the baptism of disciples, but points out that Jesus was thirty years old when he came to be baptized, possessing "the full age of a master," which he claimed to be. Irenæus proceeds to observe that Jesus did not despise or evade any condition of humanity, "but sanctifying every age, by that period corresponding to it which belonged to himself. For he came," it is added, "to save all through means of him-



self—all, I say, who through Him are born again to God—infants, and children, and boys, and youths, and old men. He therefore passed through every age, becoming an infant for infants, thus sanctifying infants : a child for children, thus sanctifying those who are of this age, being at the same time made to them an example of piety, righteousness, and submission ; a youth for youths, becoming an example to youths, and thus sanctifying them for the Lord.” This author obviously intended to teach that Christ—not baptism—sanctified every age of man, from infancy to maturity, and that the sanctification was effected—not by baptism—but by Christ Himself passing through each particular stage of life. Candid Pædobaptists allow this. The learned Hagenbach, in his *History of Doctrines*, remarks that the above passage does not afford “any decisive proof” that “infant baptism had come into use in the primitive church” but “only expresses the beautiful idea that Jesus was Redeemer *in* every stage of life, and *for* every stage of life.” Robert Robinson was fully justified by the concurrent testimony of authors of the first one hundred and fifty years, whose works are extant, in declaring, in his *Ecclesiastical Researches*, “writers of all denominations affirm, and a strict adherence to truth compels them to do so, that the churches of the earliest times were small independent societies, who assembled at least once a week on the first day, each in its own place to worship God ; that in these assemblies prayer and praise were offered to the Deity by one at a time, in the name of the rest ; that the Holy Scriptures were read, expounded, and enforced, and that giving instruction was open to all : that the doctrines taught were few, plain, and simple, taken immediately from the Gospel ; that the ceremonies were baptism of adults by immersion, and the Lord’s Supper : and that the morals

of the people were irreproachable." This state of the Christian church did not last through many generations. The ambition of ministers or teachers ; the proneness, still observable, to lay greater stress on the externals than on the inward spirit of religion ; and especially the tendency to exaggerate the value of rites and ceremonies, induced a departure from the simplicity of the faith and the purity of the Christian fellowship. Doctor Lightfoot, in a dissertation on the Christian ministry in his commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians, has traced with a master hand and singular clearness the processes by which the presiding elder became a bishop after the model of a Roman or Anglican episcopate. "The priestly functions and privileges of the Christian people," says the doctor, "are never regarded (in the New Testament) as transferred or even delegated to these (church) officers. They are called stewards or messengers of God, servants or ministers of the church, and the like ; but the sacerdotal title is never once conferred on them. The only priests under the Gospel, designated as such in the New Testament, are the saints, the members of the Christian brotherhood." The office of overseers, who were forbidden to be lords over God's heritage, was corrupted, so that, in the language of the commentator, "from being the representatives, the ambassadors of God, they came to be regarded as His vicars." The difference between the first bishop of the church at Jerusalem or at Ephesus and the present Bishop of Rome or Archbishop of Canterbury marks the extent of the departure from the "apostolic ideal." A like change for the worse took place in the views of Christians respecting Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Here also "the vision was only for a time, and then vanished : " "within a few generations the priestism which had corrupted the Christian ministry " corrupted

the two ordinances. In course of time—was it to magnify their office and to make it appear necessary to the churches?—these newly made priests who had taken the place of the pastors or presbyters of a purer age began to teach that baptism was other than a profession of discipleship; that it possessed supernatural virtue; that thereby the greatest conceivable change could be effected; that therein, and by means of it, the persons baptized were made the children of God, regenerated; that their sins were washed away by the waters of baptism, so that they in and through baptism passed from death to life. Without baptism, it was taught, there could be no salvation. Dr. Bennett observes, (*Theology of the Early Church*), “As far as we can ascertain that the early Fathers adopted what is called the *opus operatum*, or the efficacy of the mere rite of baptism, we can show that they believed not only that the soul received a certain effect, but that the body received immortality by baptism.” Is it surprising that anxious parents, watching the dying of infant children, desired for them what they were taught was the divinely appointed sacrament which could secure for their infants spiritual life and immortality? The superstitions which gradually gathered round baptism, such as the unpardonableness of sins committed after baptism, may have led, as in the case of Constantine, to postponing baptism till the last possible moment; but it is no less certain that the dogma of baptismal regeneration, the efficacy of baptism in washing out the sins of men and in making the baptized a child of God, inevitably led to the demand for baptism in the interests of dying infants as of dying men. For the latter half of the second century this dogma was accepted by many churches, it is to be feared by most, and the consequence was at first the occasional, and subsequently the frequent,

baptism of young children, if not of newly-born infants. Towards the close of the second century, the Christian church was no longer wholly and exclusively Baptist. In their views of the constitution of a church and of its officers, for sacerdotalism had made itself felt; in their views of gospel and orthodox truth, for a bastard philosophy had destroyed the simplicity of believers, and had substituted semi-scholastic refinements for the faith which was originally delivered to the saints; in their views of the two chief ordinances, for baptism had ceased to be a profession of discipleship and had become a condition and the cause of salvation, and the Lord's Supper had lost the character of a memorial service and with baptism was regarded as efficacious in saving the souls of those who partook of it; and in their views of the subjects of baptism, for little children and infants were baptized, (though as yet immersion held its own,) Christians at the close of the second century had departed from the traditions handed down by the apostles to their children in the faith. Baptists there still were in the churches; but the offices of the churches were filled generally by sacerdotalists who taught the doctrine of salvation by sacraments, which leaven spread rapidly, and threatened soon to leaven the whole of Christendom.

FROM A.D. 201, TO A.D. 312.

Thus far, only undisputed ground has been traversed. The growing prevalence of infant baptism in the third century is known mainly through the writings of its opponent, the celebrated Tertullian, who died about the year A.D. 240; but there is little doubt that, through the influence of priestly authority and episcopal ambition, which increasingly characterized those who professedly belonged to the Christian ministry, the practice extended far and wide, and with it the pernicious doctrinal errors, of which it was the outcome and which

have generally been its accompaniments. The separation of the pure from the corrupt, of Evangelicals from Sacramentarians, was not due, however, to the controversy about baptism. In the year A.D. 250, the office of bishop of Rome became vacant, and one Cornelius was nominated to fill it. Cornelius had been an advocate of lax discipline. The church had passed through the severe ordeal of persecution, a flail which has ever been effective in separating the chaff from the wheat. Many members of the church had renounced their faith and conformed to the requirements of heathenism to escape the martyr's death. The Puritan section of the church were opposed to their re-admission to membership. Not so the less scrupulous and the more worldly. They were content that "the lapsed" should be received into fellowship. Cornelius espoused this view. His election to the office of bishop was opposed among others by Novatian, who denounced the reception of the multitude into the church, and pleaded with earnestness and eloquence for purity of fellowship. The church elected Cornelius. Upon this, in the year 251, Novatian and those who sympathized with him withdrew from the church, on the ground that it was no longer a church of Christ but a worldly community, and formed themselves into a Christian church which, so far as can be ascertained, was a Baptist church. Henceforth there were Puritan and Catholic churches, the Puritan maintaining that only real and consistent Christians should be admitted to membership, and the Catholic avowedly being favourable to a loose membership and a lax discipline. It is certain that admission into the church of which Novatian became the first bishop was by baptism. "You may be admitted among us by baptism," said its members to Christians; "or, if any Catholic has baptized you before, by re-baptism." Novatian, as might be expected, is greatly

abused by Catholic authors, who refer to him as the first schismatic, and describe him as a child of the devil. Nevertheless it is allowed that he and his brethren were as zealous against vice as against apostacy, and it is confessed that the strictness of their discipline was the most offensive of their heresies. He was distinguished, according to Neander, "by stedfastness in the faith, the clearness of his Christian knowledge, (to which his writings bear witness,) for a happy facility in teaching, and for a zeal for holiness, which afterwards led him to adopt an ascetic life." His co-religionists multiplied. The Novatianists, as their enemies called them, made their influence felt through all Europe. Dr. Lardner refers to "the vast extent of this sect," and to the fact that "they were found" in "the several parts of the Roman Empire." The only punishment which in those early days the Catholics could inflict upon Puritans was the anathema of excommunication. Eusebius alludes to the epistles of certain bishops and councils in Antioch, Italy, Africa, and elsewhere, as showing how the Catholics agreed "in the necessity of relieving those who had fallen under severe temptations, and also in the propriety of excommunicating the author of the heresy, and all that were of his party." These Catholics, whether Roman or Anglican, have ever manifested this tolerance towards the worldly and severity towards Puritans. As it was, it is. Catholicism has more sympathy with the world than with the godly.

