

individual disciples; but these individual disciples would necessarily associate together, drawn to each other by the love which drew them to Him, and their love to Christ would be the bond of their union and the source of their love to each other.

Their association as disciples must be shown in their manifest union for the service and glory of their Lord, and for their mutual spiritual advantage. The love of Jesus drew them to Him, and called them out from others into Christian and church relation. Under these conditions no one would suppose himself isolated or feel disposed to act alone with regard to the Lord's Supper. There is no intimation in the Scriptures that any disciple ever so acted with regard to it.

NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING.

It is, if we follow the teachings of the New Testament, an institution for the associated disciples of Jesus,—for His churches, wherever established. So it is restricted to them, and no one outside of the churches has any thing to do with it.—There may be Christians who are not members of churches, but they have nothing to do with this institution if it is designed for the church,—and a church is composed of baptized believers, if the New Testament is the guide and the authority in the matter. The information given respecting the Lord's Supper is very scanty, and there seems to be no decided and discriminating command connected with it, either with regard to persons, time, place, elements or administrator.

The general, the universal practice of Christians has been to associate in churches, to regard baptism as necessary to membership, and membership necessary to admission to the Lord's table. Those who had not been brought in were ineligible; and those who had gone out, or been ejected for any cause, were prohibited; such is the prevailing conduct of churches to-day. As far as the New Testament instructs us this practice is confirmed,—here there seems to be no room for quibble or doubt. It is safe to follow inspired instruction, but it is not safe to follow our own preferences or notions when they disagree with Divine teachings.

The following passages of scripture contain the record of its observance: 1. Cor. xi. 23-25; Acts ii. 41, 42; Acts xx; 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

No person or collection of persons is authorized to make any changes in the inspired teachings of the New Testament, nor had any person or persons power to make a Christian rite a ceremony, or any authority in matters of faith; the whole work of the church of Christ and its officers is purely ministrative and declarative. None may add to the word, none may take from it,—all departure from it is error, or rebellion, or both.

It is to be regarded as true that "there can be no greater imposition attempted upon the just sense of common men than to affirm that there is in the New Testament, either in the Gospels or the Epistles, a pattern of any external part of the church?" If so, we do not know that there is a Christian church on earth, or has been at any time since the canon of the New Testament was completed. This, surely, is true, if nothing else is on this subject, that a Christian church is a combination or association of Christ's disciples for the purpose of obeying His requirements, observing His ordinances and carrying forward His designs. This will necessarily bring such an association under the teachings given in the New Testament, and these teachings will mould its outward form and govern its inward administration. In all the will of Christ will be supreme, and that will can be ascertained from the New Testament alone. It is a question worthy of consideration whether any organization can take the name or assume to be a church of Christ, a Christian church, that does not seek to be modelled and guided, both in spirit and form, by the teachings of the Christian Scriptures. According to the teachings of his book none were admitted to the fellowship of the apostles but believers, who as such were baptized in the sacred name; these were members of the church, were the "ecclesia," and none but these were partakers of the Lord's Supper.

OTHER DENOMINATIONS.

Among the Roman Catholics, going to mass—this mass is their perversion of the Lord's Supper,—but going to mass must be preceded by confession, by confirmation and by baptism, or what they call baptism; but which they admit is not the baptism of the New Testament. They establish the change in this ordinance on the authority of the church,—and also the change in the supper,

and the withholding of the cup from the laity.

The Episcopalians provide thus:

"So many as intend to be partakers of the holy communion shall signify their names to the curate at least some time the day before."—*Preface to Common English Prayer Book.*

After the order of confirmation it is declared,—

"And there shall none be admitted to the holy communion until such time as they be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed."—*English and American Prayer Book.*

In the Episcopal Methodist discipline there are three directions concerning the Lord's Supper. The first respects the attitude, kneeling, standing or sitting, as may be chosen. The second is, "Let no person that is not a member of our church be admitted to the communion without examination, and some token given by an elder or deacon." The third is, "No person shall be admitted to the communion who is guilty of any practice for which we would exclude a member of our church."

