

But blind must he be, also, not to perceive that much in the Christian church, at present, which assumes the name of prudence, is timidity and unbelief in disguise; that, as missionary witnesses, we treat with God too much in the commercial spirit; that we do not trust him to any large amount—that we look too much at funds in reserve, and too little at promises in reserve. "Prove me now, saith God, whether I will not open the windows of heaven to bless you." But who thinks of accepting the generous challenge? Does not our conduct, in effect, reproach the first witnesses, and charge the confessors and reformers of later days with guilty rashness? If we are only prudent, what were they? Impudent men, to venture life so recklessly as you did! Imprudent witnesses for God, to calculate present consequences so little, and to think so much of the future! And how insensible must you have been to say, when all the engines of martyrdom were brought out, that none of these things moved you! And how presumptuous to affirm that the promises of God warranted such zeal! How would you have stood corrected now! How much more cheaply might you have purchased distinction in the church now! But if distinction was your aim, well is it for your present fame that your zeal burned so long ago; for, though your names are now on every lip, and we boast that God raised you up, you could not now repeat your noble deeds without endangering your fame. Yours is zeal to be admired at a distance!

And yet, brethren, theirs, in truth, is the energy we want—the zeal of a Paul, and the first disciples; of a Luther, and the early reformers; of a Brainerd, and our first missionaries—a zeal that would startle the church; aye, and be stigmatized by thousands of its members, as what zeal has not been?—zeal that would be content to be appreciated a century hence. The zeal wanted is that which, while it invites prudence to be of its council, would not allow her to reign—which, while it would economize its means, would be too frequent in its demands on the funds of Christian benevolence to allow them to lie long at interest—anniversary zeal made perpetual. The energy we want is that which springs from sympathy with the grandeur of our theme, the dignity of our office, and the magnificence of the missionary enterprise. Oh, where is the spiritual perception that looks forth on the world as the great scene of a moral conflict, and beholds it under the stirring aspect which it presents to the beings of other worlds? Where are the kindled eye, and the beaming countenance, and the heart bursting with the momentous import of the gospel message? Where the fearlessness and confidence, whose very tones inspire conviction, and carry with them all the force of certainty, and the weight of an oath? Where the zeal which turns with its subject, as if it had just come from witnessing the crucifixion, and felt its theme with all the freshness and force of a new revelation?—the zeal which, during its intervals of labour, repairs to the mount of vision, to see the funeral procession of six hundred millions of souls—to the mouth of hell, to hear six hundred millions of voices saying, as the voice of one man, "Send to our brethren, lest they also come into this place of torment"—to Calvary, to renew its vigour by touching the cross—to the spot where John stood, to catch a view of the ranks of the blessed above. Enthusiasm is sobriety here. In this cause, the zeal of Christ consumed him—his holiest ministers have become flames of fire; and, as if all created ardour were insufficient, here infinite zeal finds scope to burn, "for the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform it."

6. And where is this flame to be kindled?—where is the live coal to be obtained but from off the altar? It was there the witnesses of Christ, in every age, found it; and there they kept it bright and burning. It was there that Christ himself obtained that zeal, in the flames of which he at last ascended as a sacrifice to God. Nay, what was that atoning sacrifice itself, but a more intense prayer for the redemption of the world—the prayer of blood—a prayer so ardent that he consumed himself in the utterance—a prayer which is ascending still, and still filling the ear of God with its entreaties—a prayer, from which all other prayers derive their prevailing power. And what was the object of that bleeding intercession? and what did he himself regard as the full answer to it? What but the advent of the

Spirit, as the agent of a new creation? Oh, Christians, is there such a doctrine in our creed as the doctrine of divine influence? Is there such an agent in the church as the Almighty Spirit of God? Is he amongst us expressly to testify of Christ—to be the great animating spirit of his missionary witness, the church? and is it true that his unlimited aid can be obtained by prayer—that we can be baptized by the Holy Ghost, and with fire? Oh, ye that preach "believe and be saved" to the sinner, preach the same to the church—"believe the promise of the Spirit, and be saved." Ye that love the Lord, keep not silence; send up a loud, long, united, and unsparring entreaty for his promised aid. This, this is what we want. And this is all we want. Till this be obtained, all the angelic agency of heaven would avail us nothing; and when it is obtained, all that agency will be unequal to the celebration of our triumphs.