To what extent the teachings of Tertullian had influenced the Christians of Africa does not clearly appear. There is no evidence that they were effectual in preventing the further extension of the practice of infant baptism. But they were successful in preserving and strengthening Christian beliefs respecting the church and its ordinances. Tertullian wrote many words, now happily accessible to English readers,

which testify to his great learning and devout piety. They are not free from error. Their effect on his contemporaries must have been to keep alive the dying faith of Christians, and largely to assist in the maintenance of gospel truth. As in Italy, the question of Puritanism ultimately divided the Christians of Africa. In A.D. 311, Mensurius, bishop of the church of Carthage, died. The deceased bishop had been charged with compromising his principles during the Dicoletian persecution, which proved fatal to the profession of many nominal Christians, and with undue laxity in administering the discipline of the church. One of the subordinate ministers, who had served under him, aspired to be his successor, and it was known that he shared in what some describe as the charity, and others as the worldliness, of Mensurius. His election to the vacant office was hurried, and Cœcilianus became the bishop of Carthage. In their haste the partisans of the newly-appointed bishop committed the serious mistake of obtaining ordination for him from the hands of Felix, the bishop of Aptungis, a place in the neighbourhood of Carthage. Felix was reputed to be a traditor, that is, one who had, on the demand of persecutors, delivered sacred books or sacred things to be burned in order to save his life. By the common consent of the Christians of North Africa, ordination by such a man was invalid. The opponents of Cœcilianus sought the intervention, it is said, some denying this, of the bishops of Numidia, who, to the number of seventy, assembled in Carthage and declared the election null and void, because the bishop had been ordained by a traditor. Majorinus was appointed in the place of Cœcilianus; and thus there were two bishops for one church, two chiefs, each of whom claimed supremacy over the Christians of Carthage. As will be seen from the next section, out of this contest arose a division which accomplished for

Africa what the controversy about the election of Cornelius had accomplished for Italy and Europe, a final separation between Catholics and Puritans.

FROM A.D. 312 TO A.D. 709.

In the year 312, an event took place which was destined to affect the character and career of the church of Christ, if not for all time, through more than fifteen hundred years. Constantine the emperor of Rome proclaimed himself a Christian, and took the churches of his empire under his especial protection and patronage. Constantine corrupted Christians by his favour and gifts.

Ah, Constantine! to how much ill gave birth,  
Not thy conversion, but that plenteous dower,  
Which the first wealthy Father gained from thee!

John Wesley is even more emphatic than was Dante. "I have been long convinced," said the founder of Methodism in Sermon cvii., "from the whole tenor of Ancient History, that this very event, Constantine's calling himself a Christian, and pouring that flood of wealth and honour on the Christian church, the clergy in particular, was productive of more evil to the church, than all the Ten Persecutions put together. From the time that power, riches, and honour of all kinds were heaped upon the Christians, vice of all kinds came in like a flood, both on the clergy and laity." The patronage of Constantine led to fiercer persecutions of Christians than the Diocletian. One of the earlier decisions of the emperor, who speedily received as much homage from Catholics as from his soldiers, concerned the dispute as to who was the rightful bishop of Carthage. The Emperor, who had recently obtained the sovereignty of North Africa, promulgated laws favourable to the Christians, making an exception to the disadvantage of the party opposed to Cæcilianus,



and limiting his patronage to the Catholics. In vain the Puritans appealed to Constantine. The bishops he deputed to inquire into the merits of the case reported against them, and the obnoxious bishop was confirmed in his office. After three years of wearisome debate and wrangling, the emperor delivered his final decision by which the Catholic party was established. Laws were soon after published which authorized the persecution of the non-contents. They were deprived of their churches; denounced as disloyal to the emperor; and treated as criminals, unworthy of the protection of the civil power, and offenders against the State. But the more they were oppressed the more they grew. The first bishop of the Puritan church at Carthage—Majorinus—was succeeded, A.D. 315, by a man whose life and opinions have been a fruitful source of contention to the present day. Donatus, after whom were named the Donatists, is one of the most prominent figures on the canvas of the fourth century. He appears to have been a man of remarkable strength of character, determined will, and indomitable courage. With an eloquent tongue, a soul readily set on fire, and never-failing energy, he was born to the leadership of men, and soon infused his own spirit into the Nonconformists of Africa. So rapidly did the Donatists multiply that the wily emperor began to doubt the expediency of persecuting them. He discovered to his surprise that he could neither drive nor draw them into conformity. They assured him, A.D. 321, that nothing could induce them to join the communion of "that scoundrel," as they described the Catholic bishop of Carthage. And therefore, hopeless of their extinction or comprehension, Constantine granted to the Donatists liberty to worship God where and as they pleased, discovering that he must leave them to the judgment of God. After the death of Constantine the Catholics

frequently persecuted the Donatists. In the many conferences which preceded, and controversies which followed, these persecutions, Baptist sentiments found full and frequent expression. Thomas Fuller, in his Church History, says of the Anabaptists, "These Anabaptists for the main are but Donatists new dipped." That they rejected infant baptism is evident. The great council, over which Augustine presided, and which was held in the fifth century, decreed, "That it is our will that all who affirm that young children receive everlasting life, albeit they be not by the sacrament or grace of baptism renewed; and that will not that young children, which are newly born from their mother's womb, shall be baptized to the taking away original sin, that they be accursed." History abundantly proves that "they refused to baptize children, contrary to the practice of the Catholic Church;" that they "admitted none to fellowship without a personal profession of faith;" that they baptized all they admitted to fellowship; and that they maintained that "the church should cast out from its body those who were known by open and manifest sins, to be unworthy members." That they were anti-state-churchmen is no less evident. In one of their conferences with imperial commissioners, they asked, "What has the emperor to do with Christianity?" And in a council, one of their bishops triumphantly demanded, "Did the apostles ever persecute any one, or did Christ deliver any one to the secular power?" Another pleaded, "The peace of Christ invites the willing with wholesome mildness; it never forces men against their wills. The Almighty God employed prophets to convert the people of Israel, he enjoined it not on princes; the Saviour of souls, the Lord Christ, sent fishermen, and not soldiers, to preach his faith." Their lives were devout and virtuous. Their chief

opponent, Augustine, deemed them worthy of Christian fellowship. "Be brothers with us," he entreated them, "in the Lord's inheritance." The historian Gibbon speaks of "their rigid and uncharitable faith;" but in his estimation their chief error was in their Puritanism. "The narrow and solitary path, which their leaders had marked out for them," says the historian, "continued to deviate from the great society of mankind:" which is to their credit, considering the state of society as sketched by Gibbon himself. That the Donatists were a powerful body is shown by the toleration of Constantine, the persecutions under his successors, and the pains taken to reconcile them to the Catholics. When Augustine and his friends met these Puritans in council at Carthage, the Catholics numbered 286 bishops, the Donatist bishops numbering 279. Mosheim is constrained to admit, "the sect of the Donatists was extremely powerful and numerous" in Africa. The manifold sufferings of the Donatists have been already indicated. At intervals persecution broke out against them. They were fined, imprisoned, banished; their bishops and preachers were torn from their congregations and put to death; those who escaped the edge of the sword fled for safety to obscure places, and hid themselves till the fury of the storm had spent itself; and when, in the eighth century, Christianity was overthrown in North Africa, and persecution had scattered abroad the Donatists, many of whom had passed into Europe, they "went every where preaching the word," disseminating in other countries the faith for which they had so heroically contended in their own.

