

BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION HISTORICALLY CONSIDERED.

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I. Baptism.

A GREAT deal of misconception and unnecessary ill feeling is caused by not having a clear definition of the terms whereby a doctrine is expressed, respecting which a controversy is held; or by arguing with respect to one meaning of a word, when a different meaning is understood by the opposite party. As before observed, the word regeneration was used by the primitive Church as a synonym for baptism, and was applied to the change of state upon which the baptized person entered through the covenant he had now made with God; but in modern times the same word is applied to the change of heart which is the result of genuine conversion. When the profession of faith and of repentance of a catechumen was sincere, the Church believed that the inward grace of the sacrament accompanied the reception of the outward sign, but the reception of this grace at one time does not necessarily imply its continuance at all times. For example, when the baptized person, through the power of temptation, yields to the assaults of the tempter and commits error: for, as the will was free to hold fast that which it had already received, or to yield to the assaults of the tempter, it might either retain or reject it; and when the soul has wilfully chosen that which God forbids, by this very act it withdraws itself from His favor and loses the grace of regeneration; nor does it imply that the soul when convinced of its sins in forsaking God, could not, through the grace of conversion, regain the position which it had lost by its sins, and be once more admitted into the favor of God. The Church evidently believes that the sinner, who has lost the blessing of baptismal grace, must retain the favor of God by genuine conversion. She addresses communicants in earnest language, urging them to bewail their own sinfulness, and confess themselves to Almighty God with full purpose of amendment of life. She asks them, when they say that they are grievous sinners, Wherefore, then, do ye not repent and amend? And in her Homily of Repentance she uses the following language: "In the Prophet Hosea, the godly exhort one another after this manner, 'Come and let us turn again unto the Lord; for he hath smitten us, and he will heal us; he hath wounded us, and he will bind us up again.' It is most evident and plain that these things ought to be understood of them that were with the Lord before, and by their sins and wickedness were gone away from him; for we do not turn again unto him with whom we were never before, but we come to him. Now, unto all them that will return unfeignedly unto the Lord their God, the favor and mercy of God unto forgiveness of sins is liberally offered." The doctrine of regeneration in baptism is, therefore, in the opinion of the Church, perfectly consistent with that of the necessity of conversion, when the recipient of the prior grace has afterwards lost it through sin.

Objections are sometimes made to the reality of the grace received, because baptized persons frequently do not manifest the possession of Christian grace; "such persons," says the objector, "made the renunciations, the professions, and the promises required by catechumens, and were baptized, and declared by the officiating minister to be regenerate; but their lives after baptism were not better than they had been before it; or "such persons were baptized in infancy, but they grew up without any manifestation of the possession of grace, and therefore regeneration is not received in baptism." Not to lay stress upon the fact that this style of reasoning is totally illogical, being an argument from the truth of the particular to the truth of the universal; it should be sufficient to reply, that baptism is a covenant between two parties, in which one engages to confer certain benefits on the other on condition that he performs certain duties; but if in a covenant, one party is not sincere in the professions he makes at the time of entering into the covenant, or if at any future time he breaks his part of the engagement, the other party is no longer bound to confer the benefits which he had promised; therefore, if at his baptism an adult has no intention of fulfilling his part of the contract, it must not be wondered at that God, who reads the hearts, does not confer the grace of regeneration, even though his minister, who looks only at the outward appearance, and takes for true the profession made by the catechumen, should declare him to be regenerated, nor is it to be wondered at that God withdraws the grace of regeneration from a baptized person, whether he received baptism in infancy or in mature years, if in after life he sins against grace and breaks the covenant into which he had entered with God.

I conclude, therefore, that on this point, as well as on the others which have been considered, the Church is orthodox, that her doctrines have met with the warm approval of the giant minds who wrought the great work of the Reformation—that they accord with the unanimous teachings of the primitive Church, and that they are firmly based upon the solid rock of the Book of God; or in other words, that the doctrines and usages of the Church of England with respect to baptism are CATHOLIC, PRIMITIVE AND SCRIPTURAL.

(To be Continued.)

