

CHRISTIAN



VISITOR.

A Family Newspaper: devoted to

Religious & General Intelligence.

REV'DS I. E. BILL & R. THOMSON,

"BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED."—ST. PAUL.

EDITORS.

Volume V.

SAINT JOHN, NEW-BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1852.

Number 39.

HYMN.

When we, like sheep, had gone astray,
And turn'd our wand'ring feet from God,
To choose the dark and crooked way,
(The way by fools and scorners trod,)
Then Jesus, though his life it cost,
Came down to seek and save the lost.

Soon had our steps gone down to death,
But he who lov'd us search'd us out;
And, snatch'd from danger, sav'd from wrath,
We to the fold of God were brought,
Reclaim'd, repenting, and forgiv'n,
And over us was joy in heav'n.

Now heark'ning to our Shepherd's voice,
We love his gentle rule to own;
In his green pastures we rejoice,
We follow him, and him alone,
Whose ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all whose paths are perfect peace.

He in his book has writ our names,
And none shall pluck us from his hand;
Soon will he bring to living streams,
Soon plant us in a heavenly land,
To dwell securely, free from fear;
For danger cannot enter there.

No sin, no sorrow, there is found,
No further need to watch and pray;
Reverses of pleasures there abound,
And tears shall all be wip'd away;
Eternal day, without a cloud,
Shines in the paradise of God.

THE DESIGN OF BAPTISM ARGUED FROM THE BIBLE.

Did Baptism come in the place of Circumcision?

(CONCLUDED.)

But we are told by our Pede-baptist brethren, that Paul speaks of a believing parent as *holy*, "else were your children unclean, but now are they *holy*." 1 Cor. vii. 14. True; but the nature of this holiness may be inferred from the fact that it is likewise said in the same passage, from which the preceding words are quoted, that the unbelieving husband is made *holy* (*hagiazō*) by the wife, and that the unbelieving wife is made *holy* by the husband; for the terms *hagiazō*, applied to the children, and *hagiazō* applied to the unbelieving husband and the unbelieving wife, have the same import. The law of Moses forbade the intermarriage of Jews and Gentiles; and it is not improbable that some of those Judaizing teachers who had taught the Gentile Christians at Antioch that they must be circumcised, had been at Corinth and taught the disciples there, that a believing husband must put away his wife if she would not give up her own religion and embrace that of her converted husband; for it appears from the 1st verse of the chapter, that the church at Corinth had written to Paul about this very matter. His reply to them is, that in the case supposed, the husband should not put away, or get divorced from, his idolatrous wife; for that would make their children "unclean," or as the term was understood by them *illegitimate*; but now, he assures them, their children are "holy," that is, legitimate, since "the unbelieving husband has been sanctified (*hagiazai*) by the wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified by the husband." Paul here enforces the same rule respecting the dissolution of the marriage tie, which Christ laid down in his reply to the Pharisees, when they asked him for what cause a man might put away his wife. These terms here translated *holy* and *sanctified*, are frequently employed by the sacred writers to denote the fitness of inanimate

things for the purposes for which they were designed; and the word here rendered "sanctified" occurs in the formulary of the Hebrew marriage ceremony, implying the solemn setting apart or dedication of the parties to each other.

Pede-baptists assume that the Christian church and the "Jewish church," as they style the Mosaic institution, are identical.—Christ did not thus teach. "I am the vine; ye are the branches," said he to the Jews.—Paul, likewise, under the similitude of an olive tree, calls both Jews and Gentiles, *branches*, partaking together of the root and fatness of the olive tree. He speaks of some of the Jewish branches as having been "broken off," and the Gentiles as having been "grafted in among them." Rom. xi. 16-21. Yet Pede-baptists claim this figure of the olive tree as teaching that the Christian church was engrafted upon the Jewish church. But both the vine and the olive represent Christ.

