

Box A 27

Baptismal Regeneration.

The True Doctrine of the Church of England,

AND SHOWN TO BE

A Cardinal Doctrine of the Gospel :

BEING A

REPLY TO THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON'S DISCOURSE
AGAINST THE STANDARDS OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE STATED AND ANSWERED.

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED, BY PERMISSION

TO THE RIGHT REV. CHARLES PERRY, D.D.,
BISHOP OF MELBOURNE,

BY

CHARLES JAMES PERRY.

"Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God
as a little child, shall not enter therein. — *Mark* x. 15.

WILLIAMSTOWN

A. T. CLARK & CO., PRINTERS, NELSON PLACE.

1888.

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REVIEW.

CAPT. PERRY'S PAMPHLET ON BAPTISM.

HAVING in a former issue given our own review of the above essay of our fellow-townsmen. Capt. Perry, we now have pleasure in giving insertion to the following notice of the work by a journal of that branch of the church to which the author is more immediately attached. We quote the latter part of a review by the *Churchman of Victoria*, which appeared on the 21st inst. :—

"The phamplet consists of three letters, the last containing answers to five 'plausible objections.' Though occasionally diffuse, it is written in a vigorous style and a Christian-like temper, and the conviction is brought home to the reader that it is the work of a well-taught Christian, filled with zeal for 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' and honestly desirous to 'contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the saints.' Many of the arguments are exceedingly well put; they evince no ordinary acquaintance with Biblical Theology, and in our opinion, at least, are more than a sufficient answer to the cavils of Mr. Spurgeon.

"In Letter I. he states the Church's doctrine of baptismal grace. Letter II., in which he vindicates it, we think exceedingly able. Many of its statements, particularly those in which (pp. 22, 25, 27, 28, 29) he proves that the grace of regeneration is connected with the Sacrament, and not with any prior act of faith, are worthy of all praise for their clearness and precision.

"Most of the 'Objections' in Letter III. are also well and fully replied to. His exposition of the texts which speak of our being 'saved' by baptism is moderate and sound; his view, of course, being that the 'state of salvation' in which we are placed by the Sacrament is of a like nature with that in which (according to Moses, St. Paul, and St. Jude) the Lord their God placed Israel after effecting their deliverance from Egyptian bondage; in short, he shows that the Christian state on earth is a state of *probation*, in which full and final salvation has to be wrought out, in the power of the Divine Spirit, 'with fear and trembling.'

"Enough has been said to convince our readers of the value of Mr. Perry's pamphlet, and we commend it to their attentive perusal. It should be circulated among both Churchmen and Dissenters. We cannot but rejoice in its publication, and esteem it a happy omen for the Church of Victoria, and a hopeful sign of the progress of Catholic doctrine. We thank Mr. Perry for his labours in the service of divine truth, and thank God that while so many of our pulpits are silent on the subject of sacramental grace, and some positively hostile, it has pleased Him to raise up from among our laity so orthodox a champion of the faith."—*Williamstown Chronicle*, September 25th, 1868.

A. J. Paul

March 26th/89

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Republication.

Dedication.

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND
CHARLES PERRY, D.D.,
BISHOP OF MELBOURNE.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

I gratefully avail myself of the honour conferred upon me in having permission to dedicate this essay to yourself as the principal minister and president of the Church of England in this colony; and I humbly trust that the effort herein made to assert and vindicate the doctrine of that branch of the Church which is under your guardianship, and to which I have the honor to belong, may meet with your approbation.

I conceive that the state of things in the Church calls for an undertaking of this kind on the part of some one; and that it has become highly needful that the doctrine of the Church should be definitely asserted and vigorously upheld by her members generally.

It does not appear to me that there is anything sectarian or narrow-minded in any branch of the Church being faithful to its own Standard of Truth; but rather the contrary, that the more heartily it embraces them the more will it appreciate those other phases of Truth which are more prominently witnessed for by other branches of

the Church ; for, fidelity to *any* Truth of the Gospel enlightens, and is a wonderful help to believe other Truths.

The doctrine of the Church, being founded upon the revelation of the Gospel, is such as man could never have discovered ; it is therefore a great and glorious dogma, to be accepted only by simple faith, but which may not be tampered with by submitting it to the opinions of men.

It is quite as needful that our doctrine should be DISTINCTLY ASSERTED as that it should be upheld ; for, if we allow the least indefiniteness or uncertainty in this respect, the licentious enemy at once takes immense advantage of it, and comes in like a flood, while we go very far towards the surrender of our Standards.

The danger we are now exposed to—and I say it advisedly—is that of RATIONALISTIC UNBELIEF ; and this insidious enemy is not only assailing us from without, but, what is ten times worse, it has gained an entrance into the Sanctuary ! May we, the members of the Church in this colony—a Church free from the State in a wordly sense—be enabled, in the strength which our great Captain supplies, to lift up the Standard of Truth against that great adversary to our religion—to that “Faith” ONCE delivered to the saints.

Thanking you sincerely for your kindness, and wishing you every prosperity in your administration of the affairs of the Church,

I remain, Reverend and dear Sir,

With respect and affection,

Yours faithfully,

C. J. PERRY.

EXTRACTS

FROM

MR. SPURGEON'S SERMON

Against the Doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration,

WITH

REPLIES

FROM A

Member of the Church of England.

And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.—*Mark* xvi. 15—16.

LETTER I.

MR. SPURGEON.—I am not aware that any Protestant Church in England teaches the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, except one, and that happens to be the corporation which, with none too much humility, calls itself *the Church of England*. This powerful sect does not teach this doctrine through a section of its ministers who might charitably be considered as evil branches of the vine, but it openly, boldly, and plainly declares this doctrine in her own appointed Standard, the Book of Common Prayer; and that in language so express that, while language is the channel of conveying intelligible sense, no process short of violent wresting from their plain meaning can ever make them say anything else. Here are the words: we quote them from the Catechism, which is intended for the instruction of youth, and is naturally very plain and simple,

since it would be foolish to trouble the young with metaphysical refinements. The child is asked its name, and then questioned, "Who gave you this name?" "My godfathers and my godmothers in my baptism; wherein I **was** made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Is not this definite and plain enough? I prize the words for their candour; they could not speak more plainly. Three times over the thing is put lest there should be any doubt in it. The word *regeneration* may, by some sort of juggling, be made to mean something else, but here there can be no misunderstanding. The child is not only made "a member of Christ"—union to Jesus is no mean spiritual gift—but he is made in baptism "the child of God" also; and, since the rule is "if children then heirs," he is also made an "inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." Nothing can be more plain. I venture to say that while honesty remains on earth the meaning of these words will not admit of dispute. The form for the administration of this baptism is scarcely less plain and outspoken, seeing that thanks are expressly returned to Almighty God, because the person baptised is regenerated. "We yield Thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this infant with Thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for Thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into Thy holy church." This, then, is the clear and unmistakeable teaching of a Church calling itself Protestant.

REPLY.—Dear Sir,—Permit a member of the Church of England, who has read your printed discourse, and is far from being scared by that bugbear word "Protestant" (believing that truth existed before Protestantism), to say that he most cordially concedes to you the fact that his Church does "openly, boldly, and plainly declare the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration in her Standard, the Book of Common Prayer," and, as you most justly observe,

nothing can be more clear and unmistakeable than the words in which that doctrine is unfolded in the Catechism we teach our children. And you are quite right in saying that our Baptismal service is no less plain and outspoken on the same point. Such, indeed, is the clear and unmistakeable teaching of the Church of England; and this I shall presently take an opportunity to prove.

MR. SPURGEON.—But I hear many good people say, “There are many good clergymen in the Church of England who do not believe in Baptismal Regeneration.” To this my answer is prompt. Why then do they belong to that Church which teaches that doctrine in the plainest terms? I am told that many in the Church of England preach against her own teaching. I know they do; and herein I rejoice at their enlightenment, but I question, gravely question, their morality. To take oath that I sincerely assent and consent to a doctrine which I do not believe would, to my conscience, appear little short of perjury, if not absolute, downright perjury; but those who do so must be judged by their own Lord. For me to take money for defending what I do not believe—for me to take the money of a Church, and then to preach against what are most evidently its doctrines—I say *for me* to do this, or for any other simple, honest man to do so, were an atrocity so great, that if I had perpetrated the deed I should consider myself out of the pale of truthfulness, honesty, and common morality. Sirs, when I accepted the office of minister of this congregation I looked to see what were your articles of faith; if I had not believed them, I would not have accepted your call; and when I change my opinions, rest assured that, as an honest man, I shall resign the office; for how could I profess one thing in your declaration of faith, and quite another thing in my own preaching? Would I accept your pay, and then stand up every Sabbath day and talk against the doctrine

of your Standards? For clergymen to swear, or say, that they give their solemn assent and consent to what they do not believe, is one of the grossest pieces of immorality perpetrated in England, and is most pestilential in its influence, since it directly teaches men to lie whenever it seems necessary to do so in order to get a living or increase their supposed usefulness. I know of nothing more calculated to debauch the public mind than a want of straightforwardness in ministers; and when worldly men hear them denouncing the very things their own Prayer Book teaches, they imagine that words have no meaning among ecclesiastics, and that vital differences in religion are merely a matter of tweedle-dee and tweedle-dum; and that it does not much matter what a man believes so long as he is charitable towards other people. That crafty kindness which inveigles me to sacrifice principle is the serpent in the grass,—deadly to the incautious wayfarer. Where union and friendship are not cemented by truth they are an unhallowed confederacy. It is time that there should be an end put to the flirtations of honest men with those who believe one way and swear another. My brethren, those are honest Churchmen in this matter who, subscribing to the Prayer Book, believe in Baptismal Regeneration, and preach it plainly.