ERRATUM.—In our last issue, page 144, column 1, line from the bottom 17, for "at" read "ab."

Diocesan Intelligence.

NOVA SCOTIA.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

BADDECK, C. B.—A very interesting and successful missionary meeting was held in Temperance Hall, Baddeck, on the evening of the 27th of February.

The meeting opened with prayer by the chairman, the Rev. S. Gibbons, missionary in charge, after which in a few well-chosen remarks he introduced the Rev. C. Croucher, of Glace Bay, who delivered a very interesting and instructive address, taking for his subject the "Origin and Object of the Diocesan Church Society."

The Rev. G. Metzler, Rector of Sydney Mines, followed in an earnest and eloquent appeal in behalf of the mission fund, clearly defining as a duty incumbent on all to aid in the spread of the Gospel by contributing liberally of the means with which God blessed each one.

The closing address was given by the Rev. S. Gibbons in his usual happy and humorous style; he recited incidents of missionary experience in Newfoundland as well as in the northern part of his present mission. The success of this meeting is owing chiefly to the assistance rendered by the Revs. Messrs. Croucher and Metzler, the former having traveled a distance of seventy miles and the latter a distance of forty miles. The addresses were interspersed with music by the choir, over which Miss McKeen presided with her usual ability. The collection taken at the close of the meeting amounted to \$11.

ORDINATION.—On the 2nd Sunday in Lent the Lord Bishop admitted to priest's orders in St. Paul's, Halifax, the Rev. G. O. Troop, curate of that parish.

AN INTERRUPTED LECTURE.—March 19th a large audience gathered at Free Mason's Hall, Halifax, to hear the Chaplain of the Forces, the Rev. Mr. Townend, lecture on "A Visit to the Netherlands and the Field of Waterloo," but when the reverend gentleman had but fairly entered on his discourse he was called away to the dying bed of General Haly, and the meeting had to be prematurely closed. The tickets were returned to the audience as they passed out. It is a singular fact that this is the third time Mr. Townend has been prevented from delivering this lecture on the night announced.

DEATH OF GENERAL HALY.—At 10 minutes to 10 o'clock on the evening of March 19th, His Excellency Lieut. General Sir William O'Grady Haly, K.C.B., commanding Her Majesty's Forces in the Dominion, died at his residence, Bellevue House, Halifax. The announcement of his serious illness prepared the people for the sad news, but the general regret will not on that account be at all lessened. General Haly succeeded to the command in the Dominion on the departure of Sir Hastings Doyle five years ago, and since that time had endeared himself to the citizens, who recognized in him all the sterling traits of the true British soldier, combined with the qualities necessary to make him a successful head of the garrison from a citizen's point of view, always taking a lively though unostentatious interest in matters affecting the public welfare. Being a soldier who had earned his honors, he was an object of admiration to the loyal people of this city, as he moved about on review days, apparently all unconscious of the glittering emblems which adorned his breast—emblems not those of the vain carpet knight, but earned by gallantry displayed on many a hard fought field. General Haly entered the British army in 1828, and saw much service. Besides ten active years in India, he served in the Crimea during 1854-5. At the battle of the Alma he had his charger killed under him. At Inkerman he received four bayonet wounds while surrounded by a party of Russians, against whom he gallantly defended himself with his sword until they were driven back. He also actively participated in the capture of Balaklava; was all through the siege, and at the fall, of Sebastopol, and was present at the gallant repulse of the Russian sortie on the 26th of October. He wore the Crimean medal and four clasps, was an officer of the Legion of Honor, and was decorated with the 3rd class of the Medjidie and Turkish.

SPRING HILL.—This is a coal mine district in County Cumberland. Ecclesiastically it is connected with the Cumberland Mines Mission, which extends in one direction 45 miles and comprises five congregations. Spring Hill being a very modern settlement, and the Church people few and poor, they have no church. In the time of my predecessor, the Rev. D. C. Moore, a grant from S. P. C. K. of £50 stg. was promised with the usual conditions. Eighteen months ago meetings were held and a church determined on. A valuable site of land having been given by Mr. James Miller, a member of the congregation, a