

CORRESPONDENCE.

For the Christian Visitor.

REASONS FOR BECOMING A BAPTIST.

ARTICLE III.

MR. EDITOR.—After I became convinced that the proper subjects of Baptism are those who experience a saving change and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, I began to inquire into the right mode of Baptism, and to learn whether it should be administered by sprinkling, by pouring, or by immersion, and I was soon brought to see, from various reasons, that the only scriptural mode, the mode which was observed by John the Baptist, by the Apostles, and by the Primitive Christians, was by Immersion. That the Lord Jesus Christ was baptized by immersion, was demonstrated to my mind, by considering the statute which God gave to Aaron and other High Priests to observe when they were consecrated to the office, and before they performed their work on the great day of atonement. When they were appointed to the office, they were commanded to be washed in water, Exodus xxix. 4. Before the High Priest commenced his work on the great day of atonement, he was required to observe the same ordinance, Levit. xvi. 4. Therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, in like manner was it shewn to me, that as the high priest and his work on the great day of atonement, were typical of the Lord Jesus and his great work of redemption, as the Lord Jesus fulfilled all the types, as it became him to fulfil all righteousness, so, before our blessed Redeemer began his great work, he was immersed by John in the river Jordan. According to my former views I used to believe, that the passage "Jesus went up out of the water," might be rendered, Jesus came up from the water, and instead of being immersed in the water, the water might be sprinkled or poured upon him but now there were other passages applied to my mind, which shewed me that the mode was by Immersion. There was light proceeding from other passages, which convinced me that our Blessed Saviour was immersed in the water. It is said, "John was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there." The apostle Paul in writing to the Hebrews, says, "Having our bodies washed with pure water," in other places we read of believers "being buried with Christ in baptism." This is a phrase which many eminent commentators acknowledge, alludes to the baptism of Primitive Christians. These Scriptures convinced me that the ordinance, in the time of the Apostles, was administered by immersion. In considering the subject, I took my Greek Dictionary looked up the word "Baptizo," and to my surprise, I found that its general meaning is, "to dip, to plunge, or to immerse," and not to sprinkle or pour. There I saw that the term Baptizo was not translated at all. If it had been properly translated, instead of baptize, it would have been plunge or immerse. After this I considered all those passages in the New Testament, where we read of Baptism, and asked myself what view of the mode of Baptism would such persons take from these passages, who had not any pre-conceived opinion about it, and I was assured, they would naturally conclude that the mode was by immersion.

In the next place I examined the history of the church, written by Mosheim—a standard work—and here I found that the followers of Christ were baptized by immersion, and that this was the general approved mode for at least five centuries. From other books, I found that except in the cases of persons being sick, or dying, when sprinkling or pouring was used—a practice which was called clinical baptism—immersion was the general mode in all Christian churches, till the year 1311, when in France, at a Council held in Ravenna, the mode was changed to sprinkling, by the Pope. This is stated by Dr. Wall, in his history of Infant Baptism. He also affirms that Immersion was retained in England for more than 300 years longer; and, he says, that in Scotland, at 1645, sprinkling was just then beginning, that the Westminster Divines took away the font from the Churches, in which believers were baptized, and brought in basins, for sprinkling infants. It was in this way that the practice of sprinkling entered the church of Scotland. In satisfying my mind respecting the mode of Baptism, I next examined the writings of learned men, and I found that the Reformers and many other eminent Divines acknowledged that the proper Scriptural way was by Immersion. Professors Stuart, Baxter, Dodderidge, and many other eminent persons, make the same concession. Finally, I considered the