REPLY.—Dear Sir,—If it is known to you that there are clergymen in our Church who preach against her own teaching, how much better must it be known to, and how deeply must it be felt by thoughtful and sincere Churchmen themselves; for they find those clergymen doing what they can to overthrow the foundations of their faith in Church ministrations, and denying the very A B C of that religion which they, the congregations, have been taught from childhood, and have been instructed by the Church to teach their children. The point you have here challenged seems to be not so much one of doctrine as of

morality; it is whether ministers should be sincere or insincere in the things they have solemnly professed to believe; and upon this very grave subject there can be but one opinion. "Thou desirest truth in the inward parts."

I conceive that the Standards of a Church are, of all outward things, the most precious she possesses, and, like the standards of an army, they outwardly proclaim her distinctive characteristics, every one of which her soldiers are supposed to glory in and fight for; and (whether right or wrong is not the question now) the most conspicuous doctrine emblazoned upon our Standards is that of Baptismal Regeneration, as indicated in the service of administration and unfolded in the Catechism. Moreover, the Standards of any one branch of the Church are intended to be understood by the whole Church, just as the display of a flag by a regiment on the field of battle is intended to be understood by every company of troops on that field; they are therefore necessarily written in the commonest, plainest, and most unmistakeable words; and this is especially the case with our Standards, which, to a very large extent, are addressed to children, because by far the largest accession to our ranks is made from infants and little children. "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise."

Now, the first lesson which meets us at the very threshold of our religion—the first stone laid in that spiritual edifice to be erected in the soul, as a foundation never to be removed—the first religious truth our spiritual mother, the Church, formally teaches us in our childhood, and continues constantly to impress upon our minds—is that of the grace of God vouchsafed to us in and by Baptism; and this fact will be palpable if we only glance at the spiritual education of the members of the Church. We first notice, then, that common instruction used in all our Sunday Schools, and supposed to be used in every family,

known as the Church Catechism,* an instruction which, according to the Book of Common Prayer, every person is required to learn before he is brought to be confirmed by the bishop; it runs as follows:—

Q. What is your name?

A. N. or M.

Q. Who gave you this name?

A. My godfathers and godmothers in my Baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

No words can be plainer than these. Then, at the Baptismal Service, when a person is to be Baptised, these words occur in the prayer: "We call upon Thee for this infant (or person), that he, coming to Thy holy Baptism, may receive remission of his sins by spiritual regeneration." And after the administration of the rite, this thanksgiving: "We yield Thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it has pleased Thee to regenerate this infant with Thy holy Spirit, to receive him for Thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into Thy holy Church." And if the recipient be an adult, these words are spoken by the minister: "Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this person is regenerate, and grafted into the body of Christ's Church, let us give thanks unto Almighty God for these benefits." What words can be plainer than

*In addition to the Church Catechism, there is that well-known instruction for very young children, called *First Steps to the Catechism*, which is extensively used in our schools and families, and seems to have been framed by the Church as an auxiliary to her Standards. It is published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, which is distinctly a Church of England institution. It commences as follows:—

Q. My good child, do you know who made you?

A. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, made me and all the world.

Q. Why do you call God your Father?

A. I call God my Father, not only because He is my Maker, but also because in my baptism I was made a child of God.

these? But, in addition to all this, the Church continually reminds her younger children of God's goodness to them in Baptism, by placing the lesson of it first in the Catechism, and requiring them often to repeat it; while, at the same time, she is no less solicitous to remind ALL her members, young and old, of the same grace, by requiring each one of them, every Sunday, in a formal confession of faith, and as an act of worship, to say, "I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins."

It may be seen, then, that REGENERATION is the special blessing taught in the Catechism, prayed for in the Baptismal Service, acknowledged to be therein bestowed, and continually commemorated in the worship of the Church.

Bear with me now, while, as a member of the Church, I briefly advert to the mistakes those ministers labour under to whom you have alluded; and shew that the things they say of Baptism are at variance with the teaching of the Church. 1st. They always speak wrongly of the NATURE of the Sacrament; for, although the Church has distinctly defined it, yet they never employ the same language as the Church uses, nor anything like it. They separate that which is properly inseparable, and represent what are only two parts of one thing as if they were two separate things, and even venture to make a comparison between them. Thus, they are loud and frequent in their animadversions upon the simple recipient of the Church's teaching; and say that he dotes too much upon the outward form, for no other reason than that he believes in the general efficacy of the Sacrament. They are not able to see that the outward form is virtually the vehicle of all that is signified by, and precious in, the Sacrament itself. They do not believe what every true and intelligent member of the Church is supposed to believe—namely, that that very outward form which they seek to place in such inferior juxtaposition to the "thing signified," was "ordained by

Christ Himself as a MEANS whereby we receive the same, and a PLEDGE to assure us thereof." The doctrine of the Church is plain :—

Q. What meanest thou by this word Sacrament ?

A. I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.

Q. How many parts are there in a Sacrament ?

A. Two ; the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.

Q. What is the outward visible sign or form in Baptism ?

A. Water ; wherein the person is baptised, &c.

Q. What is the inward and spiritual grace ?

A. A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness ; for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.

2nd. They always speak wrongly of the OBJECT of the Sacrament, by representing it as being of secondary importance and of inferior value, when compared with the virtues of a "true believer" coming to be Baptised ; for, say they, "To such an one it is only the outward sign and seal of a virtue already possessed ; he comes to be Baptised merely to make a public profession of his faith in Christ ; and also to yield a proper obedience to the appointed ordinance. Like as Abraham, the father of the faithful, received circumcision as a seal of the faith he had, yet being uncircumcised, so is it with the true believer : he does not receive any grace by Baptism, but merely a sign and seal of the thing signified by the Sacrament, which he already possesses." * Now this argument is

* The analogy presented here is defective, because it assumes premises which ought not to be assumed. It assumes that the things under the Gospel are a mere repetition of those under the law in their relation to faith, and of no more value ; and that, as circumcision was a seal of the righteousness of the faith of the recipient, so Baptism is no more than a "sign and seal" of the believer's faith ; but this is a great mistake, for the New Testament never places Baptism in such a light, but represents it as being a means and mystery of grace. —Romans vi. 3-4. Col. 12-13).

totally at variance with the doctrine of the Church of England, and, indeed, completely frustrates the Sacrament ; for, while the Church contemplates none but true believers as recipients of Baptism, she regards them as being not only destitute of virtue, but as coming to the Font to have their *sins remitted through spiritual regeneration* ; and surely, that is no small grace. Again : the Church refers, to believers when she says the benefit received in Baptism is "*a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness* ;" and, surely, that is no small grace. Once more : the Church does not contemplate a hypocrite, but a believer, when she teaches that in Baptism one is made *a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven* ; and, undoubtedly, that is no small grace. And yet those preachers say, and insist upon it, that a believer receives no grace whatever in Baptism ! They thus ruthlessly cut the ground from under the feet of the Baptised by depriving them of their standing as children of God ; a standing conferred upon them through the grace of that adoption, of which their Baptism was at once the channel, the sign, and the seal. According to their theory all the grace of Baptism is received by *unbelievers* ; or else none whatever appertains to the Sacrament. They, therefore, dissent as widely from the Church in these fundamental articles of our faith, as, I suppose, they could possibly do, and clearly contradict her true and orthodox Standards.

In concluding this topic I would respectfully recommend my brethren—the members of the Church of England—to beware of disloyalty to our sacred and precious Standards ; assuring them that the harm arising from it is INCALCULABLE. There ought to be no lukewarmness on this point, for the glory of the Church militant is its doctrine ; and the maintenance of our doctrine, in its DISTINCTNESS and PURITY, I conceive to be an imperative duty devolving

upon us all : we owe it to ourselves, we owe it to the world, and we owe it to the Churches. "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy Crown."

What is it that constitutes the vitality and stability of any distinctive branch of the Church? Is it not its devotedness to the Lord, in upholding and witnessing for that measure of truth which has been committed to its guardianship? Most undoubtedly we have been taught so; and what else could we expect it to be? Should it ever, therefore, become unfaithful to the trust, by disavowing or forsaking its own Standards—those symbolic conservators of its "talents" and mementoes of its mission—what else may we expect but that, sooner or later, it will lose its prestige amongst the Churches. To tolerate indefiniteness of doctrine, or "differences of opinion" with respect to it, on the part of those we admit to our pulpit, is virtually to furl the King's flag and let the enemy into the camp.

I now proceed, in humble dependence upon God, and with the ability which He gives me as a Christian, to shew that the teaching of the Church of England is entirely true, and that Baptismal Regeneration is a cardinal doctrine of the Gospel.

LETTER II.

MR. SPURGEON.—I find that the great error we have to contend with throughout England (and it is growing more and more) is one in direct opposition to my text, well known to you as the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration. We will confront this dogma with the assertion that *Baptism without faith saves no one*. The text says, "*He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved;*" but whether a man be baptised or not, it asserts that "*he that believeth*

not shall be damned ;" so that Baptism does not save the unbeliever—nay, it does not in any degree exempt him from the common doom of all the ungodly. He may have Baptism, or he may not have it, but, if he believeth not, he shall be, in any case, most surely damned.

REPLY.—Dear Sir,—In my former letter I confined myself to the consideration of two very important assertions in your discourse, relative to the distinctness of the doctrine of the Church of England, and the course taken by such of her ministers as preach against her own teaching; and endeavoured to show that you are quite right with regard to the doctrine of the Church, and also in saying that there are clergymen amongst us who preach against that doctrine.

