

If, as is probably the case, the old carriage horse has been docked, his suffering in warm weather will greatly be increased. That form of mutilation which we call docking is, I believe, inartistic and barbarous, and I do not doubt that before many years it will become obsolete, as is now the cropping of horses' ears, which was practised so late as 1840. But still I should not strongly condemn the owner for docking his horses, or buying them after they had been docked, which comes to the same thing, if his intention and custom were to keep them so long as they lived. But to dock a horse, thus depriving him forever of his tail, to keep him till he is old or broken down, and then sell him for what he will bring, is the very refinement of cruelty.—*Selected.*

INFANT BAPTISM.

[From a Tract "Holy Baptism" by Rev. F. S. Jewell]

Great indeed is their folly who, having the opportunity, neglect to secure for their little ones the added blessings of this Sacrament of the household! Not less great is the error, it not the presumption, of those, who, ignoring the all-fatherhood of God, and His sovereign pleasure, beyond all special provisions of grace, to 'have mercy on whom He will have mercy,' summarily assume the perdition of those helpless infants who may have died unbaptised. Let us rather fall into the hands of God than men, especially such men as these.

Infant Baptism, why not commanded.—It is no part of the present purpose to defend the Rite against uncatholic opponents. Yet these some times distress the faithful, and, hence, some words concerning the plausible plea, that the baptism of infants is not countenanced by Holy Scripture may prove helpful. The argument against this objection, while chiefly circumstantial, is one of rare naturalness and strength. What is not less interesting is the fact that, besides sustaining the Rite, it affords a beautiful and striking proof, in its aptness to the times, that the New Testament Scriptures are what they purport to be—true and divine records.

The New Testament not an exhaustive treatise.—Admit now if you will, that the New Testament says little on the subject; it must not be forgotten that it was not meant to be an exhaustive treatise on Christian institutions. Hence it is full and precise only on leading points. I was also addressed to the intelligent people of the day, who were assumed to be capable of reaching some truths, by reasonable inference. The Gospel, moreover, was intended simply to refine, elevate and supplement the old religion. It, hence, had no need to specify and elaborate everything that belonged to the new order; for the Old and the New as complementary, helped to explain each other. Besides this, Christianity was to be a growth no less than an origination, so that not a few of its details, applications, agencies and uses, were to be reached, not through a direct, dogmatic exposition, but only through a historic unfolding.

Christ Came to extend, not to abridge, gracious privilege.—Furthermore, our Lord expressly declares it to be His mission to fulfil the Old Law, that is, not simply to bring a something prophetic to pass, but to bring that which was incomplete to its fullness. But under the Old Law, the little child, no less than the adult, was by an express, divine command, circumcised, and thus brought into covenant relations with God and His Church. To continue the covenant and its relations and blessings, while extending its seal and application to the whole household, without distinction of sex, and with the substitution of a simple, unbloody and undistressing rite, in place of the former one so seemingly repulsive and severe, was certainly to add a new fullness to the ancient law. But

would it have been any fulfilling or perfecting of that law, to have deprived the Christian parent of the ancient privilege of gathering his children with him into the Church of God, and securing to them the blessings of the Covenant? Would it have been any other than a narrow and invidious distinction to have deprived the Christian child of rights and relations which had for ages been so freely accorded to the Jewish infant? And can it be supposed that Jewish converts, who were so bent on clinging to the old rite that the Councils of the Church had to issue a restrictive Canon on the subject, would have submitted to the exclusion of their children from Holy Baptism, without an outcry which would have forced its record into the sacred narratives? But there is no such record, and its absence proves the non-existence of any such grievance or ground therefor.

No indication of such an exclusion as intended. Besides this, any such harsh abridgment of the covenant privileges of the believer's household, would surely have been foreshadowed by something in our Lord's teaching and practice. He would have sagaciously provided something calculated to pave the way to its patient acceptance and peaceful introduction. But nowhere in the Gospels do we discover anything of the kind. Nor, judging from St. Peter's words in his Pentecostal Sermon—"The promise is to you and to your children" (Acts ii, 39)—do the Holy Apostles appear to have been aware of any such provision or design. On the contrary, our blessed Lord's most expressive and tender words and acts as recorded in connection with His blessing of the little children (St. Mark x, 13 16), are wholly irreconcilable with the existence in His mind, of any such contemplated exclusion of the children of believers from the covenant privileges of His Kingdom. Nay, it is impossible, save under a state of dogmatic congelation, to believe that, studiously observant of their Lord's words and ways as the Holy Apostles became, they did not see in His utterances and action on that touching occasion both a recognition of the child's right to the coming Sacramental substitute for Circumcision and a suggestion of that most becoming and beautiful ritual act of the function, so transcending anything attendant on the ancient ordinance—the enfolding of the little one in the arms of the Priestly Shepherd.