#### FROM A.D. 710, TO A.D. 1517.

During the progress of the Donatist controversy in North Africa, so sharply and severely closed by the con-

quest of the country by the Moors in the year 709, Europe witnessed many changes, which more or less affected the Novatianists and their brother Baptists, who were known by other names. The transfer of the seat of government from Rome to Constantinople, the decline of the Roman empire in prestige and power, the revolt of the Goths the invasion of Italy by the Vandals, the rise and spread of Mohammedanism, and the disorder which resulted from the violent shocks to Church and State from these successive events, could not fail to exert a potent influence on Christian societies of all kinds. These events, perhaps, were not altogether unfavourable to the maintenance and extension of Nonconformity. But the four centuries immediately succeeding the death of Constantine are seen only through clouds of ignorance and mists of prejudice. The chroniclers of those dismal and disastrous ages were the enemies of Puritans. Nothing is seen distinctly in their narratives. The growing bigotry and hardness of prelates and priests, and the suffering of saints who refuse to bend the neck to their yoke, loom in dim outline before the student; but for the most part, in the confusion and chaos of those times, little is visible, and that little extremely indefinite and uncertain. Gradually the Novatianists in Italy, the Vaudois in the valleys of Piedmont, the Puritans of Navarre and Biscay, and the sectaries, as ecclesiastics term them, of the Low Countries, and France, and Britain emerge to view. So soon as men of letters, competent chroniclers, appear upon the scene, there is no difficulty in identifying the faith and customs of the men who dissent from the Church of Rome and protest against its errors with the faith and customs of the apostolic churches, Novatianists, and Donatists. Old acquaintances with new names present themselves, and the Baptist gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to them for their faith-

fulness to the principles he holds to be true and divinely given. It is not difficult to understand how it came to pass that ecclesiastical writers confounded harmless Nonconformists with reckless and questionable opponents of Catholics. In the present day Dissenter is a name which covers varied parties and sects, many of whom differ more from one another than the majority of them differ from the Church of England. Waldensian was a generic name in the middle ages. Some thus described in history were doubtless fanatical in their beliefs, and held views of social life which did not harmonize with Christian morality. But others known as Waldensian were as pure in life and as evangelical in faith as the holiest among orthodox believers. The Anabaptists of Germany, for instance, considered themselves the descendants of the Waldensians, and the Waldensians claimed that they had existed from the time of "the secularization of the church:" in other words, from the secession of the Puritans in the third century, when the multiplying corruptions of the Catholics led them to come out from among them that they might not be partakers of their evil deeds and to form themselves into churches after the apostolic model. As with the German Anabaptists, so with their co-religionists in other countries. They had much of the Waldensian in them. Whether Baptists are right in claiming that their first principles were held and applied by some of the Waldensians can be determined by facts. It is freely conceded that there were Pædo-baptist as well as Baptist Waldensians, as there are Pædo-baptist as well as Baptist Nonconformists. But that Baptist beliefs were professed and published by Waldensians cannot be denied. One of their opponents, Reinerius Saccho, testified against them: "They hold that none of the ordinances of the church, which have been

introduced since Christ's ascension, ought to be observed, as being of no value. They say that a man is then first baptized when he is received into their communion. Some of them hold that baptism is of no advantage to infants, because they cannot actually believe." One of their confessions of faith contains the following article: "We believe that in the ordinance of baptism the water is the visible and external sign, which represents to us that which, by virtue of God's invisible operation, is within us, namely the renovation of our minds and the mortification of our members through Jesus Christ. And by this ordinance we are received into the holy congregation of God's people, previously professing and declaring our faith and change of life." Like modern Baptists, they laid great stress on the authority of Scripture: "In articles of faith, the authority of the Holy Scriptures is the highest, and for that reason it is the standard of judging; so that whatsoever doth not agree with the Word of God, is deservedly to be rejected and avoided." Their view of the Church was thoroughly Baptist: "Of this church the Lord Jesus Christ is the head—it is governed by His word and guided by the Holy Spirit. In the Church it behoves all Christians to have fellowship." No wonder Francowitz, quoted by Robert Robinson, said of them, "They scent a little of Anabaptism;" or that Limborch replied, "Yes, to say honestly what I think of all the modern sects of Christians, the Dutch Baptists most resemble both the Albigenses and the Waldenses, but particularly the latter." The fidelity of these Christians to their conscience and the Saviour, their perseverance in the narrow path, their incorruptible simplicity amid the decay and degeneracy of the middle ages, their patience in suffering, and their confidence in martyrdom, have often been portrayed. For centuries their presence

troubled the Catholics. Eventually persecution broke out against them. Space permits not, or it might be told how Frederick II., Emperor of Rome, in the thirteenth century, promulgated his decrees, breathing out threatening and slaughter against the saints; how a papal crusade was preached, and pardon of all sin promised to those who would join in the holy war; how a mock council was held, to which the Waldensians were invited, and which was broken up by the approach of the army of crusaders; how Pope Innocent III. issued a bull, in which he enjoined that no faith should be kept with heretics, adding, "We exhort you, that you would endeavour to destroy the wicked heresy of the Albigenses, and do this with more rigour than you would towards the Saracens themselves;" how, in the course of a few months, 200,000 of these Nonconformists were killed, and the town of Bezier, one of their strongholds, was besieged, destroyed by fire, and 23,000 of its inhabitants massacred; how a second crusade was undertaken in which so many prisoners were captured, in addition to a great number slain, that they were burnt to save the cost of their maintenance; and how, to complete the story of their sufferings, as recently as the seventeenth century prince and prelate resolved on their extermination. Many of these sufferers were Baptists. The cries of the fugitives in 1655 reached Oliver Cromwell; and his secretary, John Milton, poured out his troubled and sympathetic heart in the appeal to God:—

“Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones  
 Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;  
 Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,  
 When all our fathers worshipt stocks and stones,  
 Forget not: in thy book, record their groans,  
 Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold  
 Slain by the bloody Piedmontese that roll'd  
 Mother with infants down the rocks. Their moans

The vales redoubled to the hills, and they  
 To heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow  
 O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway  
 The triple tyrant; that from these may grow  
 A hundred-fold, who, having learned the way,  
 Early may fly the Babylonian woe."