But now, before I approach the main proposition of your discourse, I desire to say that it is not my intention to contend with you in a spirit of hostile controversy, but with that moderation and respect which I feel to be due to a gifted and active labourer in the Lord's vineyard.

In commencing, then, a vindication of the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, let me at once inform you that I am a firm believer in it; not merely because it is so plainly taught in the Book of Common Prayer—which, to the mind of a Churchman, is a reason of great weight—but also, and chiefly, because I am perfectly satisfied that it is warranted by the written word of God. Call me Roman Catholic, Puseyite, Ritualist, or whatever you please; I distinctly avow my firm belief in the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, as inculcated by the Church of England, both through the form of administration and in the Catechism,* without the slightest qualification or reserve; feeling that any attempt on the part of an individual to alter the

*The Catechism of the Church of England is nothing else than an unfolding of Scripture doctrine by that branch of the Church Catholic.

words of the Catechism, or to say that they mean anything different from what a child would understand by them, is, to say the least, grossly irreverent; because it virtually impugns the wisdom of the Church in her corporate capacity, and denies her ability to propound the very A B C of her own faith.

The doctrine of Baptismal grace has been a conspicuous one in every period of the Church's history; and our formulary, with respect to it, is not at variance either with the faith of the "Fathers" of the first four centuries, or with that of the Latin and Greek Churches up to the present time. The last fact may, perhaps, have no weight with that class of Protestants who are ready to reject a truth for no other reason than because it is held by those two great branches of the Church Catholic. To those, however, who are superior to such a prejudice, it is a circumstance which commends the doctrine in question; for no candid and intelligent person can deny that the truth of the Gospel existed long before Protestantism. Nor can anyone who loves the truth deny that, whatever may have been the career of the Roman Catholic Church during its subsequent history, in the age of the "Fathers" it formed a highly influential and august branch of the Church universal; and that, during a period of 230 years a long succession of the venerable and faithful Bishops of Rome, to the number of no less than eighteen, sealed their testimony to the truth with their blood; thereby forming no insignificant addition, in the page of history, to the "noble army of Martyrs" who suffered in the cause of our adorable Redeemer. And I am not aware that the Creed of that Church has at any time undergone a change with regard to Baptism.

You may perceive, then, that I am willing to incur the odium of declaring my respect for some of the doctrines held by the Church at a period anterior

to the Reformation. And, as I am willing to give you credit for a like fearless expression of your convictions, I am led to hope that our controversy may stand upon the only basis which can issue in a good result—I mean that of common honesty; a principle which prompts one not only to recognise gladly all that is true and good in what an opponent advances, but also to relinquish an error upon distinctly seeing it to be one.

Having carefully perused your printed discourse, I find that the statements in it having the greatest hostility to the Church of England are contained in the paragraph quoted at the beginning of this letter, namely: 1st. That the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration is in direct opposition to your text. 2nd. That the doctrine itself is altogether an error. As to the third assertion with which you say you “confront the doctrine”—viz., that “Baptism without faith saves no one”—I must beg leave to say that it is nothing whatever to the point; for as you are doubtless alluding to the Baptism of persons old enough to receive Gospel teaching, and to signify whether they believe it or not, such as these the Church never taught that Baptism did save without faith; but quite the contrary, in proof of which I appeal to the Catechism, thus: “What is required of persons to be Baptised?” Reply: “Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and Faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament.” That assertion, therefore, to which you give such hostile prominence falls harmless upon us, and makes neither for nor against the doctrine itself.

But now, to deal with your FIRST GRAND STATEMENT. Let us look at the text which you say the doctrine you impugn is in “direct opposition” to; it is this, “He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth

not shall be damned." I would ask, then, what does every unprejudiced reader perceive in the perusal of that sentence? Does he not, at least, perceive this—that the promise of salvation is to a BAPTISED believer, and no other? and, therefore, however a person may be disposed to build upon his alleged "faith," if he would be saved upon the terms of the text, it is quite clear that he **MUST BE BAPTISED**. The text by no means implies that Baptism is less essential to salvation than believing (it rather indicates it to be the higher thing of the two, because it comes *after* believing, and seems to be that to which the latter is only preparatory*); but it links together the two conditions, as forming the one qualification for salvation—"He that

*This will be more apparent if we view the subject in the light thrown on Baptism by the words of Philip, who, in answer to the Eunuch's appeal, "See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be Baptised?" replied, "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest;" to which the Eunuch said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God;" and he thereupon Baptised him. We learn from this narrative that to believe with all one's heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is only a necessary qualification for Baptism; and that this faith, when intelligent, prompts the believer to desire the grace of the Sacrament. His object in seeking Baptism is not, as some teachers allege, to glory in his position as a believer, before an assemblage of men; it is not to make a "public profession" that he believes in Jesus Christ; but to satisfy the felt want of his soul, now enlightened by a Gospel teacher; so that, if need be, even in a place toward the south that goeth down from Jerusalem (*away from the city of the saints*), unto Gaza (*away from the haunts of men*), which is DESERT! even in that lonely place, coming to a certain water, he exclaims, "See, here is water! what doth hinder me to be baptised?" and there he at once receives the rite, and goes on his way rejoicing. Surely the dignity and glory are entirely on the side of the Baptiser, and not one iota on the side of the recipient; a poor, needy mortal, availing himself of the grace of Baptism; like Saul, to whom it was said, *after* he believed in Jesus Christ (for to no other than a believer could such a command be given), "Arise, and be Baptised, and WASH AWAY THY SINS."

believeth and is baptised shall be saved." It is submitted, then, that every unprejudiced reader quits the perusal of your text with an impression that Baptism is of very great importance, and that it must possess a mysterious and wonderful agency in the divine economy of Grace. Now, if these premises be true—and let every pious reader judge for himself—they prove that your text, instead of being in "direct opposition" to the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, has a decidedly contrary effect. and powerfully prepares the mind to receive it, upon finding it propounded in other places in Scripture by our Lord and His apostles. And, in this way, I have answered, and I trust refuted, your first grand statement—viz., that the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration is in direct opposition to your text.

We come now to the consideration of your SECOND GRAND STATEMENT; that in which you deny the doctrine altogether, and pronounce a belief in it to be a "great error." Let us see, therefore, whether it cannot be satisfactorily deduced from the New Testament. In the first place, I quote the infallible words of our Saviour, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John iii.). Here, then, is a second birth, or what the Church has always called Regeneration, distinctly propounded. We have next to consider its connection with Baptism. Now, when the thoroughly perplexed Nicodemus asked *how* this being born again could take place, our Lord condescendingly explained it to him by solemnly assuring him that such an one must be born of water and of the Spirit;* and, inas-

*Our Saviour's words are plain—"born of water and of the Spirit;" yet, there are thousands of persons who have been led into the error of believing that the word "water" does not mean water, but the emblem of the Spirit. Now, although in several places of Scripture the word water is used as an emblem of the Spirit, it is easy to see that it could not be so used in this place; otherwise it must be understood to read

much as that no other religious use was ever made of water either by John the Baptist, the herald of Christianity, or by Christ, than for baptising, there can be no reason to doubt that our Lord alluded to Baptism. Besides, we shall do well, in this place, to bear in mind that it is in the very nature of "teaching" to make use of things known in order to convey a knowledge of things unknown; and that "teaching" immediately ceases when only unknown things are made use of. Now, Nicodemus came to our Saviour as to a "Teacher," a position accepted by our Lord; wherefore, it would be most unreasonable to suppose that, in relieving the perplexity of Nicodemus, and in unfolding what He had just before advanced, the

thus: Except a man be born of the emblem of the Spirit, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God! which would be manifestly irrational. An emblem cannot, with propriety, be mentioned in immediate conjunction with the thing signified, as having a co-operate efficacy with it, no more than the shadow of a thing can be said to add anything to its substance. The language of those who promulgate the error I am noticing is to this effect, "As for Baptism with water, it is a mere outward form of no spiritual efficacy whatever. How can the sprinkling of a little water over a person's body do his soul any good? The great and only thing that's wanted is the Baptism of the Spirit." One may answer those persons by saying that if they mean that the Baptism of the Spirit, without the use of water, is sufficient, they are absolutely in the wrong; for, when St. Peter, upon his preaching to Cornelius and his companions, saw that they received a Baptism of the Spirit immediately from Heaven, he at once exclaimed, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" Although, then, Cornelius and his companions received the Holy Spirit "as well as" (with the same plenitude as) the apostles and other Christians, yet, in the estimation of the apostle, they were not yet Baptised according to the Gospel, and the institution of our Saviour. And so essential a part of the Sacrament is WATER, that according to the mind of St. Peter, to have forbidden it would have been to forbid Baptism.

gracious "Teacher" would make use of language utterly incomprehensible to mankind, and not rather that which ought to have been understood by a "master of Israel;" or that he meant any other mode of being born of (coming out of) water than that which alone could be intelligible to His auditor, and of which the latter had daily illustrations in the crowds of believers he saw being born of, or coming out of, the water of Baptism, under the ministry of Christ and His apostles.*

Moreover, was it not to baptised persons, AS SUCH, that our Lord alluded when, upon a subsequent occasion, He said, "Since that time (the time of John) the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." For, seeing that our Saviour had already declared that no man could enter that kingdom without being born of water and of the Spirit, what persons could he now refer to as entering it, except those who were so entering by water, through the gate of Christian Baptism, ministered at His command, by His own disciples? Again, was it

*The mode in which Baptism was at this time usually administered, at least to adults, appears to have been by immersion, which is a true figure of the spiritual blessing appertaining to the Sacrament. Yet, one would be far from concluding that it was invariably so administered; for, apart from the consideration of young children being recipients of the rite, it is easy to conceive of many cases in which Baptism would be impracticable were a rigid adherence to that mode to be insisted upon. It is highly improbable that either the Jailer of Philippi and his household, or the Centurion and his companions, were immersed when Baptised; for the rite appears to have been promptly administered upon the exigencies of the occasions: the former was converted in jail, at midnight, and was, with all his household, "*straightway*" Baptised; while, with regard to the latter, the words of St. Peter seem to indicate the bringing of water to the spot—"Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised." The two narratives equally preclude the idea that the recipients were conducted to a pool of water.

not that same great company of persons referred to by our Lord, when He said, "*Every man* presseth into it," that attracted the notice of the Jews, who came to John at the wane of his ministry, and, expressing their surprise at the turn things had taken, said, "Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptiseth, and *all men* come to him." The "all men" of the Jews who were BEING BAPTISED are identical with the "every man" of Christ who was PRESSING INTO THE KINGDOM; they were pressing into the kingdom by the only means that they could possibly enter it, by being born of WATER and the Spirit—by being BAPTISED. The great point, therefore, to be believed in our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus, is that when, as a merciful and condescending Teacher, in unfolding the meaning of the words He had previously uttered, He said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit," He meant by the word "water" that which is commonly known as water by all mankind.