Why no New Testament mention of Infant Baptism. As for the objection sometimes urged, that no clear mention is made of the baptizing of infants, what better record is there, in the sacred narratives, of the receiving of women to the Holy Communion; or of the 'making of a profession of religion' by converts, apart from their Baptism; or of the setting apart of the Lord's Day as the Christian Sabbath, or a number of other observances which the Church has held Sacred throughout the ages? Besides this, where was the need of any such distinct notice, when the baptizing of households is so often mentioned. It was a settled fact, under both Jewish and oriental usages, that the wife and child, and even the servant, were so necessarily included in the household as to need no distinct enumeration? Really, Christian people ought not to forget that there were some *divine elements* in the ancient order of the Church; that such elements were, like their divine author, *enduring*; and that Christ simply transferred them to the Church of the New Dispensation, under finer and purer forms. The continuity of the Church covers something more than the bare perpetuation of her existence.

The child has no option allowed him. There is no limit to the demands made on the Church's patience, by those who affect special religious scrupulosity or conscientiousness. There are persons who, still in bondage to their old sectarian teaching and delusion, will object that, in Baptism, no option is allowed to the child. No choice of his own! How much option has

he in his natural birth? Why more in the new, or spiritual birth? Our Saviour makes the two analogous. In how many other things only important to his physical well-being, is the child equally without choice? And in all sound reason, also; because his own choice would be simply destructive. The beginning and the early regulation of his religious life are certainly not less important than these temporal concerns. Why, for example, leave the child to his unintelligent free choice as to his religion when it is not allowed in the matter of his education? The truth is, there is no graver delusion than that of leaving the child without religious establishment and training until 'he is old enough to choose for himself.' It is the devil's gospel for the release of the parent from his natural responsibility, and for securing the ruin of the child's soul. The parent is bound, by a law older than Christianity, to 'train up the child in the way he should go,' not only in things physical and mental, but also in things moral and spiritual. It is true that the parents' religion may not be the best; but his duty is still the same. He must act according to the light he has. Generally, also, even a mistaken religion is better than none. He, also, who is not faithful in little, how shall he be faithful in much?

It is wrong to build the child by such solemn vows. Much of the same character is the plea that it is wrong for parents or sponsors to bind the child by such solemn vows as are laid upon him in Holy Baptism. This is, however, to assume that the obligation thus imposed is new and altogether arbitrary. On the contrary, it is one which necessarily binds every person who, under God's good providence, has been favored with a Christian birth; or who, in other words, has been born under the Gospel. Indeed, the requirement, that that obligation should be recognized, and as nearly fulfilled as possible, is no less in accordance with right reason, than with the Christian religion; it is as conducive to the attainment of a pure and noble manhood, as it is to the perfecting of piety, or true holiness. The sponsors only *accept* the obligation for the child in form; not to impose any burden or bondage upon him, but only bind *themselves* to care for his proper training and assistance according to the vows thus recognized and to *secure* for him at the outset, the spiritual advantages and blessings of the divine covenant. The objection is, therefore, wholly without reason. As well say that the parent has no right to lay his infant child under vows of loyal citizenship, by taking the oath of allegiance, or becoming naturalized himself, which he practically does; for in that act he makes the child, without any choice of his own, a born subject or citizen. Or as well charge, that if the naturalized parent were, as a proxy (or sponsor), to take the oath of allegiance or the vows of loyal citizenship for the child, he would be laying upon him new and arbitrary obligations. The truth is, the objection is only a form of the popular fallacy, that God's law is only binding on those who loyally acknowledge its claims, or that the Christian is under obligation to obey the law of righteousness, while the non-professor is not. This makes repudiating an obligation, secure release from its claims. Can folly go further?

Not understanding it? As for the plea that the infant does not understand what is done or what it means; it is a melancholy fancy of that religion, in which everything spiritual depends wholly on a man's own faith, rather than on the direct grace of God. But, carry out the rule involved; withhold everything from the child,—or for that matter, from the adult,—which he does not or cannot understand; and of what high privileges and benefits, would he not be deprived? Besides this, who but the most densely ignorant does not know, that this is a fundamental law of the child's intelligence—first and in constant iteration, things and facts; afterwards through familiar