The Baptists believe that the Scriptures restrict communion to such as have been baptized on a profession of their faith; and believing as they do, that believers only are required to be baptized, that believers only were baptized by the apostles and their immediate followers, that baptized believers only were members of churches and partakers of the Lord's Supper, and that immersion only is baptism,—they are not at liberty to make any change, and have received no authority in the matter, but must follow the Scripture order. If there is no Scripture order in this ordinance,—there is no ordinance instituted. They cannot say with the Roman Catholic, the church has a right to change the ordinances, or, rather, "the Pope has power to change times, to abrogate laws, and to dispense with all things, even the precepts of Christ." They cannot say with the Episcopalian, "The baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the church as most agreeable with the institution of Christ," for it does not agree with it.—Christ did not so institute. They cannot say, "He shall dip him in water, or pour water upon him." They cannot say, "The church has power to decree rites or ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith," the remaining part of this twentieth article they can fully accept. They can say with the "Sanger Catechism," "Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, and so strangers from the covenant of promise, till they profess their faith in Christ and obedience to Him;" but they cannot say, "Infants descending from parents, either both or but one of them professing faith in Christ and obedience to Him, are in that respect within the covenant, and are to be baptized;" for they do not believe any such thing, nor can such teaching be found in the Christian Scriptures. They cannot admit that any one has been baptized who did not personally desire to be. Whatever the action performed, the formula used, or the circumstances of the person, if without his consent or against his will, it is not baptism according to the teachings and requirements of Jesus or the practice of the apostles. They cannot therefore say, "Let every adult person, and the parents of every child to be baptized, have the choice either of immersion, sprinkling or pouring." We have no choice in the matter. We have simply to do what Jesus commanded; if we do not know what that is it is safe to wait till we do. We are under no obligation to obey an unintelligible command,—such a command nullifies itself. Here, then, we must rest; in obedience is our only safety; we have no authority to set aside or alter in any respect the teachings and requirements of Christ and His inspired apostles.

The second letter deals with the exterior of the question, and shows that

BAPTISTS ARE NOT THE ONLY CLOSE COMMUNIONISTS,

and asks:—

Is it true that all the obloquy that is supposed to attach to what is called close communion belongs to the Baptists? Have other denominations of professing Christians any claim or privilege with regard to the views they hold and the practices they maintain as churches which the Baptists have not? Is it honest, is it in agreement with Christian principles to charge any people with bigotry and uncharitableness for carrying out Scripture teaching? Baptists affirm and maintain that no people calling themselves Christians have any right to change or depart from the teachings of the New Testament, and certainly no right to cancel or render unnecessary an ordi-

nance of Christ, or throw it into disuse. To cancel Christ's ordinance of believer's baptism is impossible; to render it unnecessary is equally so,—but it may be and has been thrown into disuse to a large extent; but it remains in His Word as a specific requirement, a distinct command, and no one can say he has obeyed that command who has not been of his own will and desire baptized as a believer. Being baptized does not make any one a disciple; it is an act of obedience by which one who believes puts on Christ, and declares himself a disciple. Baptism does not make a child, an unconscious infant, or any one who does not believe in Christ a disciple, a child of God, an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven; it does not wash away original sin. Such assertions are without Scripture foundation. Baptism, to meet the requirements of the New Testament, must be a personal act of obedience, or it is nothing; and they only who have personally and freely sought it and submitted to it have been baptized. But for the existence of Baptist churches Christ's ordinance would have been ignored, changed into something utterly unlike what He commanded. Is not the persistence of Baptists in maintaining this ordinance, and their adherence to Scripture example and teaching with regard to the Lord's Supper the cause of the unkind and unchristian remarks on the subject of communion?

INTERCOMMUNION.

There is very little intercommunion among other denominations. There does not appear to be any greater affinity or fraternity between pedobaptist churches and the Free-Will Baptists, who practise unrestricted communion, than between those churches and Baptists who do not admit this practice; nor indeed between different denominations of pedobaptists among themselves. There has not been until recently any particular disposition to go together, nor is there much disposition even now manifested in that direction. If there is nothing to keep them from intercommunion, their division into different denominations is schismatic. When churches practising open communion and infant baptism become united it will be more consistent for them to talk of the evils of sectarianism; and till they do so unite it is neither just nor honest to blame others for separating from them who have greater reason for doing so than they have for separating from each other. But is not the whole thing done for effect, and to make a bugbear of apostolic practice? It is always safe and right to follow the teachings of the Christian Scriptures in what we believe and in what we do. If they give no definite teachings, they have no authority. The teachings of the evangelists and apostles must be authoritative, and what they did with regard to the arrangement, and order, and administration of Christian churches must be of equal importance with what they said and wrote. Baptists take these positions as alone defensible from the New Testament, viz.: Christ commanded believers only to be baptized. The apostles baptized. The apostles baptized only those who declared themselves believers. Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper as a memorial feast, to be observed by His associated disciples. None but these celebrated the memorial feast in the days of the apostles. To baptize is to dip, to immerse. Every act of obedience is a voluntary act, personally performed; this is especially true of Christian obedience. In these positions we have the outward form of the Christian church, and by these we are assured that involuntary membership in a Christian church is impossible. What, then, is the meaning and purpose of the continual harping upon the communion question, and what is gained to Christian harmony and Christian fellowship by the practice of inviting others than members of the churches in which it is celebrated to partake of it? The common expression, it is the Lord's table, and all His disciples have a right to it, is sheer nonsense. Why not say it is the Lord's church, and every disciple of His has a right to take a part in its affairs, and so claim the right to act in the transaction of its business? Or say it is God's air we breathe and every man has a right to breathe it anywhere he pleases? No man has a right to shut another out of his house, and so hinder him from breathing God's air where he may choose. It is God's food men eat, and no man has a right to exclude another man from his table.

