

ST. JOHN, N. B., APRIL 20, 1871.

REV. MR. CURRIE versus WENTWORTH.

Rev. Mr. Currie seems to be horror-stricken at the conclusions to which we drive our readers by the quotations we make from Pedo-baptist scholars. He proceeds thus: "Are not those witnesses, according to Wentworth's showing, dishonest men?" "If Wentworth be truthful, his witnesses are false to themselves, to their ordination vows, to the Church of Christ, and to their God; and they are not competent witnesses."

"He" (Wentworth) "succeeds tolerably well, in the Visitor, in making his witnesses appear to be honest and unimpeachable. He says, 'If Dr. Cramp's misstatement were true' (wonderful 'misstatement' that, to be 'true'). 'Wesley's whole life was one of dishonesty, and craftiness and deceit. If John Wesley could have been guilty of such gross duplicity, as is involved in Dr. Cramp's accusation' (quotation?). 'The memory of Wesley ought to be allowed with all possible rapidity to perish, and the reputation of his name' (Ole! jam satia). 'Wentworth ought to know that the immersionist policy of trying to sustain his creed by the alleged 'admissions' and 'confessions' of Pedo-baptists is decidedly mischievous. When discriminating persons, not yet consecrated to the service of Christ, hear from a Baptist pulpit, or read in a Baptist publication, the statement that 'the most eminent and pious divisions of the Presbytery of the Church of England, and of other Pedo-baptist churches, have again and again confessed' that they teach and practice what they 'know' to be antagonistic to the Word of God, what are those persons to think?" (Sure enough) "Such persons must, if they are disinterested and thoughtful hearers or readers, (and even if they are not) certainly conceive that either the parties who profess to quote, or the parties said to be quoted from, are knaves or imbeciles, and in either case the effect must be mischievous. The above deliverances will pass among the most 'discriminating and thoughtful readers' of the Wesleyan body as a fine specimen of what is called humbug. But what is the question? This—and let us keep to it until it is settled—HAVE THE PEDOBAPTIST SCHOLARS, CITED BY WENTWORTH, MADE THE CONCESSIONS AS GIVEN IN THE QUOTATIONS? We answer, THEY HAVE NOT. Rev. Mr. Currie to disprove our answer. If it had been possible, that is what he should have done in his rejoinders, or held his peace. But it were easier, and more to his taste, to select a string of appellatives to be attached to the names of our authors on the supposition that they did make the concessions alleged. Now neither Mr. Currie nor Wentworth is to be held responsible for the inconsistency of the concessions, nor for any consequences resulting therefrom, but for their being incompetent witnesses, before they are condemned, they must be tried by their peers, and Mr. Currie is not one of them. But we think it does not require a very keen vision to see a difference between inconsistent men, and men who are 'dishonest,' 'illogical,' 'untruthful,' 'disreputable,' 'miserable,' 'knaves' and 'imbeciles.' But if Rev. Mr. Currie will deign to logue our authors, let him designate them, let him proceed. The gentleman will only raise a laugh at his wild extravagance. This *custo morum* is deeply concerned for the reputation of men who stand heaven-high above us both. We venture nothing in saying that their productions in the domain of Biblical Learning will continue to be quoted as standard authorities, notwithstanding Rev. Mr. Currie's 'CATECHISM OF EXAMINATION' in existence, 'that authors have brought to the light of day.' The following: Meyer, Olshausen, DeWette, Neander, Mosheim, Schleiermacher, Hahn, Hagenbach, Lobegott Lange, J. P. Lange, Tholke, Dressler, Baumgarten-Crusius, Corrodi, Knapp, De Preussing, John Henry Blunt (Dictionary of Doctrinal and Historical Theology), Dr. Stanley, Dr. Bloomfield, Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Nicholson, Dr. Doddridge, Whitefield and Wesley, Adam Clarke, Dr. Wall, Dr. Campbell, Bishop Taylor, Chalmers, J. Jacobi, Dr. Edward Beecher, Moses Stuart, Dr. Anthon, Lidell and Scott's Lexicon, Dr. Edward Robinson, Dr. Lyman Coleman, Dr. Schaff, Archbishop Hughes, Dr. Fairbairn, Dr. C. Hodge, and Dr. A. A. Hodge, Conybeare and Howson, Dr. Leonard Woods. How many, and which of them, came under the *irrevocable* cross-examination of Rev. Mr. Currie? J. Lange, Eberhard Heber, Jacobi, Hagenbach, Prof. Knapp, and John Wesley. The latter was defended more especially against Dr. Cramp's wicked misrepresentation. But our critic did not occupy much time and space in the work of cross-examination. His articles are principally devoted to the easier, and to him the more congenial, of berating "Anabaptists," Wentworth, Dr. Cramp, et cetera. Considerable space is taken up by Rev. Mr. Currie, with a discussion of the subject of baptism, from his standpoint. He calls to his aid Moses, Isaiah, and Ezekiel, among the ancients, and Dr. Timothy Dwight, among the modern writers. (By the way, has Rev. Mr. Currie read Dr. Dale's work on Baptism? It would be very edifying to our reviewer.) But his principal authorities on the question of Baptism are Moses and Ezekiel; and his mightiest argument for infant baptism is in the admitted fact that the New Testament is *wholly silent* on the subject. The first of our authors cross-examined is J. P. Lange. And what does he elicit from him? That he taught and practiced infant baptism; that as much as to do with the matter in dispute as the solution of a problem in geometry has to do with the question whether Rev. Mr. Currie is *compus mentis*. He carefully conceals Lange's concessions, and concludes his cross-examination with a species of gasconade, in which he is richly rewarded by designed to insert here Lange's concessions, but Rev. Mr. C. has already more than he knows what to do with. Passing by his attempt to throttle Dr. Beecher, we come to poor Jacobi. We quote our critic entire on this case. It is so instructive. Mark how Jacobi is examined by Mr. Currie, and then how he cross-examines the man, to whose "Theological Works" our reviewer has never had access. "This is just like Currie, you can get along with access to any 'Theological Works.' You are as clever—"