During this period, in which the Puritans under a variety of names, and especially the Waldenses and Albigenses, bore their testimony to the truth, Britain was not unvisited by the light of the gospel. It is not known at what precise date "the glad tidings of great joy" were first published in this country, but it is now thought highly probable, if not certain, that Britons received their knowledge of "the only true God," and of his Son the Saviour of the world, from Christians who came from the Levant. During the Roman occupation of the island, the many Christians in the imperial army would aid in the extension of the Christian religion, and there is reason to believe that in the year 412, when the last remnant of the Roman army quitted Britain, the country was nominally Christian. In the early part of the fourth century, British bishops and other ecclesiastics took part in the council of Arles, convened by the Emperor Constantine, and, in 325, Britain was represented in the more important council of Nice. On the departure of the Romans, the Britons deemed themselves unequal to the defence of the country against the Picts and Scots. They therefore invited the Saxons to come to their assistance. These heathen allies, having accomplished the object of their coming, refused to return to their own land, and dispossessed the Britons of their inheritance. Wherever they obtained the supremacy, Christianity was stamped out. Woden and Thor took the place of God in Christ. British Christians fled into the fastnesses of Wales. In 596, the year that Pope Gregory sent Augustine, the



monk, and his associates to evangelize England, the country was idolatrous. Saxon-England received Christianity from Rome. The Church of England, like the first archbishop of Canterbury, must acknowledge the maternity of the Church of Rome. Whether the ancient British Christians were Baptists, is a moot point. It is alleged by some that they were. Others hold a contrary opinion. That immersion was practised alike by the early British and the early Saxon Christians is placed beyond a doubt by the fact that rivers or the sea were chosen as places of baptism. If Augustine demanded of the brotherhood at Bangor, "that ye give Christendom to children," the inference that they had not been accustomed to baptize infants is fair and irresistible. But the form of the demands made by Augustine is open to dispute, and it is impossible to obtain a decisive answer to the question—"What was the practice of the ancient British church?" It is sufficient to know that the Saxon Church followed, in its creeds and customs, the Church of Rome. Nor can it be ascertained to what extent the principles of the Novatianists prevailed in Saxon England. It is not improbable that greater liberty was conceded to Christians before than after the Norman conquest. The Saxons were less likely to bend the neck to an ecclesiastical yoke of bondage than were the Normans. In fact, all through the middle ages the Saxons were characterized by love of freedom. It has been shown that Waldenses was a name given to Nonconformists, and that many of these Nonconformists were Baptists. In the year 1025, certain of them answered the charge that they refused to baptize infants, by saying, "A strange will, a strange faith, and a strange confession, do not seem to belong to, or to be of any advantage to a little child, who neither wills nor sins, who knows nothing of faith, and is altogether ignorant of his own

good and salvation, in whom there can be no desire of regeneration, and from whom no confession of faith can be expected." It is declared that in the eleventh century in England "not only the weaker sort in the country villages, but the nobility and gentry in the chief towns and cities were infected with" the Waldensian heresy. So numerous and influential were these Nonconformists that no less a person than Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury in the reign of William the Conqueror, wrote a book in 1087 against the Waldensians. Remembering that Lanfranc made it his chief business to substitute Norman for Anglo-Saxon methods of procedure in the church, and that he was not the man to take unnecessary trouble with "heretics," it is reasonable to conclude that, in his judgment, the Waldensian faith had been permitted too much latitude in England, and had gained many and considerable converts. William, of Newberry, whose chronicles begin with the conquest and end with 1197, represents these sectaries as being "numerous as the sand of the sea," and "sorely" infesting "both France, Italy, Spain, and England." The tolerance of Norman kings kept in check the zeal of prelates, and accounts for the boldness with which here and there even a priest in charge of a parish preached doctrines which elsewhere would have been regarded as heresy, the stains of which could only be washed out by the blood of the heretic. The Waldenses or Paulicians, as English Nonconformists were described, kept the lamp of life burning before "the morning star of the Reformation" appeared in the English heavens. John Wiclif, the most conspicuous and influential Englishman of the fourteenth century, was not a Baptist; but he held and taught many doctrines which were far more Baptist than Romanist. He was in sympathy with the main principles of the Waldenses, and ultimately openly contended for the faith

of the pure gospel. In translating the Holy Bible into "the language understood of the common people," he gave to the simple Christians the means of verifying their own beliefs and making them conformable to the word of God, as well as enabled them to detect the anti-scriptural character of the creeds and claims of the Catholics. Wiclif's reverence for the authority of the Bible, and his bold avowals respecting it, strengthened Baptists in their convictions, and laid a broad and deep foundation on which Lollards afterwards built beliefs that persecution could not shake. "It is always the Bible," says his last and chief biographer, Dr. Lechler, "which he employs as the standard. He goes back to the teaching of the Redeemer; he points to the apostles and their procedure; the authority of the Primitive Church is everywhere appealed to. To bring out the doctrine of the Scriptures as of supreme authority, is his highest aim." Thus guided and controlled, Wiclif taught that only presbyters (whom he identified with bishops) and deacons were officers known to the New Testament, and that the hierarchy and particularly the Pope were non-scriptural and without Divine authority; that the church of Christ was "the whole body of the elect," though Wiclif seemed to agree with Augustine that the visible church in this respect differs from its ideal, (Baptists holding that it should agree with the invisible and real church); that the ordinances are signs of holy things, to receive spiritual benefit from which the recipient himself must be in a state of grace. Lechler's statement represents Wiclif as speaking sometimes doubtfully, but on the whole, not only insisting that "no barrier should be put in the way of the efficacy of the sacrament" by the receiver, but prescribing "a truly penitent and pious frame of mind as a condition of the blessing that should accrue to the receiver:" which, applied to baptism as to the Lord's

Supper, involves that the ordinances are for converted persons and not for the unregenerate. The dissemination of these doctrines in England, and indeed throughout Europe, weakened the hold of the Papacy and its priests on the intellects and consciences of men; naturally secured condemnation at the bar of popes and councils; and encouraged and strengthened believers of the Waldensian and Baptist persuasion. Wiclif's enemies accused him of denying infant baptism, which was probably a false accusation; but the great reformer did say, "Those are fools and presumptuous which affirm such infants are not to be saved which die without baptism." Another of his sayings is, "That baptism doth not confer, but only signify grace which was given before." The followers of Wiclif in Bohemia were anti-Pædo-baptists. A correspondent of Erasmus assured him, "They renounce all the rites and ceremonies of the church; they ridicule our doctrines and practices in both sacraments; they receive no other rule than the Bible; they admit none to their communion till they be dipped in water or baptized." The words of Lord Cobham express the faith of the Lollards generally:—"I most faithfully believe that the sacraments of Christ's church are necessary to all believers; this always seen to, that they be duly administered according to Christ's first instruction and ordinance." Wiclif died in 1384, and in 1400, on a petition of the clergy against heretics, a law was passed for their punishment. It is noteworthy that the chief heresy aimed at was the denial of the Roman Catholic doctrine, that unbaptized infants necessarily perish; that this was the test of Lollardism; that in the examinations, accounts of which have reached the present day, there was much questioning about infant baptism, and no recorded protest by the accused that they baptized infants; and that the answers given by the con-

fessors were such as any Baptist might and would have given to the questions asked. These Lollards, many of whom were Baptists—it is contended that all were—were numbered by scores of thousands. Persecution could not exterminate them. Though the prisons were crowded with them, and some of them suffered the martyr's death, it was soon discovered that "the word of God was not bound." The truth was still preached, and God worshipped, and the ordinances administered "in spirit and in truth." In pre-Reformation times, the Lollards, closely corresponding to the Waldenses, who had resembled the Novatianists, who were followers of the doctrine and order of the apostolic churches, preached and taught Christ Jesus. And by their agency the gospel was faithfully proclaimed and Divine religion practised till, in the year 1517, Luther nailed his famous theses to the doors of the church at Wittenburg, and so challenged the corrupters of Christianity to fight the battle of the Reformation.

FROM A.D. 1517 to A.D. 1879.