On the hypothesis that the Christian church is a continuation of the "Jewish church," both being substantially the same, though differing from each other somewhat in their respective organizations, external as well as internal, how am I to determine how far and in what respects they differ? Have I a right to infer from their substantial sameness, that any one rite of the Levitical economy is replaced by either of the rites of the Christian economy? If so, how many of the Jewish rites may I infer into the Christian church? And how many of them may I replace by equivalent substitutions? And how am I to determine what modifications, if any, of the original rites are necessary to furnish the lawful equivalents? Pede-baptists tell us that baptism has come in the place of circumcision; that circumcision was given to infants; and that, therefore, infants should be baptized. But this reason is illogical. The conclusion is not deducible from the premises; for it assumes that the qualifications requisite for circumcision and for baptism are the same. It proves too much for the Pede-baptists themselves; for it would require them to baptize not only their infant offspring, but their children of whatever age, as well as their servants, whether born in their families or "bought with money," whether infants or adults, whether believers or unbelievers, and it would restrict such baptism to males. It would require, moreover, that baptized infants be regarded as holding full membership in the Christian church and entitled to all its privileges.

It is said in reply to the foregoing remarks, that the New Testament authorizes the baptism of both sexes, but says nothing of the baptism of servants or adult unbelievers—it may be added with equal truth, that the New Testament is as silent about the baptism of infants as it is about that of servants or adult unbelievers, and that whatever may be inferred from this silence respecting servants may as rationally be inferred respecting infants.—In such contradictions do Pede-baptists entangle themselves when they attempt to reason on the subject of infant baptism. In one breath they tell us that their servants are not to be baptized, because it is not commanded in the New Testament; and in the next, they claim the privilege of baptizing their children, because it is not forbidden. They admit that the law of circumcision required the Jews to circumcise both; whilst they baptize their children for precisely the same reason that they refuse to baptize their servants.

If, as modern Pede-baptists affirm, Christian baptism has come in the place of Jewish circumcision, how do they know that the two rites are not the same thing—that baptism is not circumcision? Their reply is, that the Christian rite is designated by the word *bapti-*

zo, the Jewish by *peritomeno*—terms of very different signification. They maintain that the Christian rite, or, in other words, the *mode* of baptism, is to be learned from the *law* of baptism, the commission given by Christ to the Apostles, when He sent them forth to baptize all nations; that there is no other mode of entering Christ's visible kingdom—"the Kingdom of Heaven" proclaimed by John the Baptist as "near at hand"—than by the act indicated and commanded by this word *baptizo*. Such reasoning is correct; it challenges the approval of every intelligent man; and it does this because it directs us to the language of the law requiring the act, when we inquire what the act required is. But whilst Pede-baptists argue thus logically respecting the *mode* of this rite of the Christian church, they find themselves compelled to resort to a different system of reasoning when they discuss the *subjects* of the same rite. Now the law of Christ, and the expositions of that law by his inspired Apostles, are either set aside because they do not sanction the baptism of infants, and the law of Moses is appealed to because it required the circumcision of infants; or Christ and his Apostles are claimed as authorizing infant baptism simply for the reason that they did not expressly forbid it.

This retreat from the commanding position which they held on the field of controversy when battling for the *mode*, has involved Pede-baptists in serious difficulties. Their opponents have taken their heavy artillery and turned it upon them. "Infants," say they, "were received into the church by circumcision; and therefore infants should be received into the church by baptism." "If infants," reply the Baptists, "were received into the church by circumcision, so were servants and adult unbelievers, whether bond or free, if members of a Jewish family; why, then, do you not receive such into the Christian church by baptism?" "Because," says the Pede-baptist, "the New Testament does not require it." "Neither does the New Testament require the baptism of your infant children," retorts the Baptist. "But," continues the Pede-baptist, "baptism is a seal of the Covenant of Grace, and the children of believers are embraced in that Covenant, and consequently, entitled to the seal." "The Bible affirms neither the one nor the other," replies the Baptist, "for baptism is nowhere in the Bible called a seal; nor does the Bible intimate that the infants of believers are embraced in the Covenant of Grace." "By grace are ye saved through faith," says Paul. "But circumcision is called a seal, and if baptism took the place of circumcision, it also must be a seal," rejoins the Pede-baptist. "Abraham's circumcision was said to be a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had before he was circumcised," replies the Baptist; "and if baptism be a seal, it must be a seal of like faith, which cannot be exercised by infants."