Before I proceed to give further proof from Scripture of the efficacy of Baptism, permit me parenthetically to remark that those persons who do not believe in baptismal grace generally speak very indiscriminately, and, as I conceive, erroneously about "faith;" and represent the mere assent of the mind to the abstract historical fact that Christ died for sinners, as being what they call true "regenerating faith," and quite sufficient without any ordinances whatever. Now, in opposition to that view, I submit that the faith of all those persons above referred to, which induced them to press into the kingdom of God, was NOT in itself Regeneration. I maintain that their faith was not THE blessing itself; but was that assent of the soul to divine teaching which prompts the outstretching of the hand, as it were, to receive it; while

the blessing itself was the grace of Regeneration conferred upon them in and by Baptism. Their faith was *prior* to their Regeneration; and in them was fulfilled the Scripture, "To as many as believed on him, to them gave he power (or privilege) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." I submit, then, that Regeneration by Baptism, in which WATER is a conspicuous element, was propounded by our Saviour in His discourse with Nicodemus; and such has always been the faith of the Christian Church. At this stage of my argument, then, I respectfully submit that the Church of England has an ample Scriptural warrant for teaching in her Catechism that the Holy Sacrament of Baptism was "ordained by Christ himself" as a "means" for making us inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.

We now come to the teaching of the apostles after they had been endowed with the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit, and became "stewards of the mysteries of God;" and first of all quote the text, "By one Spirit we are all baptised into one body." Here, at once, we reverently and adoringly learn by what blessed agency Christian Baptism is effected; and we regard the officiating minister as merely the instrument by which the blessing is imparted; and, surely, it would be well if we always thought and spoke of Baptism in the light of this divine revelation concerning it—

Eternal Spirit ! descend from high,
 Baptiser of our spirits Thou !
 The Sacramental seal apply,
 And witness with the Water now.

—*Baptismal Hymn.*

In the 6th of Romans St. Paul says, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death; therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so

we also should walk in newness of life." And to the Colossians, the same apostle, speaking of Baptism, says, "wherein also ye are risen with him." These instructions imply that the grace of the Sacrament is a participation in both the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that the proper fruit of it is newness of life. And, undoubtedly, this is a further unfolding of that Regeneration, or being born again of water and the Spirit, first propounded by Christ. The great reality more or less unfolded in these apostolic statements is this: 1st. That our sinful nature, after Adam, is by Baptism mystically buried with Christ (for he was buried) into death; and, 2nd, that a new nature, that of our risen Saviour, is imparted to us by a living union with Him who first died for our sins, and then rose again for our justification; and 3rd, that this grace of baptism is effected by the Holy Spirit. And so, being thus "Baptised into Christ," we are said to have "put off the old man with his deeds," and to have "put on the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness." In other words, we are said to be now "married to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should henceforth bring forth fruit unto God." And so, also, it is again said, "If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature:" so overwhelming is the testimony of Holy Scripture to the grace of Christian Baptism. All these different expressions, declaring our standing, and the grace given to us as Christians, undoubtedly imply one and the same thing—viz., the new birth, or "REGENERATION"—which, indeed, is the great theme of the Epistles, and therein shewn to be a cardinal doctrine of the Gospel.

REGENERATION is the special grace of this dispensation, and the fulfilment to the Church of a great promise in the Bible—THE COVENANT OF GRACE, and is identical with the "Promise of the Father," and the

“Gift of the Holy Ghost.” The promise in the Old Testament runs thus: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt: which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, 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” (Jer. xxxi. 31-33). And the fulfilment of that promise is thus indicated and declared in the Epistles: “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not” (1 John iii. 1). And again, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God.”

Again: What is it but the grace of Baptism which illustrates this precious word—“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ: by grace ye are saved.” Now, perhaps, you will dispute this, and say, “It is not the grace of Baptism which is here meant, but the grace of the Cross.” But I firmly and persistently maintain my position, and aver that it is immediately in and through the grace of BAPTISM that salvation by the Cross is commonly conferred on mankind; and by which alone the visible Church is incorporated in the world as a new creation, and distinguished from the heathen and all other people. The grace of the Cross, in whatever way it may be defined, does not supersede the teaching of our Lord, who is the great Head of the Church but, rather gives effect to it; so that His word is as much in force now as ever it was—

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Other Scriptures imply a like impartation of grace in Baptism. Thus we read, "Not by works of righteousness that we have done, but by his mercy, he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly by Jesus Christ." The mind of a Christian upon reading these words naturally reverts to the mystical washing away of sin in the water of Baptism,* in accordance with the glorious confession of the Catholic Church for fifteen hundred years: "I ACKNOWLEDGE ONE BAPTISM FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS:" a confession against which the gates of Hell have not prevailed, and—may I not add?—SHALL NEVER PREVAIL.

Again: St. Peter, speaking of the eight souls in the ark, pointedly observes that they were saved by water; adding "the like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ": as if the apostle had been more explanatory, and said, "By the like figure, of salvation by water, we are now saved in Baptism; not so much by that effect of it which you have been taught buries our old man into Christ's death, but rather that which you have also been taught revivifies us in the likeness of His resurrection; the body of sin being thus put off, and the new risen life in Christ put on; reckoning ourselves now to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." And if any one thinks this amplification of St. Peter's words to be gratuitous, let him consider whether it is not wise and proper to bring with us the light of St.

*The venerable Justyn Martyr, in the second century, gave expression to the Catholic faith in his day, when he called Baptism "the laver of Regeneration, for the remission of sins." (Apol. 1 c. 61).

Paul's copious teaching on Baptism, standing first in the Epistles, in order the better to understand a subsequent reference to that Sacrament by St. Peter :—

With Christ we share a mystic grave ;

With Christ we buried lie ;

But 'tis not in the darksome cave,

By mournful Calvary.

The pure and bright Baptismal flood

Entombs our nature's stain ;

New creatures, from the cleansing wave,

With Christ we rise again.

—*Baptismal Hymn.*

Once more ; In still further illustration of this subject, let me observe that Saul of Tarsus was arrested in his unbelief on his way to Damascus ; upon which occasion he encountered our Saviour in a glorious vision ; when our Lord spoke to him and said, " I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." Saul, being completely subdued by the bright vision, believed, and said, " Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?" He was now a converted man and a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ ; but, notwithstanding that, he was not yet a regenerated man ; for it happened, several days after this event, that a divinely-commissioned disciple came to him and said, " And now, why tarriest thou ? arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." So also on the day of Pentecost : when a large number of Jews believed St. Peter preaching Jesus Christ, they were not thereby regenerated ; and full well they knew it ; saying to the apostles, with no small concern, " Men and brethren, what shall we do ?" And what was the answer ? Was it in accordance with the teaching of those who say, " A believer comes to be baptised, not to be made a child of God, but because he is already one ?" Certainly not ; for it was this, " Repent, and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins."

We see, then, that a believer, at the time of his conversion, is far from being boastful about his "faith;" but is humble and supplicatory, under an awakened sense of need and dependence upon God's goodness; his language is, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and the answer of Mercy is, "Arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." Now, in both the instances of conversion above noticed it may be plainly seen that Holy Scripture connects remission of sins immediately with Baptism, and NOT with the prior act of believing.

What then, I would ask, becomes of that sort of abstract faith boasted of by so many—which makes little or no account of divine ordinances, reducing them to mere empty signs and bare mementoes—when viewed in the light of the above passages of Holy Writ, seeing that they connect the stupendous grace of forgiveness of sins with the Sacrament of Christian Baptism? Methinks it must appear puny indeed! And what comparison would any one venture to make between the relative saving virtue comprehended in the words "believeth" and "baptised" in your text, when it is once seen that Baptism is the divinely-appointed regenerating ordinance; and that although a man may have undoubted faith, as Saul had, after seeing the Lord and hearing Him speak to him; or, like that of the three thousand Jews, who now, being pricked in their hearts, believed that God had made that same Jesus, whom they had crucified, to be both Lord and Christ; yet, up to the moment of his coming to the water of Baptism, he may be looked upon as still belonging to that class of persons to whom it is said—"Repent, and be baptised, every one of you, for the remission of sins."