The reformation, so boldly championed by Luther, and which Wiclif inaugurated some century and a half before Luther's time, ought to have been based on the two principles, that the Holy Scripture is the one standard of doctrine and practice, and that men must be left free to follow the dictates of their own consciences in matters of religion without interference from the State. But this method of procedure was not adopted. Neither Luther, nor Zwinglius, nor Calvin, appreciated or even understood the principle of religious liberty. Nonconformity already existed. The halting policy of the Reformers, and their attitude towards the Puritans who had preached the truth when they were bound fast in the chains of error, compelled these Nonconformists to maintain, the Reformation notwithstanding,

a separate existence. The Waldenses, Vaudois, Lollards, were more or less Baptists who, like the ancient Novationists and Donatists, admitted to their membership by baptism, rebaptizing (as their opponents declared) Catholics whom they received. Hence the name of Anabaptists. Continental Anabaptists claimed "descent from the Waldenses," from the Puritans, "who were generally considered witnesses for the truth in the times of universal darkness and superstition." They were not Lutherans, or Zwinglians, or Calvinists. It is acknowledged that their origin could be traced to the earliest secessions from the Catholic church. Anabaptists are generally confounded with the insurrectionists of Munster. There were Anabaptists as there were Catholics among the citizens of Munster and others who rose in rebellion against the civil power. In the fierce conflict which ensued it is stated that one hundred thousand fell by the sword, a fact that suggests that the rising was general rather than sectional. It is therefore unfair to charge Anabaptists, or their religious faith, with responsibility for the indefensible opinions and horrible cruelties which characterized the popular movement. The task of proving that these unhappy rebels were "more sinned against than sinning," would not be difficult. The excesses of despotism provoked and explain, if they do not justify, the reprisals of democracy. But be this as it may, though there were Anabaptists among the men of Munster and the followers of John of Leyden, it is as unjust to accuse the German Baptists of espousing the questionable measures to which they resorted, as it would be to attempt to charge the Church of England with encouraging immorality, because some of its members have been convicted of vice and crime. Anabaptists were numerous in Germany, Holland and Switzerland, and the neighbouring nations, in the sixteenth century. They were

persecuted with great bitterness. Charles the Fifth published an edict in the year 1535, which condemned "repentant male heretics to be executed with the sword, repentant females to be burnt alive, the obstinate of both sexes to be burnt." The emperor was zealous in in this matter; and when he could secure leisure from his many wars, he turned it to account by hunting down heretics and burning them, or otherwise putting them to death. One illustration will be sufficient to show the clearness with which these martyrs bore their witness to the truth. A Christian woman named Elizabeth was examined on the charge of heresy, and was questioned as follows:—

*Lords.* What are your views on infant baptism, as you have been re-baptized?

*Elizabeth.* No, my lords, I have not been rebaptized; I have been baptized once on my faith; for it is written baptism belongs to believers.

*Lords.* Are our infants damned, then, because they have been baptized?

*Elizabeth.* No; be it far from me, my lords, to judge the infants.

*Lords.* Do you not seek for salvation in baptism?

*Elizabeth.* No, my lords; all the water in the sea cannot save me; but my salvation is in Christ, who has commanded me to love the Lord my God above all things, and my neighbour as myself.

This heroine of faith was tortured, but she would not recant. And so she was doomed to die, and, in cruel mockery of her baptism, was drowned. In Holland the Anabaptists suffered cruel persecution. Many escaped beyond the sea and settled in England, where however they met the persecutor, several Dutch Baptists being burnt during the reign of Henry the Eighth. Nor did Catholics alone smite the Anabaptists. Luther wrote to princes, exhorting them to search out

the sectaries. The reformed city of Zurich promulgated a law, which decreed the punishment of death for "all Anabaptists and those who adhere to them." And in the city of Zwinglius there were imprisoned in a dark tower twenty Anabaptists—men, pregnant women, young girls—to undergo the sentence passed on them, that they should never more see the light of the sun or of the moon, and that they should finish their lives on bread and water. In England, the king, in the year 1538, commanded Cranmer and others "to enquire after Anabaptists, to proceed against them, to restore the penitent, to burn their books, and to deliver the obstinate to the secular arm." Anabaptists were treated as worse than ordinary criminals. From a general pardon, proclaimed in 1540, were excluded all those who were guilty of believing "that infants ought not to be baptized, and if they be baptized, they ought to be re-baptized when they come to lawful age." The reign of Edward the Sixth was not unmarked by persecution of Anabaptists. And after Elizabeth had disestablished Popery, the fires of Smithfield were relighted by the burning of two Anabaptists. The Stuarts hated nonconformity. Even the Commonwealth was not willing to tolerate Baptists, and made the preaching and practising of Baptist sentiment a punishable offence. Under Charles the Second, John Bunyan was in prison "full twelve years." Then came king James the Second, who only smiled on Dissenters to secure their alliance in a plot to restore Popery; and to him succeeded a better and nobler prince, William of Orange. The Act of Toleration subsequently secured liberty to worship for Baptists. Since 1688 they have increased in numbers and usefulness. In 1879, the Baptists of Great Britain report 2,587 churches, 3,451 places of worship, 1879 pastors, 2,652 evangelists or



unpaid preachers, 276,348 members or communicants, 399,317 Sunday scholars, and they may claim about 1,000,000 adherents, including those who attend their chapels and Sunday-schools. They possess ten colleges, in which young men are trained for the ministry, Home and Foreign Missionary Societies, and are well if not amply represented by weekly and monthly periodicals. Baptists flourish in Germany, and are beginning to multiply in other nations on the continent of Europe. In almost every country of the world there are Baptist missionaries, and the truths to which so many confessors and martyrs have borne witness are preached in all quarters of the globe. But in America, and particularly in the republic of the United States, Baptists most prevail. In 1638 there was not a Baptist on the continent of America. In that year Roger Williams was fighting a hard battle for the Indians and against State authority in religion with the Puritans of New England. His banishment was resolved on. He and his companions escaped to Rhode Island, and there founded the city of Providence. In the year 1639, one of the little company (it numbered twelve men) baptized Roger Williams, and he afterwards baptized the other eleven. In 1878 there were in America 24,753 Baptist churches, 15,126 pastors or missionaries, 2,113,721 members, that is, communicants, and probably not less than 8,000,000 adherents, numbering children as well as adults. "Hitherto the Lord hath helped" the Baptists, "hath done great things for them." In reviewing the past, and remembering that through all the centuries the Lord has preserved for Himself a people to bear witness to His truth, and that He has kept them faithful in times of persecution and prosperity, Baptists have abundant cause for gratitude, and may well respond, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE AIMS AND PROBABLE FUTURE OF THE BAPTISTS.

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“There was given him (the Son of man) dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him.”—*The Prophet Daniel.*

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**H**AD any one of the hundred and twenty disciples who met in Jerusalem in the interval between the ascension of their risen Lord and the day of Pentecost been favoured with a vision of the triumphs of Christianity during the centuries to the present day, he would have been “slow of heart to believe” the revelation vouchsafed to him. Had such an one told his dream, his hearers certainly would have listened with incredulity, if they had not laughed him to scorn. How improbable it would have seemed that the colossal power of Rome would be wielded by professedly Christian emperors, that the idolatry of classic peoples would give place to trust in the crucified Galilean, that the mightiest sceptres and most influential civilization of the world would do homage to Jesus the son of Mary, that the disciples of Moses would seek refuge in lands where the Nazarene numbered his nominal followers by hundreds of thousands and by millions, that this despised and rejected “Man of sorrows” would be acknowledged as Lord and Saviour by more than three hundred millions of the human race! Yet all this has come to pass. The wisdom, and the might, and the influence were not in the “feeble Jews” who had seen in Jesus the long-promised Christ. Had they been left

to themselves and to their own resources, neither their names nor the name of the Master they loved so dearly and served so faithfully would have survived the destruction of Jerusalem. Two words of the Divine Lord who had made them His disciples explain their prowess and account for their success. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," was the promise made by Christ to those sent to "disciple all nations." "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth," was the last word before His ascension. "The Lord of Hosts" has been with His people, always causing them to triumph. He has fought for them, proved Himself to be "mighty in battle," and has given them the victory. And had they never relied on "an arm of flesh," but always on the Lord, had the weapons of their warfare ever been spiritual and never carnal, had Christian churches only acted as the Spirit of God prompted and inspired, instead of the partial conquests for which the devout thank God, the idols would probably have been utterly abolished and the world won for Christ.