When we examine this subject by the light of the Scriptures of truth, we cannot be surprised at the confession of even John Calvin, the founder of Presbyterianism—"Because Christ requires teaching before baptizing, and will have believers only admitted to baptism, baptism does not stem rightly administered except faith precede."—of Richard Baxter, when he writes thus—"My conscience is fully satisfied, that it is one kind of faith even saving, that must go before baptism." To reconcile their confessions with the advocacy and practice of infant baptism belongs to those who follow example.

The whole world is nothing else than a dialogue turned about, the ten commandments read backwards.—Luther.

"KNOWLEDGE IS POWER."

From the earliest age to the present period, we can trace the justness of this observation. Power, or that superiority which one man exercises over another, so as to direct, control, and model him after his own views, has universally been wielded by those who have held the sceptre of knowledge. It alone commands obedience, supports true dignity, and upholds the institutions of society. In the organization of all associations, all governments, all empires, those only are chosen to direct and watch over their infant struggles, who, from their experience and acquirements, are judged best fitted for such onerous undertakings.

Mankind fear, admire, and venerate those whom they know to be wiser than themselves. They fearlessly intrust their happiness unto their control, and place the most implicit confidence in their counsels.

All ages bear testimony to the power of knowledge; and in the pages of ancient and modern history we can trace its gigantic influence. According as we find knowledge crippled or free, confined or diffused, in like proportion do we observe the interests of a people neglected or advanced.

The nation that is immersed in ignorance is barbarous and uncivilized, a prey to turbulence and conquest; but knowledge raises, animates, inspires, and strengthens it. Savagery shrinks back, and violence ceases, as enlightenment proceeds. Patriotism, religion, commercial enterprise, industry, and all moral and social virtues, keep pace with the march of intellect.

The cultivation of useful and practical knowledge has conferred the greatest advantages upon every nation. It has raised the most renowned empires, and bestowed on them that proud pre-eminence which history records.—What made the Assyrian, Persian, Babylonian, Grecian, and Roman empires obtain that unbounded ascendancy, which we now read of with astonishment? On inquiring, we shall find that the period in which they were at the zenith of their power, was one peculiarly marked by cultivation of the arts and sciences. But let us turn to modern times, and view the proud position those nations command over which the sun of knowledge has shed its brightness, and the degradation into which those are sunk who are deprived of that glorious light. What has contributed to the greatness of England? What has made her the emporium of commerce—the mistress of the sea—the ruler of the destinies of the world, but the steady and uniform support which she has invariably bestowed on the cultivation of knowledge?—We know of no more beautiful illustration of this useful truism than the wonderful power which Archimedes was able to exercise over the Roman army in their attack upon Syracuse. He alone defended the city against the assaults of the most powerful army, and thwarted the schemes of the most celebrated generals; and what enabled him to oppose, single-handed, the concentrated force of an invincible army, but knowledge? The Spaniards, with a handful of disabled and ill-provisioned soldiers, invaded and took possession of South America. They drove the united thousands of the inhabitants, who attempted to check their progress, before them, made them submit to their authority, and held them in subjugation for centuries. What enabled the inhabitants of these countries, which Spain extorted obedience from, in after years to rise up against their rulers, and to free themselves from their power? The introduction of the arts and sciences having made great progress amongst them, increased their strength and their confidence; while the Spaniards were gradually relaxing into idleness, neglecting the advantages which the extension of know-