"JACOBI EXAMINED. "Wentworth puts Rev. Mr. Jacobi, a German clergyman, on the stand, (Visitor, Feb. 9th, 1871.) Jacobi taught the doctrine of infant baptism in his pulpit, and baptized the infant children of his people." (What pulpit, and what people?) "Wentworth, however, tries to make Jacobi 'confess' that he is a very dishonest man. Jacobi, according to Wentworth's manipulation, appears to be a tolerably fair Baptist, and to 'admit' that the Baptist belief is true; although Jacobi's pulpit was in his practice in the house of God, have been radically antagonistic thereto. If it be true, as Wentworth indicates, that Christian ministers may manifest such capriciousness as Jacobi, in Wentworth's hands, appears to do, it were no wonder if infidelity should more and more abound, and that many should learn to look with contempt upon the whole Christian system."

"JACOBI CROSS-EXAMINED. "Unhappily we have not access to Jacobi's Theological Works. (So much the more qualified to cross-examine. The peculiar way, however, in which Wentworth discards his 'witness' is suggestive.) (Very) "Wentworth, after attempting to show, by Jacobi, that infant baptism is an 'innovation,' an 'intruder,' a 'subverter,' and 'wrong,' and 'wicked,' drops the subject with these words: 'Jacobi, in another brief paragraph, attempts a plea for infant baptism. Those who wish to read it can consult Kitto's work. We have neither patience to copy it, nor space to publish it.' This is just like Wentworth. He says certain things calculated to put Jacobi in a false position. But, on the other hand, Wentworth has not 'patience' to copy one 'brief paragraph' in Jacobi's defence. (Why did not Mr. C. copy it? Oh, he had not 'access,' &c.) "Why Wentworth's 'patience' could not bear the strain is obvious. The one 'brief paragraph' would not demand much time or labor in being copied; but it would probably expose Wentworth's own position in a very likely way, as we shall see. Then, again, the 'space to publish it' would not be a very serious matter, as it was only one 'brief paragraph'; and besides, if it were needed" (It was not needed), "the question of 'space' might have been referred to the