The position of Baptists in the present day is not unlike the position of the disciples at the dawn of the day of Pentecost. There are those among them who dream of a radical reformation, or rather a blessed revolution, in churches nominally Christian. Such catch glimpses of a state of things in which princes shall cease to bribe or coerce consciences, and Christ alone shall be exalted; in which legislative assemblies, whether civil or ecclesiastical, shall no longer make, or repeal, or amend laws for the government of churches or believers, but the sole standard and rule of faith and practice shall be the written Word of God; in which preachers shall declare nothing but "the mind of Christ," and

the one object of hearers shall be to learn His commandments; in which religion shall be wholly and exclusively divine, with no intermixture in its creeds, or ceremonies, or customs, of the human; in which no superstition, only the spiritual shall be found. The aim of Baptists is to accomplish the apparently impossible task of making church and world answer to this ideal. They may be feeble, as were the Jews when they began to build again the walls of Jerusalem. Their resources may be insignificant and inadequate to a great enterprise, but not more so than were the resources of Galilean fishermen and a few women from Galilee to the work of converting the world to the Saviour. The obstacles which block the path of progress and threaten to prevent success are many and huge. Tradition, with its long list of errors, has a firm hold on Christendom; prejudice has entrenched itself in many churches behind earthworks which for ages have been a refuge for unscriptural practices; and numbers, vast learning, and great influence are hostile to the simple faith and the equally simple worship of Baptists. Of the three hundred millions of nominal Christians, there are some two hundred and ninety millions who are Pædo-baptists. Still there is no sufficient reason for despair. He, "whose fan is in his hand," will "thoroughly purge his floor." The work is Christ's. Baptists aspire to serve under Him, to be His followers. It is impossible that He should fail or be discouraged. William Dell, a Baptist, in preaching before the House of Commons, on November 25, 1646, speaking of this necessary reformation, said, "This is not the work of men of war, but of the Prince of Peace, seeing this is not a work of human might or strength, but of the Spirit. So that you did well that ye thought to reform the church: but when you shall understand that the Reformation of the Church is as great a work as the redemption of it

you will acknowledge that the work is too great for you, and that it belongs only unto Christ, seeing that the Father hath committed the care of this work only to Him, and He hath taken this care and charge upon Himself, and it is only suitable to Him as being the Head of the Church, and He only is able for it as being the Son of God and equal to God." So say Baptists now. Their aim is to exalt the Saviour, to ascertain and to do the Divine will, and to induce others to render obedience to the Master. On the ground that they preach the doctrines of Christ and teach His precepts, and only to the extent that they do this, they believe and confidently hope that the day will come when these doctrines will be received and these precepts kept by all who profess and call themselves Christians. Not that they think they are equal to effecting this wonderful change. Their trust is in the Lord who has said, "I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people." He "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

It should not from these remarks be inferred that Baptists aim and expect to absorb all other denominations or communities of Christians. Whether the Baptists are a denomination, is by no means certain. They do not accept the connexional principle, which makes Wesleyan Methodists a compact and thoroughly organized community, or the principle which subjects congregations to the rule of synodical assemblies, which is the peculiarity of Presbyterians. Each Baptist church is complete within itself, nor is there any court which can listen to an appeal from its judgments. Of late years the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland has held spring and autumnal sessions, and its proceedings might lead strangers to conclude that the congregational principle is being gradually overshadowed,

and may eventually be superseded, by the connexional. This would be an error. The Baptist Union, like the Baptist Missionary Society, is an association of individuals and churches for defined purposes. A church can refuse to identify itself with the Union or to subscribe to the Missionary Society without ceasing to be a Baptist church. Such churches and individuals as desire occasional conference and fellowship with their co-religionists, and co-operation in acts of benevolence, are members of the Baptist Union, which has already undertaken the direction of Home Missions and other good works. The Baptist Union has no more authority to interfere in the government of a Baptist church than it has to manage the affairs of a railway company. And it is only on the condition that it leaves intact the independence and self (though Divinely regulated) government of each church that the Union is supported by Baptists. This Union meets with general approval. It has uniformly respected the liberty of the churches; never arrogated to itself the least authority; and engages in enterprizes to which an individual congregation would be necessarily unequal and which many congregations gladly sustain by contributions and zealous activity. The Baptist Union is not the Baptist Denomination, but a voluntary combination of individuals and churches for the accomplishment of objects in which they take a common interest. From the nature of the case therefore Baptists are less denominational than the majority of Christians. They are earnest in propagating principles, in seeking the welfare and prosperity of the church of which they are members, but cherish little if any ambition which looks in the direction of a great ecclesiastical organization. The changes they desire to see effected in the beliefs and customs of Christians cannot be brought about by absorption, or amalgamation, or submission to the authority of any

assembly of any kind whatsoever. In their judgment councils, assemblies, conferences, so far as they formulate creeds and prescribe rites and ceremonies, are unfavourable and not friendly to the cause of truth. Their authority is altogether inconsistent with the brotherhood of believers and the declaration, "One is your Master." Baptists aim at securing loyalty to the Lord Jesus, and their conviction is that not till every disciple shall learn of the Great Teacher and take His yoke and wear it, not till every knee shall bow to Him, and every tongue confess that He is Lord, not till the authority of Christ shall be sole as well as supreme in all matters of faith and practice, will Christian churches return to the simplicity of the gospel which the Lord gave His apostles to preach to every creature, to the simplicity of the ordinances which the apostles delivered to the first converts, and to the simplicity of the church order and discipline which was enjoined upon the early Christians. With these views Baptists can do none other than aim to convince individuals of the claims of Christ, rather than to secure the absorption of other communities by (if the phrase may be used) the Baptist denomination.

What has taken place in the United States may be expected to occur in other countries when the power of prejudice has been broken, and the fear of human authority has been banished by love of truth. It has been shown that Baptists have multiplied in America. "The little one has become a thousand, and the small one" a great multitude. But the statistics quoted in a previous chapter fail to give an adequate idea of the number of Baptists in the United States. In the trans-Atlantic Republic, Episcopal Methodists seem to outnumber the Baptists by more than 1,000,000. This is in appearance only. There are no Pædo-baptists in American Baptist churches, for only the baptized (im-

mersed) are admitted even to the Lord's Table. But there are many Baptists in Methodist Episcopal societies. So common is it for members of this community to desire immersion on a profession of their faith (which is regarded as Christian baptism) that baptisteries are provided in many Methodist places of worship, and the candidates are immersed by Methodist clergymen. A few years since the number of such baptisms exceeded the number of infant baptisms (if sprinkling may be termed baptism.) A considerable proportion of the members of the Episcopal Methodist body are Baptists. It is similar, though not to the same extent, with the Congregationalists and Presbyterians of America. The good leaven of loyalty to Christ in the observance of his ordinances is working in other than Baptist churches. Complaints are often made that infants are not brought for baptism, that infant baptism is falling into disuse. Error confronted with the truth is put to shame, and frequently, though the truth is not acknowledged, error is abandoned. Baptist sentiments are spreading after a like fashion in England. There are few Congregational churches in which there are not several, if not many, Baptists; and among Methodists there are not a few who have asked Baptist ministers to baptize them. The number of Baptists is much greater than the statistics of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland would lead an inquirer to suppose. The number of the unbaptized who hold Baptist views in other denominations is still greater. Thousands admit that the New Testament plainly teaches that the subjects of baptism are professed disciples, and that baptism is immersion in water on a profession of discipleship, and openly state that in sentiment they are at one with the Baptists; and yet, from the force of prejudice, or through indifference, or because of dislike to the ordinance as administered, they neither have been nor are willing to



