

it is true, for man cannot bestow life, but still something set forth to view, which has not its subsistence in the stone, but is an emanation from the spirit of man, and, as to how it came there, as incomprehensible to the beast which gazes on it as to us are the out-goings of the Spirit of God. For who knoweth the things of a man save the spirit that is in man; even so who can search the deep things of God save the Spirit who searcheth all things?

We know how the artist has put expression into the features of his statue; but it is neither from seeing his hands at work upon it, nor from seeing the work when done that we know this, but from our having access to contemplate within ourselves the powers and manner of working of a spirit similar to his own.

We know that the hand would obey his will, that the graving tool would follow the guiding of his hand, and the stone yield to the strokes of the graving tool, and that the mind can conceive and in peculiar cases accomplish such results. But how God forms His purposes, or how He carries them into accomplishment, we know not and cannot know. His works seem to us to have come forth out of nothing, only because they come forth from the hidings of the power of a God whom no man hath seen or can see.

HISTORY OF PRESBYTERIANISM.

THE WORSHIP OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

3. *Presbyterians reject Godfathers and Godmothers in Baptism.*

It is well known that the Presbyterian Church differs from Roman Catholics and Episcopalians in regard to sponsors in baptism. We differ in two respects. First, in not requiring or encouraging the appearance of any other sponsors in the baptism of children than the parents, when they are living and qualified to present themselves in this character; and, secondly, in not requiring or even admitting any sponsors at all in cases of adult baptism. And we adopt this principle and practice for the following reasons:—

1. There is not a shadow of evidence in the New Testament, that any other sponsors than parents were ever admitted to answer for their children in baptism in the Apostolic Church; nor is any text of Scripture attempted to be adduced in its support by the warmest friends of this practice. When the jailor of Philippi was baptized, "he and all his straightway;" and, when Lydia and "her household" were baptized, we read of no sponsors but the heads of these families, whose faith entitled them to present their households to receive the appropriate seal of faith.

2. We find no trace of any other sponsors than parents during the first 500 years after Christ. When some persons in the time of Augustine, who flourished towards the close of the fourth, and the beginning of the fifth century, contended that it was not lawful in any case for any excepting their natural parents to offer their children in baptism, that learned and pious father opposed them, and gave it as his opinion, that in extraordinary cases, as for example, when the parents were dead; when they were not professing Christians; when they cruelly forsook and exposed their offspring; and when Christian masters had young slaves committed to their charge; in these cases (and the pious father mentions no others) he maintains that any pro-

fessing Christians, who should be willing to undertake the charge, might with propriety take such children, offer them in baptism, and become responsible for their Christian education. In this principle and practice all intelligent and consistent Presbyterians are agreed. The learned Bingham, an Episcopal Divine of great industry and erudition, seems to have taken unwearied pains in his "Ecclesiastical Antiquities" to collect every scrap of testimony within his reach in favour of the early origin of sponsors. But he utterly fails of producing even plausible evidence to this amount, and at length candidly acknowledges that in the early ages parents were in all ordinary cases the presenters and sureties of their own children, and that children were presented by others only in extraordinary cases, such as those already stated, when their parents could not present them. It was not until the Council of Mentz in the ninth century, that the Church of Rome forbade the appearance of parents as sponsors for their own children, and required this service to be surrendered to other hands.