publisher of the Visitor. We dwell" (We should think you did) "upon Wentworth's position, in regard to Jacobi, because it reveals the artifice in which Wentworth indulges. He gives, in this instance as in others, a distorted view of his 'Pedo-baptist witness.' (As Mr. C. can bear witness, not having 'access,' &c.) "but will not permit his witness to speak one word in his own defence, except when it suits his peculiar purpose, and his patience. We would suggest that a more excellent way would be to let an absent clergyman's reputation entirely alone. (We agree with Mr. C. for once) "unless full justice can be awarded him. As Jacobi was virtually wrongfully accused, he should have been allowed at least one brief paragraph in his own defence."

Rev. Mr. Currie "unhappily" has "not access to Jacobi's Theological Works." Well, Horace says, *Non curis homini contigit adire Corinthum*. But is Rev. Mr. Currie destitute of Kitto's Cyclopaedia? It may be found in the home of the humblest of his flock. We quoted from that book the following from Jacobi. We insert nothing and omit nothing.

"INFANT BAPTISM," says Jacobi, "was established neither by Christ nor the apostles. In all places where we find the necessity of baptism notified, either in a dogmatic or historical point of view, it is shown that it was only introduced for those who were capable of comprehending the word preached, and of being converted to Christ by an act of their own will. A pretty sure testimony of its non-existence in the apostolic age may be inferred from 1 Cor. vii. 14, since Paul would certainly have referred to the baptism of children for their holiness. But even in later times, several teachers of the church, such as Tertullian and others, reject it. The Jewish and Heathen, and of commanding them more effectually to the care of the Christian community—all these circumstances, and many more have contributed to the introduction of infant baptism at a very early period."

"There is Jacobi's concession, not 'Wentworth's manipulation.' Now for the 'one brief paragraph' in his own defence." "But, on the other hand, the baptism of children is not at all at variance with the principle of Christian baptism in general, after that we have observed on the separation of regeneration and baptism. For since it cannot be determined when the former begins, the real test of its existence lying only in the holiness continued to the end of man's life, the fittest point for baptism is evidently the beginning of life. Nevertheless, the profession of faith is still needed to complete it; or confirmation, or some equivalent observance, is there an important ceremony, and the *filii infantium* is an absurd assumption, of which the Scriptures know nothing. On the other hand, the baptized child is strongly recommended to the community and to the Spirit of God dwelling therein, becoming the careful object of the education and holy influences of the church (Comp. 1 Cor. vii. 14). 'Nature and experience' (read carefully and slowly) this sentence, my friend, for here is Jacobi's real position in his own defence. 'Nature and experience' teach us, therefore, to retain the baptism of children, now that it is introduced." Just read that sentence over again, and especially the last clause.

There is Jacobi's defence. Thank you, Rev. Mr. Currie, for giving us the opportunity of bringing our author to the front again. But while you, sir, practice such trickery in controversy, "it were no wonder if infidelity should more and more abound, and that many should learn to look with contempt upon the whole Christian system." We comfort ourselves with the reflection that the influence of your pernicious example in religious discussion is confined within very narrow limits.

Now for Neander:— "NEANDER EXAMINED. Neander is examined by Wentworth, and made to say (Visitor, Dec. 22, 1870): 'Since baptism marked the entrance into communion with Christ it resulted from the nature of the rite that a confession of faith in Jesus as the Redeemer would be made by the person to be baptized.' We cannot enter the existence of infant baptism from the instances of the baptism of whole families." Compare this "sifted" of a quotation with the entire paragraph quoted by our reviewer from Neander. Ah, the whole of what Neander says of infant baptism would have been a heavy dose for the *Wesleyan* and its readers.