be baptized. As in the American Republic so in the United Kingdom, parents, who are not numbered with Baptists, decline to have their infant children sprinkled, seeing clearly that infant sprinkling is not Christian baptism, and that Pædo-baptism is not maintainable except on the hypothesis that the church has authority to decree rites and ceremonies, or that baptism confers a spiritual benefit on its subject. Dr. John Henry Newman, in a sermon on regenerating baptism, states the difficulty felt by many attendants at Pædo-baptist chapels:—"The ordinary and intelligible reason for the baptism of infants, is the securing to them the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost—regeneration; but if this sacred privilege is not given to them in baptism, why, it may be asked, should baptism be administered to them at all? Why not wait till they can understand the meaning of the rite, and can have faith and repentance themselves? Certainly it does seem a very intricate and unreasonable proceeding; first, to lay stress on the necessity of repentance and faith in persons to be baptized, and then to proceed to administer baptism universally in such a way as to exclude the possibility of their having repentance and faith." So think thousands of Christians who attend the ministry of Pædo-baptists, and, as they reject the unscriptural figment of salvation by sacraments, they decline to present their children for baptism. Should the reader be either a baptized believer among Pædo-baptists, or convinced that immersion on a profession of faith in Christ is baptism and yet has not been baptized, or a rejector of the dangerous doctrine of infant baptism, he is earnestly urged to consider whether he should not identify himself with Baptists. It is freely allowed that infant baptism is practised by Christian churches which, in every other respect, are worthy of the sympathy and support of Baptists; that, if the choice were between

a Pædo-baptist Evangelical church and a Unitarian church, which perchance practised baptism by immersion and rejected the doctrine of the Deity of Christ, the former should be preferred to the latter; that the reasons for leaving an Evangelical community are neither so many nor so forcible as the reasons for seceding from a Ritualistic or Rationalistic congregation; and that some service may be rendered by Baptists in Pædo-baptist churches to the Saviour, their neighbours, and the world. But the position of such is equivocal. They sanction by their presence, membership, contributions, and activities, a belief and custom which they reject as erroneous. To some extent they are parties to what they consider non-scriptural teaching and practice. Circumstances and courtesy alike forbid the open publication of their views. They are compelled to listen without protest to the advocacy of opinions they repudiate, and to be silent about truths which they have learnt from Holy Writ. The understood term of their communion with Pædo-baptists is that they shall not disturb the unanimity and peace of the church by controversy. Were they to persist in calling attention to the real nature of Christian baptism, and in challenging the lawfulness of infant sprinkling, their Pædo-baptist associates would be the first to suggest that schism—division within a church—is worse than secession—separation from a church. On the other hand, by casting in their lot with Baptists, those who hold Baptist sentiments would not lose opportunities for doing good. There is ever and everywhere work for the Christian toiler, and fallow ground to break up, fields to cultivate, seed to sow, and precious fruit to gather in. Baptist churches are often sorely discouraged by Baptists giving themselves to other societies. If, as is sometimes the case, the Baptist church is smaller, poorer, and socially less influential than other churches in a town, there is

for such as seek membership therein, an opportunity of corresponding greater usefulness, a service more self-sacrificing and Christlike than would be possible under different circumstances. One other consideration remains, that as a member of a Baptist church the Christian who believes with Baptists would aid directly, by his own efforts, and indirectly, by the maintenance of Baptist Home and Foreign Missions and kindred agencies, the propagation of the whole truth. It is cause for gratitude that so many thousands who worship with Pædo-baptists renounce infant sprinkling and have been baptized, but such would act a still nobler part if they allied themselves with Baptists in church fellowship and in Christian work.

“The signs of the times” and the tendencies observable in Christendom encourage the hope that Baptists will “see greater things than” those which have made them glad in former days, and for which they thank God. There are three claimants for the loyal service of man: the Catholic Church, Reason, Christ. More and more thoughtful or speculative men are taking sides: Happily for truth and liberty the Catholic Church has taken the last step in its downward course. So long as it clothed with authority the concurring voice of the doctors and councils of the earlier centuries, or even asked the submission of the individual to the decisions of the whole church as registered by the order of an assembly ostensibly representative of Christendom, it appealed to a large class of learned and devout men who were not within the pale of the Roman communion. But the Catholics have left this position, and taken up another position far less tenable and more glaringly inconsistent with fact, reason, and the Word of God. They have clothed the Pope of Rome with infallible authority, and boldly declare that the pope, speaking *ex cathedra*, has ever been infallible, though

no council may have made the proclamation till more than eighteen centuries had passed from the call of Peter to the apostleship. Henceforth there will be no need of councils. The pope, it is held, cannot err when in the chair of Saint Peter. His decrees, therefore, whether concerning faith, or ceremonies, or discipline, or political questions even, must be received as infallibly true, of infallible authority, and consequently as binding as absolute truth can make them. History and the New Testament afford singularly conclusive comments on such pretensions, and time will doubtless show that, by making a claim utterly at variance with historical fact and no less, but more emphatically still, with the dictates of Reason, Romanists have undermined the authority of the pope, and prepared the way for its final rejection by Christians. While the tendency among Catholics is towards popery, unreserved and unquestioning loyalty to the pope, a tendency no less obvious is seen in other quarters towards Rationalism, submission to reason as the highest possible authority in the domain of faith. This is the natural reaction against the claims of ecclesiastical or papal authority. Religion is discredited by those who profess and call themselves its ministers and guardians. The intellect rebels against the attempt to enslave it. Conscience will not let reasonable men deny facts and affirm that error is truth and truth error. Manhood resents the withholding of freedom, will not renounce itself and consent to be the mere echo of the pope, without the right to form its own creeds and exercise its own judgment. And the outcome of the conflict is, in innumerable cases, the rejection of authority external to man. Reason is practically enthroned, if not deified. Man claims to be "a law to himself," subject to no higher will than his own, and acknowledges no truth which not been discovered by man. Divine Revelation is rejected for what some

call Rationalism, others Secularism, and others the Religion of Humanity. Were the choice between the pope and Reason, between the teachings of those who have been enthroned upon the seven-hills by the river Tiber and the authority of a man's own judgment and conscience, the acceptance of the latter in preference to the former might be justified, and would perhaps be the lesser evil of two. But this is not the only alternative. There is a third claimant—the Lord Jesus Christ. His authority, so Baptists plead and urge, is supreme and sole in all matters pertaining to what God requires of man. He leaves men free to adopt the form of civil government which commends itself to them, to conduct political affairs in accordance with their sense of justice and expediency. He does not interpose His authority to prevent or limit researches into facts, or into what are called the laws of nature. It is impossible that any master should give to his disciples greater liberty as citizens, in the pursuit of knowledge, and for all practical purposes. “His service is perfect freedom.” The authority which the Lord Jesus Christ claims concerns the Divine mind and will. He makes known God; declares what God has done, and is prepared to do for man; and states the conditions upon which man can become a partaker in the benefits and blessings which God provides for him. In accomplishing the object of His mission, Christ makes no use of human authority. He does not employ the magistrate to threaten or to coerce. He enjoins upon His ministers that they should be the servants, and not the masters of their converts. He bases his claims upon the evident wisdom, and truth, and goodness, manifested in the Gospel He reveals and in the precepts He teaches. His appeal is to the intellect, the heart, the conscience. He offers to deliver from evil, to reconcile the sinner to God, and to give him grace to love God with all his soul, and to love his

neighbour as himself. This authority, when fully known and rightly understood, will be accepted by reasonable men. The kingdom of Christ, which is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit," will yet commend itself to all mankind. Churchmen will renounce other allegiance to be loyal to Christ, and Reason will submit herself to the true Wisdom. There are many indications that the question of questions will soon be, "to what authority should men bow?" The tendency is to narrow and to simplify the points in dispute. Baptists do not fear, but hope much from, the issue. They believe that the Lord Jesus is alike true to man and to God, that He is not less human than Divine, and that men will trust and love Him as their "elder brother," "the first-born among many brethren." They doubt not the final conquest of the Saviour. "He must reign" till all submit themselves to his rule. The word of God is pledged to Jesus and to the world. The prayer taught is also a promise made to the disciples, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." And when that kingdom shall come, and that will be done, the whole world will be disciplined to Christ, and shall do all things—"fulfil all righteousness," baptism included—"whatsoever he has commanded." Not that Baptists anticipate for all the details of their church government and theological beliefs complete and ultimate triumph. Conscious of weakness, and believing as little in their own as in the pope's infallibility, they know that more or less of error must taint their opinions and their ecclesiastical polity. It is only in their faith in Christ, in their plea that he should be the one and only Lawgiver and King among Christians, and so far as they are sure that they have "the mind of Christ," that they are confident. Within these limits they have no doubt. "The cause" they fight for, "so far as it is true, and

no farther, yet precisely so far, is very sure of victory. The falsehood alone of it will be conquered, will be abolished, as it ought to be: but the truth of it co-operates with the world's eternal tendencies, and cannot be conquered."