Having thus dealt with the main proposition of your argument, and endeavored to shew—1st. That the Church of England does not teach that persons are saved by

Baptism without faith; 2nd. That the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration is not in "direct opposition" to your text, but is in harmony with it; and 3rd. That the doctrine is a Scriptural one, and therefore a belief in it is not a "great error;" it appears to me that I have answered all that may be considered important in your charges against us. I have further endeavoured to show that the Holy Scriptures connect the forgiveness of sins, and the new birth, with the grace of God vouchsafed in Baptism, and NOT with any prior act of faith; for we have seen that it is only to a person possessed of faith—only to a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, that the exhortation applies: "Arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins."

Now, whether the arguments adduced throughout this letter be assented to or disputed by my theological adversaries, I take leave to contend earnestly for them; and to maintain that the holy Sacrament of Baptism is an indispensable means of grace, and an instrument of Salvation; and that such may be seen to be a cardinal doctrine of the Gospel.

I have stated that the doctrine of the Church of England, with regard to Baptism, is not at variance with the faith of the venerable "Fathers" of the first four centuries, nor with that of the Latin and Greek Churches up to the present time. I now cite some of these authorities:—

ST. AUGUSTINE.

"For, from the little child but lately born, even to the decrepit old man, as no one is to be prohibited from Baptism, so is there no one who in Baptism dies not to sin."—*Treatise on Faith, Hope, and Charity.*

ST. CHRYSOSTOM.

"The remaining dead to sin after Baptism must be the work of our own earnestness; however, we find God here giving us large help, for this is not the only thing that Baptism has the power to do, to obliterate our former transgressions, for it also secures us against subsequent ones."—*Lecture on Baptism.*

ST. CYRIL.

"By Baptism the sting of death is destroyed. Thou descendest into the water, bearing thy sins; but the invocation of grace, having sealed thy soul, allows not that thou shouldest henceforth be swallowed up by the fearful dragon. Dead in sins, thou wentest down; quickened in righteousness, thou camest up."

ST. CYPRIAN

Speaking of his state before and after Baptism, he says: "I used to think that second birth which divine mercy promised for my salvation a hard saying, according to the life I then led; as if a man could be so quickened by a new life in the laver of healing water, as to put off his natural self, and keep his former tabernacle, and yet be changed in heart and soul. But after that life-giving water succoured me, washing away the stain of former years, and pouring into my cleansed and hallowed breast the light which comes from heaven; after I drank in the heavenly Spirit, and was created a new man by a second birth, then marvellously what before was doubtful became plain to me," &c.
—*1st Treatise.*

TERTULLIAN.

"Happy our Sacrament of the water! whereby, being cleansed from our former blindness, we are made free unto eternal life. * * *

* * * * * So in us also the anointing runneth over us bodily, but profiteth spiritually; as likewise in Baptism itself, the act is carnal, that we are dipped in water; the effect spiritual, that we are delivered from our sins."—*Lecture on Baptism.*

The faith of the Latin and Greek Churches in the fourth century is exhibited in the Nicene Creed, in the framing of which the Bishops of those Churches took part. The expression of that faith is as emphatic as it is concise—"I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins." And the same Creed is still used by those Churches. Indeed, it appears that from the period of the Council of Nice, in the fourth century, up to the present time, there has never been any difference in the views of the Western and Eastern Churches on this subject; and that the doctrine of both is equally expressed by the Catechism in present

use by the former, written by the Right Reverend Doctor Challoner, as follows :—

Q. What are the effects of the sacrament of baptism?

A. *Firstly*, it washes away original sin, in which we were all born, by reason of the sin of our first father, Adam. *Secondly*, it remits all actual sins which we ourselves have committed (in case we have committed any before baptism), both as to the guilt and pain. *Thirdly*, it infuses the habit of divine grace into our souls, and makes us the adopted children of God. *Fourthly*, it gives us a right and title to the kingdom of heaven. *Fifthly*, it imprints a character or spiritual mark in the soul. *Sixthly*, in fine, it lets us into the Church of God, and makes us children and members of the Church.

I now propose to state and answer in the following letter the various popular objections against the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration.

LETTER III.

DEAR SIR,—In my last letter I took exception to, and answered, the three grand statements in your discourse against the doctrine of the Church of England. Those statements may well be regarded as the pillars of your subject; for with them nearly all your arguments must either stand or fall. I endeavoured to shew that Baptism is an ordinance of saving import, and that the use of Water forms an essential part of the rite. It is for our readers to consider both sides of the controversy, and judge for themselves; but this can only be done in the light of revelation, and not in that of reason; for, after all, the question resolves itself into this: whether we are to walk by faith—belief in the Scriptures, or by sight—the con-

clusions of Rationalism; whether we shall, at the bidding of the prophet, "wash, and be clean," or, with the "honorable and mighty" warrior of this world, disdain such simplicity, saying, "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" and, in the pride of our philosophy, turn, like that "great man" did, and go away "in a rage."

In looking over the remainder of your objections, they appear to be either reiterations, in different forms, of those I have already answered, or else they refer to points of detail which ought to be considered to stand or fall with the main arguments. If, for instance, an individual broadly denies that the palace of Shushan ever existed, and then seeks to prove it by condemning the historian's account of its pillars of marble, beds of gold, and tessellated pavement, it ought to be quite sufficient to invalidate such an objector's declamation against these details if the challenged historian distinctly proves that the palace *did* really exist. For what can a person's denial of the contrivance of a thing be worth who is found to be so over head and ears in error as wrongly to deny the very existence of the thing itself? So, in like manner, with regard to the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, when it is clearly shewn that some persons erroneously deny it to be a doctrine of the Gospel, what can their arguments against the use of Water be worth? Surely it is not unreasonable to conclude that person to be wrong in the details of a matter who is manifestly wrong upon those main points on which all subordinate questions depend. Still, for the consideration of those brethren whose faith in the doctrine of the Church has been impaired by the sophistry of Rationalism, I have thought it desirable to notice, as briefly as the subject may admit of, the most plausible objections against the doctrine that I am acquainted with.

FIRST OBJECTION STATED AND ANSWERED.

UNGODLINESS AMONGST THE BAPTISED.—“*Look around and see what ungodly lives a great number of the Baptised lead. They are to be found in our gaols, in dens of infamy, and in the condemned cells. Some of them are so atrociously vile as to be accounted, even by the civil law, utterly unworthy to live upon the face of this fallen earth; and are we to be shocked by being told that these, the very scourings of society, have been Regenerated? Why, the thought is absolutely horrible! We, therefore, indignantly denounce the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration altogether.*”

I think it will be admitted that the above objection is put in as strong a light as the most violent opponent of the doctrine could well place it. In answer to this apparently formidable argument, I would at once premise that the validity of the doctrine is in no degree contingent upon the abiding faithfulness of all the Baptised, but depends upon whether the doctrine itself is a Gospel one or not,—whether Baptism is the divinely-appointed means of Regeneration and admission into the Christian Church—into that kingdom of grace upon earth, which to the faithful shall eventuate in the kingdom of glory in Heaven. And of its nature in this respect I have, to some extent, treated in the preceding letter.

There is evidently a misunderstanding, as well as a disagreement, between Christians on this subject; and my humble endeavour will be to remove the former as far as I can in what follows, believing that the meaning of Churchmen, with respect to these things, can only be understood in the light of the sacred writings. “In thy light we shall see light.” Now, whatever nomenclature Scripture employs to describe things with, the Church also employs to describe the same things, although such language always has been, and will be, misunderstood by persons conversant with only secular matters. It seems,

therefore, to be owing to an ignorance of the language of the Bible that many people take offence at the words "Saved" and "Regenerated," and other like words mentioned in connection with Baptism, not considering the limited sense in which such expressions are used both by the Scriptures and the Church. Such objectors ignorantly suppose that final and full Regeneration and Salvation are implied to be necessarily secured by every recipient of that ordinance, independent of faith and obedience on the part of such recipients. But such a construction is neither warranted by Scripture nor intended by the Church; and yet the terms employed, "Saved" and "Regenerated," are not only true in the limited sense intended, but are the only proper ones to be made use of.

To prove what has now been stated, it is submitted that there is a "Salvation" spoken of in Scripture, in a subordinate sense, both under the Mosaic and Christian economies;—a *present* Salvation, which, in each dispensation, marks very significantly a stage in God's gracious dealings with man;—a Salvation antecedent to, and, therefore, not necessarily securing, the full and final Salvation in the kingdom of Glory, but, as it were, a stage towards that happy consummation. And a prominent feature in the nature of that anterior and subordinate Salvation is this: that it effects a present deliverance from a spiritual thralldom, and thereby sets men free to live to God and serve Him. Let me now proceed to illustrate the truth of these remarks.

What happened to God's covenanted people, the Jews, we are taught, happened to them for ensamples, and are written for our admonition. We do well, then, to consider the analogy thus presented to us; and we shall find that, under the Mosaic economy, the Salvation I am speaking of was effected by a miracle of grace, and in this Christian economy it is effected by a mystery of grace; in the

former, God's people were delivered from the thraldom of the literal Egypt by the passage through the Red Sea ; while, in the latter, they are delivered from the Egypt of the flesh through the Water of Baptism.*

The Israelites were suffering grievous bondage under the iron rule of Egypt, and were mercifully delivered by a wonderful and visible exercise of divine power, being miraculously brought through the Red Sea, while their pursuing enemies were overwhelmed and destroyed. They saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore and rejoiced ; they sang the song of Moses—"The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my SALVATION ;" and the inspired volume goes on to say, "Thus the Lord 'SAVED' Israel that day out of the hands of the Egyptians." Here, then, was a wonderful deliverance—a great SALVATION actually experienced by the people ! So is it, in like manner, with Christians now :—

Thou hast a great deliverance wrought,
The staff from off my shoulder broke ;
Out of the house of bondage brought,
And freed me from the Egyptian yoke.
—*Christian Hymn.*

We were, when the Gospel met us, in hard bondage under the Egypt of the flesh ; for, if we were Gentiles, we were dead in trespasses and sins ; or, if Jews, then the motion of sins which were by the law worked in our members to bring forth fruit unto death ; but, whether Jews or Gentiles, we have also experienced a mighty deliverance, for "by His mercy He hath SAVED us, through the washing of Regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost," thereby

*"And also did'st safely lead the children of Israel thy people through the Red Sea, figuring thereby thy holy Baptism."—*Church Service.*

translating us from the power of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. And of this Salvation BAPTISM is both the instituted means and sign; for it is with immediate reference to the virtue of the Sacrament that the Christian says, "I heartily thank our heavenly Father that he hath called me to this state of salvation:" and it is in the faith of a PRESENT AND REAL DELIVERANCE that we also sing and rejoice, as did the Israelites, saying in our religious assemblies every Sunday, "O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our SALVATION."