doctrine which the Lord Jesus designed to be taught by the ordinance of Baptism, and I saw that sprinkling failed to set forth that doctrine, whereas immersion held it forth in a plain and evident manner. According to my views, the ordinance of Baptism teaches doctrines which refer both to the Saviour and to his people. With respect to the Divine Redeemer, Baptism represents his sufferings, death, and resurrection; and, in regard to his people, it is an emblem of the pardon of their sin—of being washed from guilt in his blood: it is a profession of their faith in Him—it is an engagement to live to His glory—and it is a channel by which He communicates a blessing to their souls. But I could not avoid the conviction, that none of these truths were taught by the custom of sprinkling. This custom taught no doctrine respecting the Redeemer, and unconscious infants made no profession of faith in Him, and received no blessing. So much was my mind enlightened respecting the mode, that I became sensible that the practice of sprinkling infants was no baptism at all. It was made clear to my mind that the custom of sprinkling is an invention, the doctrine, and the commandment of men; and Jesus Christ declares in his word—"In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Since I was convinced that infant sprinkling was the device and commandment of man, I was also convinced that it was no Baptism. On the contrary, I saw that Immersion was the counsel of God—it was the plan, the device, and the commandment of the Most High, the Three-in-One God. God the Father sent John to baptize by immersion, God the Son, as the Forerunner and great Exemplar of his people, obeyed God by being baptized by immersion in Jordan, and God the Holy Ghost sanctioned the ordinance by coming down upon the Saviour in the shape of a dove, whilst there was also a voice from the Father—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Now when I was brought to consider all these different particulars respecting the mode of baptism, when I saw that the Lord Jesus fulfilled the type in being washed before he began to perform the work of redemption, and that all the notices of baptism in the Scripture determine the meaning to signify immersion, when I perceived that the true meaning of the word baptize is to dip or plunge, when I considered the view of the mode which unprejudiced persons would form, by reading the plain narrative in the word of God, when I examined my church history and other books, and found that immersion was the general and approved method in all Christian churches, from the time of our Saviour till about the year 1311, when in France it was changed to sprinkling, when also I found that the reformers, and other learned and good men of different sects, and likewise Pseudo-Baptists candidly confessed that the scriptural mode was by immersion, and when too I saw that the form of sprinkling, failed to exhibit the doctrine which the Lord designed should be taught by the ordinance, and that sprinkling was a device and a commandment of man—when all these different views of the subject were impressed on my mind, I was deeply and thoroughly convinced that the only scriptural mode of baptism is by immersion. As I was convinced that there is no authority from Scripture to baptize infants; that persons should be born again and believe in the Saviour before they are baptized, so I was now also sensible, that there is no warrant from the word of God for the practice of sprinkling, that the primitive and scriptural mode is by immersion. Not only was my mind enlightened respecting the ordinance of Baptism, my heart and conscience also were powerfully arrested, there was a holy awe and fear of God upon my soul, and I was made willing to follow the Lord Jesus in his truths and ordinances, whatever should be the consequence. Those passages of scripture made a deep impression on my mind: "He that knoweth his master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes." "Whosoever will come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, and the gospel's, the same shall save it." "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him, also, shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

I very frequently thought of the great day of judgment, when the Lord Jesus Christ will come to judge the world, when he will require all his ministering servants to give an account of their stewardship, with deep anxiety I used to reflect, how awful would be my condition at that day, if I were found not only, amongst those who knew their master's will and did it not, but also amongst such as prostituted the solemn ordinances of Christ, corrupted his church, and led their fellow men astray. No person can imagine the trouble of mind which I endured for a short time, except those who have experi-

enced the same. To increase the trial, I saw that I must leave my kind, loving congregation, with whom I had lived on good terms for a number of years; I saw that I must leave my good house and farm, in which I and my family were very comfortable; I saw that I must, in a sense, leave my relatives and friends, my house and home, and like Abraham, go out to an unknown land, not knowing whither I should go. But on the other hand, my mind was sweetly and powerfully inclined to cheerfully endure all these trials for Christ's sake. I was taught to see, since the Lord Jesus Christ did so much for me, I should willingly make this small sacrifice for him. I was in a sensible and intuitive manner, given to know, that God in sovereign love had called me by his grace and brought me into his family; and that the blessed Saviour had redeemed me by his blood, and given me an interest in his blood and righteousness; and now since Christ Jesus had endured so much poverty, hatred, and divine wrath on my account, I should most willingly obey his command in the ordinance of baptism, and, likewise, cheerfully endure all afflictions, which would come to me in pursuing this course. At the same time I felt a strong and ardent love to the Divine Redeemer, a love which inclined me to cheerfully confess all his truths, to observe all ordinances, and to give up, if required, all this world's good things for his sake. And now, when I was convinced that it was my duty to follow the Lord Jesus, in being baptized by immersion, possessed of a holy fear of God, and a sincere love to Christ, I cheerfully submitted to this ordinance.