"NEANDER CROSS-EXAMINED. Neander thinks (see his *Planting and Training of the Christian Church*), that the decisive proof that infant baptism came 'immediately from Christ himself.' Neander could not ascertain definitely the beginning of this practice. 'Whether,' he says, 'this institution originated from an injunction given by the earlier apostles, or among the Jewish Christians, or whether Paul introduced it first among heathen Christians,' were still unsolved questions. Neander says: 'the evidence arising from silence on this topic has therefore the greater weight.' What wretched garbling! What wholesale verbiage! It is scarcely credible that any man would dare to handle an author's writings as Rev. Mr. Currie has handled Neander's in the above caricature of a cross-examination. Neander's language is as follows—(See Ryland's edition of *Planting and Training*, p. 102, or Dr. Robinson's edition, p. 62.) "And if we wish to ascertain from whom such an institution was originated, we should say, certainly not immediately from Christ himself. Was it from the primitive church in Palestine, from an injunction given by the earlier apostles? But among the Jewish Christians, *circumcision* was held as the seal of the covenant, and hence they had so much less occasion to make use of another dedication for their children. Could it then have been introduced first among heathen Christians introduced this alteration by the use of baptism? But this would agree least of all with the peculiar Christian characteristics of this apostle. He who says of himself that Christ sent him not to baptize but to preach the gospel; he who always kept his eye fixed on one thing, justification by faith, and so carefully avoided everything which could give a handle to support the notion of a justification by outward things (the *servitia*), how could he have set up infant baptism against the circumcision that continued to be practiced by the Jewish Christians? In this case the dispute carried on with the Judaizing party, on the necessity of *circumcision*, would easily have given an opportunity of introducing this substitute into the controversy, if it had really existed. The evidence arising from silence on this topic has therefore the greater weight." The greater weight is in what direction? Let any man with common honesty interpret Neander's meaning. "The greater weight," Mr. Currie would make Neander say, in favor of infant baptism! The very thing against which Neander is arguing. Neander says the exact opposite of that which Rev. Mr. Currie makes him say.

Again Mr. Currie quotes Neander as follows:— "This is just like we have, says Neander, 'the fundamental idea' from which infant baptism was developed; and by which it may be 'justified.' Neander finds, he says, 'a trace of infant baptism in the time of Irenaeus; and also that 'in the third century it was recognized as an apostolic tradition.' Now note what Neander does say. 'We find, indeed, in one passage of Paul, 1 Cor. vii. 14, a trace, that is, that the children of Christians were baptized; but every trace of infant baptism, as such, would be considered in a certain sense as belonging to the church, but this is not deduced from their having partaken of baptism, and this mode of connection with the church is rather EVIDENCE AGAINST THE EXISTENCE OF INFANT BAPTISM. In the same con-

nection Neander intimates that in a subsequent age the idea of infant baptism grew out of that passage. But Neander himself finds in it evidence against infant baptism. Take our author's words: 'But in the point of view here chosen by Paul we find (although it testifies against the existence of infant baptism), the fundamental idea from which infant baptism was afterwards developed.' (mark, not that he develops the ceremony from that passage. He develops it from a general view of his own opinions, and by which it must be justified,' (not by himself, but by those who introduced infant baptism) to agree with Paul's sentiments.' Says our critic, in one connection, 'If Wentworth, having read, &c., has... misapprehended the mind and design of his author, and acquired an erroneous view of his teachings, it is only natural that Wentworth reading the Bible itself in his peculiar way, should stumble into strange errors, and therefore teach spurious dogmas.' Will our readers go over the passage again, substituting for *Wentworth*, D. D. Currie, and for the word 'misapprehended' the word 'misrepresented? Now hear Neander on Irenaeus. But first read the following from Rev. Mr. Currie. 'Immersionists have attempted to weaken the evidence from Irenaeus,' says Neander. 'Irenaeus' writings, both here and there, are full of opinions, and by which it must be justified,' (not by himself, but by those who introduced infant baptism) to agree with Paul's sentiments.' Says our critic, in one connection, 'If Wentworth, having read, &c., has... misapprehended the mind and design of his author, and acquired an erroneous view of his teachings, it is only natural that Wentworth reading the Bible itself in his peculiar way, should stumble into strange errors, and therefore teach spurious dogmas.' Will our readers go over the passage again, substituting for *Wentworth*, D. D. Currie, and for the word 'misapprehended' the word 'misrepresented? 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