From Egypt lately come,
Where death and darkness reign,
We seek our new and better home,
Where we our rest shall gain.

To Canaan's sacred bound
We haste with songs of joy,
Where peace and liberty are found,
And sweets that never cloy.

—*Christian Hymn.*

Secondly: The Salvation from Egypt, though very great and wonderful, proved not to secure a subsequent full and final salvation of the whole people; yet it marked very gloriously a stage in their progress towards the promised land; and, being wrought by the power and goodness of God, placed the people under a peculiar obligation to trust and obey Him. A course of probation and the river Jordan still lay between them and their Beulah; and what do we read? Why, that during their journey they provoked the Lord by refusing to hear His voice; so that many of them were overthrown in the wilderness. Here, then, was a considerable number of a covenanted people, who, having been once "SAVED" by a great deliverance, were afterwards destroyed; and that not through any inefficacy in the means which at first saved them; for,

under the leadership of Moses, they had ALL passed through the sea, and were equally placed upon the high road to the promised land. So, again, in like manner, with Christians: although they have been recipients of a great deliverance from the dominion of the flesh, "that (like the Egyptians) being dead wherein we were held," yet a life of probation, in which they are to work out their final Salvation with fear and trembling, still lies before them; and neither the light of Scripture, nor the facts with which we are surrounded, lead us to conclude that ALL who have been thus SAVED will perseveringly press towards the mark of our high calling in Christ Jesus, and attain to the Heavenly Jerusalem.

And this is the very matter in which we are specially admonished by the apostles. We are reminded of the experience of the "SAVED" Israelites: St. Paul informing us that, although they had ALL been baptised unto Moses, in the cloud and in the Sea, and had ALL partaken of the same spiritual meat and drink, yet were many of them overthrown in the wilderness through lusting after evil things. St. Jude also, speaking to the same effect, says, "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having 'SAVED' the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not." We gather from Scripture, then, that the people whose history is written for our admonition were, WITHOUT A SINGLE EXCEPTION, the subjects of a present and great "SALVATION," effected by a special act of God in their behalf; and that they were afterwards, for the most part, cut off in the wilderness.

We conclude, then, that we should speak of these things and understand religious nomenclature in the light of Holy Scripture, and not after the vain philosophy of worldly seminaries. And, seeing that neither the dignity nor efficacy of the Sacrament which baptised the people unto

Moses, in the cloud and in the Sea,* was one whit impaired by the subsequent unbelief of the thousands who perished in the wilderness, so should we not undervalue the precious Sacrament of Baptism because of the unbelief and unfaithfulness of many who have been recipients of the same; but rather hold fast the faith by implicitly believing the Scriptures, which plainly tell us that we Christians have been "ALL" baptised into one body (the Church), and have ALL been made to drink into one Spirit." And thus do I answer the first and most popular objection against the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration—viz., "Ungodliness amongst the Baptised."

SECOND OBJECTION STATED AND ANSWERED.

ST. PAUL'S WORDS TO THE CORINTHIANS.—*St. Paul said, in his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, 1st chap., "I thank God that I baptised none of you, but Crispus and Gaius." And again, "For Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the Gospel."*

Now, dissenters from the doctrine of Baptismal grace construe those words of the apostle in such a manner as to imply a disparagement of Baptism, and as affording a warrant for esteeming the rite to be of little or no importance. But it may be seen that such a construction is not only unwarranted by the sense in which the words are to be understood in connection with the context, and the evident design of the apostle in the matter he is treating, but is also at variance with the general tenor of Scripture teaching on the subject of Christian Baptism; for that

* "The Sacraments of the Jews are types of ours, and their punishments examples for us."—Preface to 1 Cor., chap. x.

teaching generally inculcates an exalted estimate of the grace of God vouchsafed therein.

1st. We have John the Baptist, who, when the question of purification arose (mark it well, PURIFICATION), in consequence of the discovery by the Jews that Christ also baptised, sufficiently indicated the contrast of the two baptisms, and the august character of that ministered by Christ, in saying, "Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all. He that is of the earth (that is, myself) is earthy. He that cometh from Heaven (that is, Christ) is above all."

2nd. We have Christ's solemn testimony to Nicodemus, that, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

3rd. We have, again, the words of our Lord, by St. Mark, quoted in your text, and laying down Baptism as one of the two conditions of Salvation—"He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved."

4th. We have the exhortation of the apostle St. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, to the multitude of Jews which believed his preaching—"Repent, and be baptised, every one of you, for the remission of sins."

5th. We have the divine message, sent through Ananias to Saul, after he believed, commanding him, saying, "Arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins."

6th. We have the apostle St. Paul, knowing the distinction between the ministry of John and that of the HEAVENLY ONE, causing a number of persons who had been baptised by John to be re-baptised in the name of Jesus Christ.

7th. We have the several additional passages of Scripture adduced in the preceding letter, referring directly to Baptism, not only as a means of grace, but also as an

instrument of Salvation, to which may be yet added another text involving the same precious truth, "For as many of us as have been baptised into Jesus Christ have put on Christ."

Surely, then, the person who puts such a construction on the apostle's words cited in the objection as that I have mentioned, becomes suddenly oblivious to the harmonious and weighty testimony to the grace of Baptism which pervades both the Gospels and the epistles; seizes upon the mere fragment of a discourse, apart from its context, and fails altogether to "compare spiritual things with spiritual."

The sense of the apostle's words—"I thank God that I baptised none of you but Crispus and Gaius"—must be understood in connection with the context, and in view of the object he was evidently aiming at, which was to correct in the Corinthians the common tendency to think too much of their respective ministers, who were only the instruments of grace, and too little of Christ, who was the source and fountain of that grace. By such sentiments they impaired the unity of the body, and introduced divisions among themselves, some saying, I am of Paul; and others, I am of Apollos; and others, I am of Cephas; and others, I am of Christ; whereas they all ought to have said the same thing, "I am of Christ," the Lord being immediately the Head of every man as well as Head of the Church collectively.

It was, then, in a remonstrance against those divisions, and a tendency to the baneful worship of ministers, that the apostle uses a series of interrogatives, each one of which is calculated to exhibit conspicuously the incongruity of such conduct: "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptised in the name of Paul?—I thank God that I baptised none of you, but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that I baptised in my own

name." The reason given by the apostle for being thankful at not having baptised many was not because he would now represent the ordinance as being one whit less important than he had indicated it to be in his epistles to the Romans and Colossians—very far from that ; but merely because the fact helped his present argument : for, on the one hand, it precluded the Corinthians from founding a justification of their divisions, and an inordinate admiration of the apostle upon anything very special ministered by his own hands ; and, on the other, it left him free to disavow every particle of glory attaching to the plenitude of their endowment with the grace of God, given them by Jesus Christ, by whom, he declared, they were enriched in all utterance and in all knowledge.

And now let us consider what follows : "For Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the Gospel." How are we to understand this? Are we to conclude that a disparagement of Baptism is implied? I would reverently and yet emphatically answer, No ! and submit that Baptism is to be maintained in its own proper place, and that an exalted one too ; yet not the first place, but the second. First, the Cross ; secondly, the Font : both of grace ; Glory be to God !

Relying upon the sure word of Scripture, as upon an everlasting rock, I venture to say that the apostle only meant that the first and chief object of his mission was not to baptise, but rather to pursue the necessary antecedent ministry of preaching the Gospel as his own special function. But the apostle was very far from meaning that he was not to baptise at all, or that the ordinance could possibly be dispensed with ; for, in addition to those persons he mentions in this place as having baptised, we read of him afterwards causing to be baptised no less than twelve disciples at one time, at Ephesus ; and, again, the Philippian Jailer and all his house, in the middle-

of the night ; and we may safely conclude that, if the administration of the rite was necessary for all those persons, it was also necessary for every other individual converted under the apostle's ministry ; and, indeed, we well know that Baptism is a Catholic ordinance, and not a whit more needful for one individual than another, but equally so for all.

Seeing, then, that St. Paul had baptised Crispus and Gaius, and the household of Stephanas, *before* he said, "Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the Gospel," and that, *after* saying so, he baptised twelve disciples at Ephesus, and the Jailer and his household at Philippi, it is clear that the expression, "Christ sent me not to baptise," is to be understood only in a qualified sense, as meaning that it was not the primary duty of his mission.