When I was baptized in his name, I received a sweet sense of his love and greater measures of his grace. Many precious promises were applied to my mind, and I enjoyed a blessed hope that the Lord was my God, and heaven my eternal home.

Yours, &c. J. REED.

TAVOY MISSIONS.—JOURNAL OF MR. WADE.

The Tavoy Mission is that which lies nearest adjacent to the field now occupied by our own beloved missionary. The following accounts, therefore, from Mr. Wade's Journal, will be read with interest.—Ed.

Revival at Newville.—Dec. 16. Arrived at this place, and Kaulapau, my assistant, preached to the church this evening. During his prayer, before sermon, which was offered with subdued tones but deep apparent feeling, I heard suppressed sobs from different parts of the assembly. His sermon was short and impressive, and was listened to with fixed attention; after which he called on the assistant stationed at this place, and one of the leading members of the church, to offer prayer for the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the congregation; and these prayers seemed to be answered while being offered. The assembly was then dismissed, but as not a person left the house, or moved from his seat, I addressed them for a short time. It was a solemn assembly, and a season of uncommon interest; both the gray-headed and youth seemed alike humbled in the dust before the presence of the Lord.

Thursday, 17. Evening. The meetings to-day have been solemn, and many tears were shed, particularly during the prayers. No preaching or exhortation seems to reach the hearts of this people, as do the supplications and confession of sin, where all are bowed together in solemn prayer to God. The assistant at this station has been a valuable servant of the church for many years, but is now an old man; and the almost continued illness of his wife has prevented him from teaching a school during the past rains, and has otherwise hindered him much in his labors in the church; as there is no such thing as a nurse to be hired for the sick among the Karens. But he is a good man, exhibits deep Christian feeling, and, doubtless, does more for the church by his consistent Christian example, than by oral instruction. A new assistant is to be appointed to this station for the present year.

Friday, 18. Evening. The excitement has been greater in the assembly to-day, than at any time since our arrival; so great, indeed, that during the sermon preached by Aitee several could no longer restrain their feelings, and cried aloud. I felt anxious at this crisis, lest their feelings should lead them beyond the bounds of that order which becomes the house of God. I recollected, however, that in days of old, when Israel repented of their sins, the "people lifted up their voices and wept;" and I was afraid to reach forth my hand to steady the ark of God lest I should sin against the Divine presence so manifestly in the midst of us;—and yet I was grieved to see some among both the aged and the young, whose hearts seemed hard and unmoved. I observed that my assistant Kaulapau was deeply affected by the scene he witnessed, and learned afterwards that he considered it a special answer to the prayer which he offered during the night. He said, he then pleaded with God, until his heart was poured out like water, that on the coming day he would pour out his Spirit in a remarkable manner; and he felt that his prayer was fully answered. I may say of this assistant as was said of Barnabas, "He is a good man and full

of the Holy Ghost;"—at least he has sustained this character during the past year.

Saturday 19. The interest of the meetings to-day has been, I think, greater than on any previous day. The afternoon was spent in examining the female members of the church preparatory to the communion, and with only two or three exceptions each one spoke of her sins and unworthiness to have a place in the kingdom of God, with many tears, and I trust with truly broken and contrite hearts. This evening, the head man with eight or ten of the brethren arrived from Yaville. They had enjoyed the meeting at their own village so much, that, though in the midst of harvest, they made arrangements to leave their worldly business with the hope of receiving still another blessing. I also observed at our meetings eight or nine of the disciples from Lung-lung, a village three days journey from this place, who came with the hope of having their minds revived, and refreshed in spiritual things by attending the meetings. They went all the way up the river to Yaville, but did not arrive until the meetings at that place were being closed.