Witnesses for Christ, hear the conclusion of the whole matter: the cause of your Redeemer has come on in the heathen world—the cause of human happiness; the destiny of immortal myriads is involved; and the world is hushed, and waiting to receive your evidence. By the love of Christ, will you not go and testify in his behalf? The destroyer of souls is witnessing against him; and millions are crediting and confirming the dreadful testimony; will you not hasten to testify for him? Mahometanism is denying his divinity, and is placing an impostor in his stead—will you not attest that there is none other name under heaven given among men wherby we can be saved, but the name of Christ your Lord? China is denying his existence, and one-third of the human race believe it; will you not go to proclaim—"This is the true God and eternal life?" Hindooism is affirming that his name is Juggernaut, and that he—your Lord, the Saviour of the world—that he loves impurity and blood; and millions believe it;—will you not go and attest that "his name is Jesus, because he saves his people from their sins?" Shall his cross have next to no witnesses of its benevolence? shall his blood have no tongue to proclaim its efficacy; his cause no friends to espouse it? Witnesses for Christ, your Lord is in India, awaiting your arrival. He has obtained a hearing for you; and he is on the plains of Africa—at the gates of China—in the temples of Hindostan, calling for his witnesses to come and testify in his behalf. And shall he call in vain? He is saying to his church to-day, not for the third, but for the thousandth time—"Lovest thou me?" Then, by the blood which redeemed you—by the benevolent design of that redemption, that you might be my witnesses—by the wants of the world, waiting to hear you proclaim my grace, and perishing till they hear—by the certainty of your success, and the glories that would result from it—by the power of that cross which is destined to move the world—awake, arise, to your high prerogative and office; call down the aid of the great renewing Spirit; and let every creature hear you say, "We have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the saviour of the world." "Ye are my witnesses."

INFANT BAPTISM.

A NEGATIVE argument for matters of fact in Scripture, cannot conclude a law, or a necessary, or a regular event. And, therefore, supposing that it be not intimated, that the Apostles did baptize infants, it follows not that they did not; and if they did not, it does not follow that they might not, or that the church may not. The words and deeds of Christ are infinite, which are not recorded; and of the acts of the Apostles we may suppose the same, in their proportion: and, therefore, what they did not is no rule to us, unless they did it not because they were forbidden. So that it can be no good argument to say, the Apostles are not read to have baptized infants, therefore infants are not to be baptized, but thus: we do not find that infants are excluded from the common sacraments and ceremonies of Christian institution, therefore we may not presume to exclude them. For although the negative of a fact is no good argument, yet the negative of a law is a very good one. We may not say, the Apostles did not, therefore we may not; but thus: they were not forbidden to do it—there is no law against it—therefore it may be done. No man's deeds can prejudicate a divine law, expressed in

general terms; much less can it be prejudiced by those things which were not done. *That which is wanting cannot be numbered, cannot be effectual; therefore, Baptize all nations, must signify all that it can signify—all that are reckoned in the capitations and accounts of a nation.*

Now, since all contradiction to this question depends wholly upon these two grounds: the negative argument in matter of fact; and the preferences, that faith and repentance are required to baptism;—since the first is wholly nothing, and infirm upon an infinite account, and the second may conclude, that infants can no more be saved than baptized: because faith is more necessary to salvation than to baptism—it being said, *he that believeth not shall be damned*: and it is not said, *he that believeth not shall be excluded from baptism*;—it follows, that the doctrine of those who refuse to baptize their infants, is, up on both its legs, weak, and broken, and insufficient; and upon these grounds, the baptism of infants, according to the perpetual practice of the church of God, will stand firm and unshaken upon its own base.—*Bp. Jer. Taylor.*

SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATIONS.

CARRYING A KEY ON THE SHOULDER, A MARK OF OFFICE.

Isaiah, xxii. 22.

"The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open."

Bishop Lowth says, as the robe and the girdle, mentioned in the preceding verse, were the ensigns of power and authority, so likewise was the key the mark of office, either sacred or civil. The Priestess of Juno is said to be the key-bearer of the goddess.

This mark of office was likewise among the Greeks, as here in Isaiah, borne on the shoulder by the Priestess of Ceres. To comprehend how the key could be borne upon the shoulder, it will be necessary to say something of the form of it. One sort of keys, and that probably the most ancient, was of considerable magnitude; and as to the shape, it was very much bent and crooked. Aratus, to give his reader an idea of the form of the constellation Cassiopeia, compares it to a key. Eustathius speaks of its being in shape like a reap-hook. The curve part was introduced into the key-hole, took hold of the bolts within, and moved them from their places.

From all that is said of ancient keys, it appears that they must have been of considerable size and weight, and could be most commodiously carried upon the shoulder. Ulysses's key was of brass, and the handle of ivory; but this was a royal key: the more common ones were probably of wood. Thevenot informs us, that in Egypt they continued to use wooden locks and keys, and that even the gates of Cairo have no better.

In allusion to the image of the key, as the ensign of power, the unlimited extent of that power is expressed with great clearness as well as force, by the sole and exclusive authority to open and shut. Our Saviour has applied to himself the very words of the Prophet—"These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and he that shutteth, and no man openeth." Rev. iii. 7.—*Burder.*

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION.

[CONTINUED.]

THE birth of the Papacy, which we have seen took place in the year 533, was the commencement of an era of darkness, corruption and superstition, which continued for nearly a thousand years, during which, the lights and glories of the church suffered a dread eclipse: "darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people." It is true, that during this long night of heathenish darkness, and of corrupted Christianity, there arose, in its different ages, men of eminence, piety and learning, who mourned over, and laboured to remove, the ignorance by which they were surrounded, as we learn from the history and writings of the "Ancient Fathers;" but so great, and so universal were the ignorance and superstition both of the clergy and laity during this long