We do not question a man's citizenship when we do not vote with him. We do not question a man's piety by belonging to another church. Churches of every name have their own rights,—their own privileges,—and no one may consistently inter-

fere with them; and of all people the Baptists are least disposed to do so; they have always contended against and resisted such attempts, proclaiming everywhere that Christ alone is Lord of conscience. They cannot, therefore, depart from what they believe the Lord requires and the Scriptures teach concerning the ordinances of Christ. He instituted but two for His church, and their order is Baptism and the Lord's Supper; baptism the initiatory rite; the Lord's Supper the memorial feast of His associated disciples.

It is not a very long while since Baptist churches were regarded as unfit to exist anywhere. They have been subject to persecution from every other church that has had the power to persecute. The members of them and the pastors, so far from being desired to commune with other churches, have been, in this land, even, fined, imprisoned, whipped and banished. They have increased and multiplied, notwithstanding all these, and are still multiplying. Is not the persistent misrepresentation on the subject of communion a manifestation of the same spirit that was prevalent in those days?

It may be well to inquire what is meant by unrestricted communion. Does it mean that every man who thinks himself a Christian, or professes to be one, has a right to go to the Lord's Supper, anywhere, in any Christian church, wherever he may be when it is administered? or does it mean that every church is bound by Christian courtesy and charity at the celebration of the Lord's Supper to invite every person present to participate who thinks himself a Christian or desires to be one, or desires to partake of the Lord's Supper with them? or is the invitation to have any restrictions? Is it to be restricted to members of churches, Christian churches, evangelical Christian churches? Then with whom is the right and responsibility of determining the eligibility? Is it with the individuals themselves? Not so would they be admitted into the church. Perhaps there is no right or responsibility in the matter. Perhaps there is.

No one ought to commune with any church with which he is not in fellowship, and could not become a member.

FROM THE EASY EXPECTORATION, increased respiratory power of the Lungs, and the removal of irritation, manifest from cessation of cough, and other alarming symptoms, after using Fellows' Compound Syrup of Hypophosphites, it is clear that the formation of tuberculous matter is not only stopped, but that already deposited is being carried away.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

A MASONIC BAPTISM.

Mr Editor,—

I was not aware till recently that Free Masonry had any denominationalism connected with it or that members of any church were necessarily compromised by connection with the fraternity. The following from the Washington Star is a very significant comment on the practice of Infant Baptism. Being a Baptist I have the same objection to such a ceremonial in a lodge as if it, with somewhat less of parade, were performed on infants in a church and called a Christian ordinance. I am not surprised that "it has been censured as an irreverent imitation of Christian Baptism." It appears to me open to that objection. The Messenger being a Baptist paper, you will not I trust object to publishing the article for the information of your readers, although you will not of course approve of the performance any more than I do.

FRATER.

The first public Masonic baptism of children which has ever taken place in the district was performed last night in the chapel chamber, Masonic Temple, in the presence of a large number of masons, their wives and daughters. The children were an infant son of Dr. Joseph W. Nairn, 32nd degree, and a son of Mr. E. B. MacGrotty, 18th degree, who were baptized in Mithras Lodge of Perfection, ancient Scottish rite, which is the consistory of this Masonic jurisdiction. The rite was performed by Thrice Illustrious P. G. M. Albert Pike, assisted by Illustrious J. O. Sinclair, S. G. W.; Illustrious L. H. Pike, J. G. W.; C. W. Bennett, grand orator; W.

