

IMMERSION.

In shunning one extreme, we are wont to run into the contrary. The Papists in former times made the mere act of immersion or of sprinkling, irrespective of the sentiments, faith, or feelings, of the subject, wash away all sins. They used the name of the "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," or of "the Trinity," as they termed it, just as conjurors use the words of a charm. They supposed that the mere pronounciation of the names constituting "the Holy Trinity," together with two or three drops of water from the baptized finger of an ignorant priest, forgave all sins, whether "original or actual," and therefore contended, "no baptism, no salvation." Because they terminated in this abominable delusion and carried their notions to this immense extreme, the Protestants ran to an equal extreme on the other side of the equator of truth; and therefore gave to baptism, however administered, no connexion with the remission of sins. So much did they hate the errors of popery, that they did scarcely name "the forgiveness of sins" on the same day on which they "administered baptism." This is not the only instance in which the Protestants were driven entirely to neglect their duty, because the Catholics ran into some absurdity. Thus, as the Romanists laid so much stress upon fasting, as to make it almost more than "a sacrament," the Protestants will not fast at all, lest they should become Papists; and therefore, although they have some days called "fast days," they take good care to eat as abundantly on those holy days as upon other occasions.

Now, methinks we are not to be scared out of our duty or privilege because of the errors or follies of others. Nor do we lose sight of the forgiveness of our sins in immersion, because Papists have made a saviour of a mere ceremony. We connect faith with emersion as essential to forgiveness—and therefore, as was said of old, "According to your faith, so be it to you," so say we of immersion. He that goes down into the water to put on Christ, in the faith that the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin, and that he has appointed immersion as the medium, and the act of ours, through and in which he actually and formally remits our sins, has when immersed the actual remission of his sins. So that he is dead by sin, buried with Jesus, and is born again, or raised to life again, a life new and divine, in and through the act of immersion. This we have seen in the preceding essays is the Bible import of the one immersion. In it we put on Christ, are buried with him, rise with him, have our sins remitted, enter upon a new life, receive the Holy Spirit, and begin to rejoice in the Lord.

Infidels and skeptics in general, as well as some weak minded christians, object to this doctrine because it is not complex or mysterious enough. It is too easy, too cheap, too simple to have such immense advantages attached thereto. What! say they, is a man to put on Christ, to be born again, to begin a new life, to rise with Christ to a heavenly inheritance, to have all his sins remitted, to receive the Holy Spirit, to be filled with joy and peace, through the mere act of a mere believing immersion in water into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I say yea—most assuredly; and re-