## APPENDIX A.

# LIST OF BOOKS ON BAPTISM AND THE HISTORY OF BAPTISTS.

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*This list has cost considerable labour, and yet it is very incomplete. It is not submitted to the reader as in any sense exhaustive. The object of the compiler has been to suggest a few works which cannot fail to interest, and so to help youthful students of Baptist principles and literature. It is hoped that some competent and scholarly Baptist will prepare a complete and exhaustive list, as by so doing a considerable service would be rendered to Baptists. This part of the writer's task would have been still more inadequately performed if he had not received kind and efficient help from Drs. Underhill, Angus, and Maclaren, and Messrs. Stovel, Goadby, Pattison, and others, to whom his grateful acknowledgments are due.*

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### (1) BOOKS ON BAPTISM.

THE NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES. — GREEK LEXICONS ON ΒΑΠΤΩ, ΒΑΠΤΙΖΩ, &C.—EXPOSITIONS OF AND COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

AUTHOR.	TITLE OF BOOK.
<i>Abraham Booth.</i>	Pædo-baptism examined.
<i>H. S. Burrage.</i>	The Act of Baptism in the History of the Christian Church.
<i>Dr. Carson.</i>	The Mode and Subjects of Baptism.
<i>Dr. Conant.</i>	The meaning and use of Baptizein, philologically and historically considered.



- W. W. Cote.*  
*A Country Pastor.* (1814.)  
 ”  
*D'Anvers.*  
*William Foot.*  
*Gibbs.*  
*Dr. Gill.*  
 ”  
*F. W. Gotch, LL.D.*  
*I. T. Hinton.*  
*R. Ingham, D.D.*  
*Francis Johnstone.*  
 ”  
*T. Russell Leonard.*  
*David Macallan.*  
*Dr. Newman.*  
*B. W. Noel, M.A.*  
*J. Norcott.*  
*Pengilly.*  
*David Rees.*  
*Robert Robinson.*  
*W. Sherreff.*  
*Joseph Stennett.*  
 ”  
*Charles Stovel.*  
 ”  
*Dr. Wayland.*  
*Samuel Wilson.*
- The Archæology of Baptism.  
 The Candour of Mr. P. Edwards exhibited, and his curious reasons for his renouncing Anti-pædo-baptism examined.  
 Remarks on the Review of a Pamphlet called the History of the Baptists.  
 Treatise on Baptism. (1673.)  
 A Plain Account of the Ordinance of Baptism.  
 On Baptism.  
 The Divine Right of Pædo-baptism Examined and Disproved.  
 Infant Baptism a Part and Pillar of Popery.  
 Critical Examination of the Renderings of Βαπτίζω.  
 The History of Baptism  
 The Subjects of Baptism.  
 Infant Baptism not Christian Baptism.  
 Baptism is Dipping, &c.  
 Christian Baptism—its Mode, Subjects, and Perpetuity.  
 The Mode and Subjects of Christian Baptism.  
 9 Pamphlets on Baptism.  
 Christian Baptism.  
 Baptism Discovered, &c.  
 Guide to Christian Baptism.  
 Answer to Walker's Defence of Infant Baptism.  
 The History of Baptism.  
 Lectures on Baptism.  
 An Answer to Mr. David Russell's Book, "Fundamentals without a Foundation; or, a True Picture of the Anabaptists."  
 Christian Discipleship.  
 Letter on Christian Baptism.  
 Baptist Principles.  
 A Scripture Manual, or a Plain Representation of the Ordinance of Baptism.

- William Walters.* The Origin and Tendency of Infant Baptism.  
*Thomas Westlake.* A General View of Opinions and Evidence on the Mode, Subjects, and History of Baptism.  
*A. M. Stalker.* Kind Questions.

## (2) BOOKS ON BAPTIST HISTORY.

- T. Buckus.* History of the New England Baptists.  
*Benedict.* History of the Baptists.  
*S. Cowling.* The Dead in Christ; or, the Baptists in Bunhill Fields.  
*Dr. Cramp.* History of the Baptists.  
*Crosby.* History of the English Baptists.  
*D. Doughlas.* History of the Baptist Churches in the North of England.  
*Dr. B. Evans.* Early English Baptists.  
*G. Gould.* The Norwich Case.  
*Ivimey.* History of the English Baptists.  
*Francis Johnstone.* Origin and Antiquity of Christians called Baptists.  
*J. Murch.* Baptist Churches in the West of England.  
*Orchard.* A Concise History of Foreign Baptists.  
*Dr. Rippon.* Baptist Register.  
*Robert Robinson.* Ecclesiastical Researches.  
*D. Taylor.* History of the General Baptists.  
*Edward Terrill.* Broadmead Records.  
*Thomas.* History of the Welsh Associations.  
*Dr. Underhill, editor.* Publications of the Hansard Knolly's Society.  
 „ Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Missionary Society.  
*Dr. Underwood.* Life of the Rev. Dan Taylor.  
*William Walters.* The Baptists in the North of England.  
*Wood.* Condensed History of General Baptists.

## (3) BOOKS USEFUL IN THE STUDY OF BAPTIST PRINCIPLES AND HISTORY.

- R. Barclay.* Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth.



## APPENDIX B.

## ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE GENERAL BAPTISTS AND THE PARTICULAR BAPTISTS.

THESE words, "General" and "Particular," have no reference whatever to terms of communion at the Lord's Supper. They refer to the doctrine of redemption. General Baptists are Arminian in their theology, repudiating the doctrine of eternal and personal election to eternal life, as it is held by Calvinists, and insisting that the Lord God makes no difference between sinner and sinner. "We preach," explained the Rev. J. Clifford, LL.B., in an article on the General Baptist Denomination, in the "Monthly Magazine" for January, 1877, "the actual, and real, and unreserved universality of salvation—as to its source, in the Father's love for all; as to its means, in the Son's sacrifice for all; and as to its application, in the Spirit's convincing work for all." Particular Baptists, for the most part, accept the theology of Andrew Fuller and Robert Hall, who, while Calvinistic in their doctrinal beliefs, taught that the Gospel should be preached to every human being. Many of them hold that Christ died only for those who should believe on him, and not for all mankind, irrespective of their predestination by God or their foreseen repentance and faith. The General Baptists, moreover, are "a federation." Every member of a General Baptist Church is also a member of the General Baptist Association, which includes all the churches. This Association leaves each individual church free to elect its own officers, and to conduct its own business; but it exercises authority in all matters purely denominational. The Association directs and controls Home and Foreign Missions, the College, the Building Fund, and the periodical literature of the connection. It claims to be "a confederation of spiritual republics." There is no corresponding organization among the Particular Baptists. Their Foreign Missions, Building Fund, such colleges

as those at Bristol, Rawdon, Regent's-park, Manchester, &c., and periodical and hymn-book funds have constituencies of their own. The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland has no right of interference with the management of these institutions, and is composed of both General and Particular Baptists. In 1878, the General Baptists reported 179 churches, 23,959 members, and 37,348 Sunday scholars. The Particular Baptists reported in the same year 2,408 churches, 252,389 members, and 361,969 Sunday scholars.