M. Ireland, master of ceremonies; B. F. Hendrich, senior deacon; C. T. Nutze, junior deacon; Rev. Mr. Harris, chaplain; H. J. Markin, secretary; and L. Stoddard, tyler. The ceremony of Masonic baptism had always been celebrated in the ancient and accepted Scottish order. It has been censured by many as an irreverent imitation of the Christian rite of baptism; but well informed Masons know that purification by washing was used in all the mysteries thousands of years before our era.

After the assembly had been seated, Grand Master Pike gave a short history of the ceremony, saying that it taught neither hatred, intolerance or revenge. After a voluntary on the organ by brother Servoss, a rap was heard at the door, and information given that two children, with their parents, desired admission; the parents praying that their children might be baptized, when the master directed the master of ceremonies and his aids to bring the children, their parent and sponsors into the lodge.—Soon after the master of ceremonies returned, followed by one of his assistants bearing a candlestick with three lighted candles—one white, one black and one red—forming a triangle. Following were two assistants, one carrying the child of Dr. Nairn, Robert Bruce Nairn, upon a cushion covered with light blue silk, the other leading the child of Mr. MacGrotty, Edward Albert MacGrotty; and behind these came the parents of the children, and the sponsors. The sponsors for the son of Dr. Nairn were Dr. J. B. Gibbs, 32nd degree, and Caroline E. Davis; for Master MacGrotty, Jerome C. Davis, 32nd degree, and Mrs. M. Walker. After the third circuit of the room the procession halted, and the candlestick was placed before the altar, and the children returned to their mothers, who with their sponsors, took seats in the centre of the room. The Masonic choir then sang: "My soul doth magnify the Lord." After an oration by the master, in which he explained the duties and responsibilities which the lodge was about to assume in conferring the rite, he then asked the fathers: "Are you willing that we should accept these duties?" An affirmative response being given, the master called upon the chaplain to invoke the favour and assistance of God, which was done, the brethren all kneeling. The choir then sang the ode: "Rejoice, rejoice, fond mothers." The sponsors then took seats near their parents, when the master addressed them in relation to the duties they were taking upon themselves. After an invocation to the Deity and music, the children, parents and sponsors were then conducted forward to the altar, on which water, oil and salt were placed. The master then called the lodge up, descended from his throne, and, after a few words addressed the group, lighted the incense on the altar. After a chant by the choir, the master took the children severally in his arms, dipped their left hands in a basin of perfumed water, and said:—"By this symbol I devote thee (in each case) to the service of virtue and truth. May our father who is in heaven keep the innocent and pure of heart all the days of thy life." During this ceremony the choir sang an appropriate ode. The master then took the vessel of perfumed oil, dipped the little finger of his right hand therein, and marked it with a delta on the forehead of each child, saying: "I set upon thy forehead the symbol of wisdom, power and love of God. May He protect and guide thee in right courses all the days of thy life," the choir singing meanwhile the chant, "Blessed are the undefiled in the way." The master then replaced the vessel on the altar, and, stretching out his hands toward the children, invoked a blessing upon them. The children, and those in charge of them were conducted to their seats, and the choir sang an appropriate ode. The Godmothers then placed them at the altar of obligation; the brethren present formed in a circle around them, each with his left hand on his heart and his right hand raised toward heaven. All then knelt and repeated after the master the solemn vow to protect the children from all danger and temptation until their arrival at maturity. After rising, the master, taking the vessel of salt in his hand, repeated the Arab vow which sanctifies the enemy with whom he has tasted salt, and placing a portion of the salt on his tongue said: "With this salt I seal my vow." The kernel was then passed to each brother, who in turn repeated the vow. The children were then invested with lambskin aprons and each was presented with a Masonic jewel, the Master saying: "In the name and under the auspices of the supreme council, I do proclaim these children consecrated to the service of truth and virtue by Masonic baptism and anointing after the ancient custom of Masonry, to be wards of the Mithras Lodge of Perfection." This was repeated in turn by the venerable grand and senior wardens. After more music, the orator delivered a brief lecture after which two young ladies, in conformity with a law of Scottish rite, passed among the assemblage and received contributions from all who chose to give, the sum so collected to be given by the grand almoner to the most needy person or persons known to him, the source from which it comes, in pursuance of inviolable custom, not to be made known. A closing chant concluded the ceremonies.