Lord's day, 20. At the close of the morning service seven were baptized, all young, and most of the number not above thirteen or fourteen years of age. But they gave such satisfactory evidence of a change of heart, that I felt they were truly "lambs of Christ's fold." The communion season this evening has been deeply interesting, on account of the solemnity which prevailed among the communicants. Every one seemed to feel that great indeed was the mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ in giving his life a ransom for our souls. Every one of the eighteen meetings with this church has been deeply solemn and delightful to me, and I bless the Lord who has spared my life to see the "wilderness bud and blossom as the rose." The sermons delivered by the assistants were appropriate and searching, "came from the heart, and reached the hearts of others."

THE NEW ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.—Dr. Sumner was born in 1780, and is consequently now in his 68th year. He was educated, we believe, at Eton, and became, in due course, a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge; and subsequently a Prebendary of Durham. He was raised to the Bench in the year 1828, on the promotion of Dr. Blomfield to the see of London, and has remained Bishop of Chester for nearly 20 years. When we state that the annual value of that see is £1,534, and that it has been, until the erection of the bishopric of Manchester, the largest and most labourious in England, comprehending more than two millions of people, we need add nothing to prove that the man who could properly discharge the burdensome duties of such a post, must be held to be fairly entitled, in his 68th year, to the honorable advancement and comparative ease of Canterbury.

The Bishop of Chester has consecrated, we believe, very nearly two hundred new churches in the twenty years of his episcopacy; and a great number of these owe their erection to his own zealous exertions.

And yet this laborious prelate has found time to produce, not merely some volumes, or many of moderate merit;—he is the most copious and useful writer that the English prelate has seen during the last century. His Apostolical Preaching Considered, is in the eighth edition;—his Evidences of Christianity in the sixth;—his Prize Essay on the Creation, in two vols. octavo, in the fifth; his Sermons on the Christian Faith and Character, in the eighth. His writings from fourteen octavo volumes, and all of them have been frequently reprinted.

We repeat, therefore, that the Bishop has had a fine opportunity of discharging a great duty to the Church; and he has promptly and wisely availed himself of it. The Tractarians, however, will probably be of different opinion; for no member of the episcopal bench has so firmly or constantly withstood their efforts, as has the new Archbishop of Canterbury.

PROGRESS OF PROTESTANTISM IN FRANCE.—Rev. Mr. Sawtell, one of the secretaries of the Foreign Evangelical Society, delivered a discourse in Bowdoin street Church, last Sabbath afternoon. Mr. S. has resided, for several years, in France. He stated that when he went to that country in 1836, there were but 50 evangelical ministers and 30 or 40 colporteurs, in France, there are now 3 or 400 ministers, 70 or 80 evangelists, and 2 or 300 colporteurs.

REQUISITES FOR A GOOD ACTION (IN A LEGAL SENSE).—A lady asked her uncle, an old lawyer, what were the requisites for going to law. He answered, "I'll tell you, Maria; first, a good cause; second, a good purse; third, a good counsel; fourth, a good judge; fifth, a good jury; sixth, good luck."

WE learn that the British Government, through Mr. Elliott, the British consul in this city, has awarded £500 sterling to be distributed to the owners, master, and crew of the American barque Byron, Captain Read, of Stonington, Conn., and a gold medal bearing the portrait of the Queen, to Capt. Read, for their humane exertions in rescuing eighteen British seamen, wrecked on the coast of Patagonia.

Mr. Elliott has also been directed by the British Government, to give £100 sterling to the owners of the schooner Leander, of Boston, for rescuing and taking into port the crew of the British brig Lelia. Boston Journal.