And, be it observed, that not one of St. Paul's Epistles is addressed to any other than baptised persons ; nor would any one of them be applicable to any other. I would further remark, in conclusion, that the order of the operations of grace is indicated in the apostle's questions : "Was Paul crucified for you ?" "Or were ye baptised in the name of Paul ?" and would point out the significant and exalted position assigned therein to Baptism, that it immediately follows a belief in the preached Atonement, and that there is nothing whatever between the Cross and the Font, the former being the Well-spring, and the latter the Channel, of grace. Surely, then, the apostle, jealous for his Master's glory, while modestly disclaiming credit for the abundant grace of God vouchsafed to the baptised Corinthians, does inadvertently magnify rather than disparage that cardinal ministration of the Gospel by his redundant testimony to its happy effects. "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ ; that in everything ye are enriched by him in all utterance and in all knowledge ; even

as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you : so that ye come behind in no gift ; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ : who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." Now, these words of the apostle apply exclusively to persons who have been Baptised into Christ ; for such only, according to the New Testament, could be in everything enriched by Him ; and to suppose otherwise would be to render the plain declarations of holy writ unintelligible, by depriving them of their distinctive significations.

"Rejoice, believer in the Lord,
Who makes your cause His own ;
The hope that's founded on His WORD
Shall ne'er be overthrown."

THIRD OBJECTION STATED AND ANSWERED.

ST. PAUL'S WORDS TO THE JAILER OF PHILIPPI.

THE case of the Philippian Jailer is often referred to by some preachers as an argument against the doctrine of the Church. They quote the answer of St. Paul to the Jailer : " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved ;" and, forgetful of our Lord's teaching, present it as an instance in which Salvation immediately accrues from the simple reception of the words spoken independent of, and complete without, that administrative act, viz., Baptism, which is seen in all other cases immediately to follow, and, as it were, to crown the preaching of Christ. But it may be seen that there are no just grounds for investing this case with such a peculiarity, merely because a command to be baptised did not instantly accompany the command to believe on the Lord Jesus

Christ—a course which, upon reflection, must appear to be incompatible with the Gospel procedure. We cannot doubt but that, in the minds of the apostles, believing on the Lord Jesus Christ necessarily embraced a submission to His commands, and that they, at the outset, intended to enjoin Baptism after they should be accepted as the ambassadors of the Lord : and as, in pursuing the narrative, we find that they spake unto him the Word of the Lord, and that the Jailer and all his were “straightway” baptised, we conclude that the word of the Lord thus spoken comprehended the command to be baptised ; and the significant word “straightway” forbids us to allow that there was any delay in administering the ordinance after they believed the words spoken to them by Paul and Silas. There is, therefore, no such peculiarity in this case as some would endeavour to make out ; for the necessity and dignity of Baptism seem to be fully maintained in it.

The midnight prayers and praises of the Saints to the heavenly throne, audible to the inmates of the prison, were the precursors to an earthquake which had the wonderful effect of opening the prison doors and loosing the fetters of the prisoners. The Jailer was at once overcome by what he saw, heard, and apprehended. This marvellous earthquake, together with the calm dignity of the servants of God—a dignity alike superior to the power of the rulers of this world, and the awful convulsions of Nature—seem to have been regarded by the Jailer as a divine attestation of the mission of Paul and Silas, and to have induced the belief that they really were what they professed to all the world to be, and for which they now rejoicingly suffered persecution. So that, whatever obduracy of unbelief, or whatever contempt for the followers of the “despised Nazarene,” may have existed in the heart of the Jailer, it is apparent that the same was now subdued in him, before the apostles said one word to him

about Jesus Christ. The words used by the Jailer to the men whom he had shortly before "thrust into the inner prison and made fast in the stocks" clearly indicate the change of mind concerning them which God had already wrought in him; for he came trembling and said *respectfully*, "Sirs! what must I do to be saved?" His position now was analagous to that of the Jews on the day of Pentecost, when they believed the preaching of the apostles, and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" It was analagous in that he now *accredited* Paul and Silas to be the servants of God. Well, they said to him, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved;" they answered him differently from that in which St. Peter and the eleven answered the Jews, for they said, "Repent, and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." How is that? Is there one way of salvation for the Jews and another for the Gentile Jailer? One would reverently say, certainly not; and confidently believe that the apostles on the day of Pentecost would have given the Jews the same answer as Paul and Silas gave the Jailer, if their question had been put *before* Jesus Christ had been preached to them; and that Paul and Silas would have given the Jailer the same answer as the apostles gave the Jews, if his question had been put *after* Jesus Christ had been preached to him. But, be this as it may, I trust sufficient has been said to shew that the case before us is quite in accordance with the common procedure of the Gospel, being simply one in which, 1st, Jesus Christ, our Saviour, is preached to a sinner; 2nd, that preaching is believed; and 3rd, the believer is baptised. Whatever, therefore, the virtue of Baptism is declared to be in other cases, we ought to believe it to be the same in this; and a fair and comprehensive view of the case will afford no grounds for supposing that St. Paul's general instructions touching the grace of Christian

Baptism, in his Epistles to the Romans and Colossians, are not as applicable to the case of the Jailer of Phillipi as to that of any other member of the Christian Church.

FOURTH OBJECTION STATED AND ANSWERED.

THE BAPTISM OF LITTLE CHILDREN.—“*But how can a little child possess the repentance and faith necessary to a right reception of Baptism, and what can it understand about the Sacrament to be in any wise benefitted by it?*”

The answer is that it is not essential that a little child should understand the nature of Baptism in order to be a recipient of the grace of it, any more than it was essential under the law that an infant of eight days should understand the rite of circumcision, of which it was a recipient, and whereby it was fully brought into the same covenant as its parents; or that the young children upon whom Christ laid His hands, and took up in His arms and blessed them, should understand the nature of the blessing they were receiving. Perhaps the person who makes the objection here anticipated has lived for twenty years or more unbaptised; and he may be known as one of good moral character, and an active, intelligent, and pious member of a congregation. Well, however desirous one may be to think and speak charitably of such a person, one can only view his position in the light of revelation; for we can know nothing certainly of religious truth but what is derived from the Holy Scriptures: “Thy word is truth.” However good, therefore, his intentions may have been, it is impossible to regard such a person as being within the category distinguished by the apostle in the words, “For as many of us as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ;” or as having complied with

the terms of Salvation comprised in your text—"He that believeth and is Baptised shall be saved." But, whether this be admitted or not, let us now consider such an one coming at length to be baptised, having been instructed in the truths of the Gospel; and let us suppose that he sees an infant being brought to the same Font, and is greatly offended at it. But why, I would ask, should that infant, which has committed no actual sin, and for whom Christ died, be less acceptable to the Almighty than one who has often sinned since he was as helpless as that babe? Or is it to be assumed that the intelligence such a person has acquired, and the knowledge of the Gospel which has been imparted to him, are things so meritorious as to more than compensate for his sins? For, unless this position be taken up, it seems impossible to give any reason for supposing him to be a more acceptable candidate for the divine favour than that innocent and unconscious babe concerning whom it is written—"It is not the will of your Father, which is in Heaven, that one of these little ones should perish;" and again—"Their angels do always behold the face of my Father, which is in heaven;" and again—"He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them;" and we may be well assured that whom HE thus blesses are blessed indeed. No one will suppose that the fullest Baptismal blessing can surpass in richness that vouchsafed to the little children by Him who is infinitely above His own appointments, and who "took them up in His arms and blessed them."

In the words and acts of our Saviour may be seen the good-will and favour of God towards little children, as such, irrespective of either intelligence, or repentance, or faith, on their part. If, then, the desire of those persons who brought little children directly to Christ, without any authority for doing so, either written or traditional, but merely through a belief in His goodness, was so signally

rewarded by our compassionate Redeemer, how can any one venture to say that, with such an example before us, it would be wrong now to bring little children to Him even by a mode for which there is no express authority?

Again: If it be conceded, as it must be, that little children may still be brought to the Saviour, then the propriety of bringing them through a means instituted by Himself, as a door of entrance for mankind generally into the kingdom of heaven, and in the absence of any other known means, must be obvious; for we must be blind indeed if we cannot perceive that persons who now intelligently bring their infants to be Baptised have not only the same desire for God's blessing that the women in the Gospel had, but also join to that desire a reverent submission to His now well-known appointment; at the same time clearly understanding and believing that whoever is brought to the Font, whether he be a child or an adult, it is freely to receive a blessing from God, for Christ's sake, without money and without price. That person, therefore, must have strange thoughts of the Saviour who thinks that because a respect for His ordinance is joined to the same trust in His goodness as the women in the Gospel exhibited, He will, on that account, deny the blessing. Yet such is manifestly the position they all take up who object to infant Baptism, dispute it as they may.*

*If it be an "awful" thing, as such persons say it is, to involve unconscious babes, and little children, in the solemnities of Baptism, surely it must be ten times more so to bring them unauthorised into immediate contact with the great Author of those solemnities. Yet this is precisely what the women in the Gospel did, and were graciously received. It may be that the disciples, in forbidding them, thought the women very presumptuous, but what did the Lord say? "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven"—and, knowing this, who is there amongst us that would not desire to do as the women did—bring our little children

Moreover, the truth of infant Baptism was typified under the law, for the law was a schoolmaster to the Jews to bring them to Christ; it therefore, to some extent, educated them for the Gospel, being "the shadow of good things to come." And it may be seen in the Gospels that our Lord conversed with the Jews as with a people who ought to have been trained for God under the Mosaic institutions: "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" We look therefore in the Gospel for the antitypes of conspicuous national ceremonies under the law. Thus we have the daily service of the Church, with its sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving corresponding with the daily service of the tabernacle. Again, we have in the holy Eucharist the repeated commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross once for all, as the antitypes of the recurring sacrifices on the great day of atonement; then we have the celebration of our Saviour's ascension into

directly to the great Author of all the solemnities and responsibilities pertaining to Baptism, to find in Him a beneficent Saviour. Would the thought of the obligations it would entail upon the children deter us from doing so? Certainly not; then why should any misgivings prevent us from bringing them to Him by Baptism? for the very most that could be said against that act, were we to assume that the ordinance was not intended for children, would be, that, having an invitation from the Saviour to bring our little children to Him, we had brought them in a way which he had appointed to receive and bless men and women; and if that is to be accounted a bold act, or an "unwarrantable" one, or a "presumptuous" one, it is as nothing in comparison with what the women in the Gospel did, who, by such "boldness," obtained a blessing.

