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[The following lines were lately given by the Rev. Dr. McNeile, at a meeting of the Protestant Defence Association in Liverpool, and received with the most unbounded enthusiasm. They speak the language of deep feeling, confidence in the truth and hope in the future, for our Church and Nation,—that all our readers must rejoice at, and desire to unite in.]

Old England's awake, she is startled at length,
And majestically speaks in the pride of her strength.
There's a voice in the air from her millions of men,
Proclaiming her ripe for the conquest then.
There's a voice on the air—its deep solemn tone,
Has come from the cottage, has come from the throne,
And the swell of its chorus proclaims to the world
That the standard of Protestant truth is unfurled.
The land is awake from the sea to the sea,
From the shore to the shore she resolves to be free;
She resolves to proclaim that no Cardinal's tread
Shall befall the green sod where our martyr's have bled!
Yes, England, no boasting; be wise, kiss the rod:
Confess your transgressions, walk humbly with God:
Your watchwords be these, while a breath you can draw,
The Saviour, the Bible, the Queen and the Law!

THE DOCTRINE OF BAPTISM.

A short time since a book with the following title was published in New York city:—"THE BIBLE AGAINST CLOSE COMMUNION.—An Allegorical Dialogue between a professed Messenger from Heaven and an Old Man, on the Assumption by the Messenger that Immersion is an essential Condition of Salvation.—By Rev. LEBEUS ARMSTRONG."

This book was ushered forth under the sanction of many names of note.

The Rev. Mr. Hodge, of Brooklyn, feeling that its unwarrantable attacks upon the Baptists, and its inconclusive reasonings warranted a Review, gave himself to the work which he has accomplished with signal ability. We present in this article the part touching certain points which may be read with interest by inquirers.

"Prove all things: Hold fast that which is good."

JOHN'S BAPTISM.

A leading idea set forth in this book, and very common among our Pædobaptist brethren, to which it is not probable the endorsers will be likely to except, is, that John's baptism was not Christian. The precise position assigned to John by those who will not allow him to belong to the Christian dispensation, it is somewhat difficult to ascertain, for the reason that they are not agreed among themselves. They seem willing enough to admit that his baptism was from heaven, but where to locate it on earth in the history of men is a puzzle. Some contend that he was a prophet of the old dispensation, while others again insist that he occupied an intermediate state, on a kind of *no man's land*, betwixt the old and the new. In a matter of this kind, where the Doctors disagree, it is exceedingly gratifying to have our difficulties removed by the unerring testimony of God's own Word.—"The faithful and true witness" says, Matthew xi. 12, 13. "And from the days of John

the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force; for all the prophets and the law prophesied until John."

The evangelist Mark says, i. 1: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ." And to sustain this declaration, he cites the predictions of Malichi and Isaiah, thereby fixing the date of the gospel dispensation at John's ministry.

Some of the ablest Pædobaptist commentators explain this assertion just as we understand it. Lightfoot says: "Mark calls the ministry and baptism of John the beginning of the gospel." Henry says: "In John's preaching and baptizing there was the beginning of gospel doctrines and ordinances, and the first fruits of them." Calvin, who ought to be no mean authority with our brethren, says: "It is certain that the ministry of John was precisely the same as that which was afterwards committed to the apostles; the sameness of their doctrine shows their baptism to have been the same." Scott is very explicit, and holds the following: "This was in fact the beginning of the gospel, the introduction of the New Testament dispensation." We bring forward but one more passage, the same as we had occasion to furnish one of those endorsing Doctors not long since, when we found him floundering in this very slough. Luke xvi. 16: "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." We more than half suspect that this proof establishes our claim to John as a legitimate brother in the gospel. Those who contend that the ministry of John was not under the Christian dispensation, usually hold that the present dispensation did not commence until the death and resurrection of Christ; the book before us claims that it began at Christ's death. But do these biblical savans know where this puts Christ's own ministry, and where too it puts the ordinance of the Supper? Where but back into the Jewish dispensation? Enough said.

CHRIST'S BAPTISM.

The blunders of these our beloved brethren on the subject of baptism would be laughable indeed, if the subject itself were not so serious, and they were not after all our fellow-disciples. The book so fully endorsed before us asserts most seriously that Christ's baptism was not Christian, and not designed to be, but an introduction into the Jewish priesthood rather. Dr. Spencer fell into this same ditch in his "Pastor's Sketches," at which we were the more sorry, because of our cordial regard for him, and the more provoked by his doing so in daylight. Others of the endorsers we know to have swallowed this Jewish priesthood theory, just as they found it in the Standards of the Presbyterian church, without ever suspecting that it was priestly nonsense.—Christ was baptized, they say, to induct him into the Jewish priesthood, according to the Levitical law. And when we ask who inducted him, we are told John, by baptism.—When we ask who inducted John, the answer must be, "further your deponent saith not." Although John was the son of a priest, yet on him was never poured the consecrating oil; on him were never laid the sacerdotal vestments; his hand never bore the sacred censor; he never publicly read the written law; he never bowed before the altar of Levi; his voice never sounded within the temple gates; he never, in all he said or did, referred to the holy place. It is a question, indeed, whether he ever saw the temple. Nor did a Jewish priest ever perform the work he performed, or preach the doctrine he preached. He could not therefore, according to the Levitical statute,

induct Christ into the Jewish priesthood, having never himself been inducted.