As for the "responsibilities" upon a Baptised child, they are not greater than those upon one whom He has taken up in His arms and blessed; for, in the latter case, the obligation is to believe in His loving kindness, and to love Him and live accordingly: and in the former, it cannot be more; for, under the Gospel dispensation, it is not so much God's majesty as His love that challenges our obligations. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

Heaven, "where he ever liveth to make intercession for us," corresponding with the entrance of the High Priest into the most holy place with the intercessory blood of the covenant. But while we glance at these great ceremonies of the law, and the things they foreshadowed, there is yet another one equally conspicuous as being of universal obligation in Israel, and an indispensable qualification for entering upon the worship of the sanctuary and enjoying its covenant blessings; and that ceremony was the circumcision of male infants on the eighth day;* and the thing indicated by it was PURIFICATION. Where, then, I ask, is the antitype in the Gospel to that significant ceremony towards young children, which, while it was expressive of the purification of the recipient by the blood of the covenant, was also the very door of admission into that covenant? I answer that it is to be seen in the Baptism of young children, an ordinance imparting purification,†

*Not only throughout the period of the ceremonial law, but even from the time of Abraham, God had established His covenant with infants, and there was no religious principle more universally understood for upwards of a thousand years, nor more deeply rooted in the constitution of the Jewish mind, than that involved in the rite which admitted infants into the divine covenant. God is unchangeable; and since He had for ages revealed His goodness in this particular, concerning infants, there does not appear to have been any occasion for our Lord, during his ministry, to refer to a principle so long established and thoroughly understood by the whole house of Israel. If a change in the divine procedure in this respect had been intended, it would indeed have been a very great change; and we might then well wonder at no intimation of it being given in the Gospel; wherefore, the fact that no such intimation was given is a powerful argument that no such great change was designed.

†Yes; PURIFICATION, expressed also in this form: "By the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;" *i.e.*, Christian circumcision—the circumcision of the Spirit—the cir-

and also forming the gateway to the kingdom of heaven upon earth—the Christian Church.

I am now content to conclude this branch of my subject with the lines of an eminent Christian poet, in which is indicated the largeness of the grace of infant baptism :—

God of eternal truth and love,
Vouchsafe the promised aid we claim ;
Thine own great ordinance approve ;
The child Baptised into thy name
Partaker of Thy nature make,
And give him all Thine image back.

Father, if such Thy sovereign will,
If Jesus did the rite enjoin,
Annex Thy hallowing Spirit seal,
And let the grace attend the sign ;
The seed of endless life impart,
Take for Thine own this infant's heart.

Answer on him Thy wisdom's end,
In present and eternal good ;
Whate'er Thou didst for man intend—
Whate'er Thou hast on man bestowed—
Now to this favored child be given
PARDON, and HOLINESS, and HEAVEN.

—*Baptismal Hymn.*

cumcision “made without hands,” in contradistinction to that of which our Lord and all the Jews were recipients—the circumcision instituted by Christ, viz., holy Baptism, as indicated in the explanatory context : “buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith in the operation of God (*towards you therein*), who hath raised him from the dead.”—Colossians ii.

FIFTH OBJECTION STATED AND ANSWERED.

THE BAPTISM OF SIMON THE SORCERER.—“*But was not Simon the Sorcerer Baptised? and yet we find him unregenerate immediately after the rite; for he incurred the holy indignation of the apostle, who declared that his heart was not right in the sight of God.*”

Well; part of the testimony concerning Simon is as follows: “Then Simon himself believed also; and when he was baptised he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.” I at once grant, then, that, although Simon “BELIEVED,” and was baptised, he did not thereupon immediately manifest the grace of regeneration; so that, if we could be justified in saying that, in this case, Baptism did not implant the grace of regeneration, we should certainly be equally justified in saying that BELIEVING did not; for, it is as distinctly recorded of Simon that he “BELIEVED,” as that he was baptised. But I submit that, although the case at first sight looks very unfavorable, there is no warrant for concluding that Simon’s faith and baptism were necessarily altogether vain, because their proper fruit did not immediately appear. The case seems indeed to be an exceptional one, and to stand out in contrast with the usual results of ministerial acts by the Lord’s servants in the apostolic age; yet, one feels that it would be both irreverent and rash to pronounce upon it on that account.

It sometimes happens that a particular circumstance seems to contradict a general truth; but it would be most wrong to surrender the latter on that account. No one would venture to deny that the true and proper effect of our Lord’s companying with twelve disciples was to make them good; and the fact of its not having that result in the case of one of them, is no argument against the virtuous efficacy of His companionship as a general truth. In like

manner, the true and proper effect of a man "believing" and being baptised is shewn in all the other Scriptures on this subject to be "newness of life;" in other words, Regeneration: and the fact of there being the record of a case in which Faith and Baptism did not produce the immediate manifestation of that effect is an insufficient argument against their general efficacy.

Such, then, would be my answer to the objection we are dealing with, if I gave it an unqualified acceptance in the form in which it is presented to us, and assented to all that seems to be implied in it; and particularly that because the grace of Baptism may not be *immediately* manifested, therefore none has been vouchsafed, and its manifestation may not thenceforward be expected. So far, however, is that from being my view, that I believe the development of the grace of Baptism is in most cases only progressive, and that there have been some instances in which it seemed to be in abeyance for a very long time, when it might well have been said to an individual whose Regeneration was afterwards unmistakeably manifested—"Thy heart is not right in the sight of God." There are things far beyond our comprehension in the operations of grace, as well as in those of nature: and we know not how long a particular grain of the "seed of the sower" may lie in the earth before it germinates; and because the plant makes no appearance at the time we look for it, we may not therefore be justified in concluding that the seed has been sown in vain.

"That seed will buried lie,
Till Thou the increase give;
Yet then, although it seem to die,
It shall revive and live."

But, without any reference whatever to Simon's case, let us suppose it could be distinctly shewn that a large number of other cases of baptised believers have ultimately

proved hopeless; that ought not to impair our confidence one whit, since we are led to expect that such things will happen; for, as a great falling away from the faith is predicted, there must be many who were once believers, but afterwards cease to be so. The truth we rely on remains the same, whether people hold fast the faith or not. Our faith is based not upon what we see in one another, but upon the word of God; and, while I contend for the truth of Baptismal grace, in all its fullness, I am solicitous not to overstate it, but to keep close to the Scriptures. Whatever, then, may be said about the case of Simon, or ten thousand subsequent ones in which baptised believers may have "fallen from grace," I can perceive that such things are not incompatible with the doctrine of Sacramental grace; for I am not professing to discuss the continuance, or otherwise, of a person's standing, and adhesion to Christ; but I accept the Holy Scriptures, of which the Church of Christ, "the pillar and ground of the truth," is the living expositor, as my rule of faith; and from them I satisfactorily learn, and most assuredly rely upon it, that by baptism believers are made recipients of Gospel grace, after the mode adverted to in those apostolic instructions already amply quoted.

In conclusion, I would observe that it is only to the baptised, as such—to those who *have* thereby been the recipients of the grace of God—that the solemn admonition of the apostle applies—"Brethren, I beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain;" and above all, that of our Saviour—"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away."

Of life thou art the tree;
My immortality;
Feed this tender branch of Thine,
Ceaseless influence divine;
Thou, the tree, the heavenly vine,
Grafted into Thee I live.—*Christian Hymn.*

CONCLUSION.

And now, dear Sir, I have accomplished fully as much as I designed to do upon first undertaking to notice your animadversions upon the doctrine of the Church of England; and have endeavoured in the foregoing pages to shew, and prove, and I trust successfully:—

1st. That Baptismal Regeneration is the doctrine of the Church of England; and therefore your emphatic statements to that effect are quite true.

2nd. That Baptismal Regeneration is a cardinal doctrine of the Gospel.

3rd. That the standing of the baptised is analagous to that of the children of Israel, when they were delivered from the Egyptians by being brought through the Red Sea.

And, considering the fixity of deep thought needful in an essay of this kind, and the multiplicity of secular demands upon the time of one in such humble circumstances as myself, I trust it may be admitted that the subject has been treated as comprehensively as could well be expected, whatever may be the general defects of the undertaking.

It would be gratifying to me if some one more competent than myself would come forward in what appears to me to be so honorable a cause, seeing that we are exhorted to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints. Were anyone to do so, it is likely I should benefit by it very much, in having my faith strengthened, as I anticipate that many of the statements contained in this Reply would receive confirmation at the hands of any well-informed and true-hearted Churchman; I should, therefore, be both strengthened and comforted by a labour

in this direction, on the part of any qualified Christian brother.

I am not aware that any answer to your discourse has already appeared in this colony, although I suppose many have been published in England; all I can say is, that I have no knowledge of any in either place, and that the view of Baptism presented in these letters is the result of much prayerful study of the subject. Regretting that there should be a difference between us upon a point of Christian doctrine, and trusting that I have said nothing in this Reply to give you just cause for offence, and wishing you every prosperity,

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

C. J. PERRY,

WILLIAMSTOWN, VICTORIA,
August 1st, 1868.

THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,
METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE,
LONDON.