But we have another serious difficulty with this priestly expedient of our friends. The priest was to be consecrated at the "door of the Tabernacle," and not in Jordan; besides, how, upon this theory, are we to account for the absence of all the other rites of Aaronic consecration? Where were the appointed sacrifices; the basket of unleavened bread; the curious girdle; the breastplate with Urim and Thummin; the mitre; the anointing oil?—And why did not the service continue seven days? Another and still more fatal objection to this idea is the fact that Christ was not of the tribe of Levi, and was therefore not eligible to the Jewish priesthood. The apostle says on this very subject: "He pertained to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar." For," continues he, "it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood." And again, as if in anticipation of this very mistake, he says: "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest." Is it not mortifying that a subject so plainly set forth in the Scriptures should be so perverted, merely to discourage the disciples of Christ from following his example in baptism? We are sometimes tempted to ask our Pædobaptist brethren what amount of biblical knowledge among them is necessary to qualify one to be a Doctor in Divinity, and to become an endorser of books on baptism. We hope our brethren will pardon us, but really this Jewish priesthood theory of theirs seems to us about as stupid as Jewish unbelief, and much of a piece with it.

"From such apostles, O ye mitred heads!
Preserve the Church,
And lay not careless hands on skulls
Which cannot teach and will not learn."

Christ was indeed a priest, but not such a one as our brethren claim. He was a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, of whose consecration we have no account in the sacred record. To make him to be a Jewish priest is as degrading to him as to substitute sprinkling for his own ordinance, and then call it baptism.

INFANT BAPTISM.

One of the gravest charges brought against us in this book is, that we reject infant baptism. The truth of this charge we cordially confess, but demur at the guilt the author and his comforters are disposed to associate with it. To adopt the language of one of the letters, "We do not believe there are many elements of pure sectarian error in the Church at once more fallacious and degrading" than *infant baptism*. We ask our brethren for their Scripture warrant for this additional rite in Christ's kingdom, and sometimes almost pity their perplexity in not being able to produce it. Were it not for the terrible interrogatory, "Who hath required this at your hands?" we might be disposed to allow them to practice their unwarranted ceremony without a single rebuke. Our reason for rejecting infant sprinkling is, that the Scriptures nowhere enjoin it. Some of the most distinguished Pædobaptist authors admit all that we claim in this respect.

Bishop Burnet says, "There is no express precept or rule given in the New Testament for the baptism of infants." Dr. Wall, in his History of Infant Baptism, acknowledges that "There is no express mention, indeed, of any children baptized by him," i. e., John the Baptist. "Among all the persons that are recorded as baptized by the apostles, there is no express mention made of an infant." Martin Luther declares, "It cannot be proved by the sacred Scripture, that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the apostles." Erasmus, in

his annotations on Romans v. 14, says: "Paul does not seem to treat about infants. It was not yet the custom for infants to be baptized." Dr. L. Woods, late Professor in the Theological Seminary at Andover, in his work on Infant Baptism, frequently admits that "We have no express precept or example for infant baptism in all our holy writings" Dr. Dwight, a former President of Yale College, says: "There is no instance in which it is declared in so many terms, that infants were baptized." Tertullian mentions infant baptism as early as the third century, and he opposed it, "which," says Venema, "he certainly would not have done if it had been a tradition and a public custom in the Church—seeing he was very tenacious of traditions—nor, had it been a tradition, would he have failed to mention it."

There seems to be a universal consciousness among our brethren who practise infant sprinkling, that to sustain it by the direct testimony of Scripture is impossible, and even to do so by analogy, is both difficult and hazardous. Besides, we know they mark, as well as ourselves, a growing dislike among their people to it. Why else was the Pilgrim Church in Brooklyn constituted without any article in its creed, avowing it, or making it binding upon its members to present their children for it? Why do we hear such lamentations coming up from every part of the Pædobaptist Zion because of its neglect? It is no explanation of this state of things to charge it to the Baptist leaven among the masses. The fact is, the mass of Pædobaptist laity do not know us scarcely at all; they are taught to believe that we are monsters of exclusiveness; and it is not because of any favour with which they regard our peculiarities that they are less cordial towards their own."

Our brethren the endorsers, some of them at least, have come to know by an earnest experience, long before this, that it requires a great deal of pastoral prerogative and influence to make any thing live that has not the germ of life in itself. If infant baptism dies, we acquit them of all blame in the matter.—We hope not to be considered offensive for the freedom with which we express our views on this subject, when we say, in all soberness, that it is a settled religious conviction with us, that infant baptism is doomed to be more and more unpopular with the laity in Pædobaptist churches, and that its destruction is as certain as that of the Papacy itself. Jesus said, Matthew xv. 13, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." Does Pædobaptism claim a divine origin? When did Christ institute it, or the Father acknowledge it, or the Bible sanction it? Never, never. Let it rather "go to corruption, and say, Thou art my Father, and to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister." The history of this innovation on the kingdom of Christ has yet to be written, but written it will be, beyond a peradventure. It will then be seen that the Scarlet Lady at Rome had never been able to make war upon the saints, and fill the world with her abominations, but for it. State Churches, with all their corruptions and oppressions, so insulting to God and cruel to men, could never have existed but for infant baptism. It is itself the chief form in a religion of forms, and that upon which a religion of forms is based. It is the Delilah in whose lap the sons of God—too many of them—have been lured to sleep until their locks and strength are gone.

The Abrahamic covenant—that noble old ship, from the decks of which so many pop-guns have been fired in this baptismal conflict—was condemned as unseaworthy, dismantled and laid up in ordinary long centuries