3. The subsequent history of this practice marks the progress of superstition. Mention is made by Cyril in the fifth century, and by Fulgentius in the sixth, of sponsors in some peculiar cases of adult baptism. When adults, about to be baptized, were dumb, or under the power of delirium through disease, and of course unable to speak for themselves, or to make the usual profession; in such cases it was customary for some friend or friends to answer for them, and to bear testimony to their good character, and to the fact of their having sufficient knowledge, and having before expressed a desire to be baptized. For this there was undoubtedly at least some colour of reason; and the same thing might perhaps be done without impropriety in some conceivable circumstances now. From this, however, there was a transition soon made to the use of sponsors in all cases of adult baptism. This latter, however, was upon a different principle from the former. When adults had the use of speech and reason, and were able to answer for themselves, the sponsors provided for such never answered nor professed for them. This was invariably done by the adult himself. Their only business, as it would appear, was to be a kind of curators, or guardians of the spiritual life of the persons baptized. This office was generally fulfilled in each Church by the deacons when adult males were baptized; and by the deaconesses when females came forward to receive this ordinance. Hence in the Roman Catholic, and some Protestant sects, the practice was ultimately established of providing godfathers and godmothers in all cases of adult baptism.

4. Among the pious Waldenses and Albigenses in the middle ages no other sponsor than parents were in common use. But, when the parents were dead, or absent, or unable on any account to act, other professors of religion, who were benevolent enough to undertake the charge, were allowed to appear in their place, and answer and act in their stead.

5. If, then, the use of godfathers and godmothers, as distinct from parents in baptism, has no countenance in the Word of God; if it was unknown in the Church during the first 500 years after Christ; and if it was superstitious in its origin, and connected with other superstitions in its progress, we have undoubtedly sufficient reason for rejecting the practice. When the system is to set aside parents in this solemn transaction; to require others to take their places, and make engagements which they never think of fulfilling, and in most cases notoriously have it not in their power to fulfil, we are constrained to regard it as a human invention, altogether unwarranted and adapted on a variety of accounts to generate evil rather than good.

According to one of the Canons of the Church of England "parents are not to be urged to be present when their children are baptized, nor to be permitted to stand as sponsors for their own children." That is, the parents, to whom God and nature have committed the education of chil-

dren, in whose families they are to grow up, under whose eye and immediate care their principles, manners, and character are to be formed, shall not be allowed to take even a part in their dedication to God, nor encouraged even to be present at the solemn transaction! In the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States "parents shall be admitted as sponsors if it be desired."

"The Prelatical Church," says Lorimer, "is a curious mixture of high claims and mean practices." We have seen much of the first, we may here advert to one of the second. One would think from the way in which Ordination and the Sacraments are spoken of, the exclusive channels of Salvation, if not Salvation itself, that the administration of baptism by any one save a prelatically ordained officer would be shrunk from as sacrilege; but so it is, that the Church of England, following the Church of Rome, recognizes and practises lay-baptism! baptism by commanding officers in the army or navy, who have no holy orders! What are we to think of the consistency of a system which allows any lay-man, however humble, to dispense baptism as validly as the highest bishop; and which at the same time is unchurching nine-tenths of Protestant Christendom, because its Churches have no Episcopal ordination. Is baptism, by many accounted regeneration itself, less important than ordination? Is this the language of Scripture? In England, previous to the Reformation, so established was the practice of lay-baptism that ministers were called to instruct their parishioners how to administer the ordinance in a *decent way*, as all might be called upon to do so. After the Reformation it was a frequent and serious ground of complaint by the Puritans against the Church of England, that women were allowed to baptize. There have been occasional controversies on the subject of lay-baptism, but the Church of England has all along held, and continues to hold its validity.

We shall next state our reasons for rejecting the *sign of the Cross in Baptism*, and the *rite of Confirmation*.

MISCELLANEOUS.

HEATHENISM AT HOME AND ABROAD.—At the Annual Meeting of the Edinburgh City Mission held lately in the Music Hall, the Duke of Argyll, on being called to the Chair, gave a talented and interesting address, from which we extract the following:—

"It is strange to think that we are now in the middle of the nineteenth century of the Christian Era, that for eighteen hundred and fifty years the faith of Christ has been preached in the world, that faith which is ultimately to subdue all nations under it, and that, at this moment, after so long a lapse of years, the millions who believe in Brahma, in Mahomet, and in Buddha, and in the stocks and stones which the Heathen worship, exceed by an immense majority the millions who believe in Christ. Most of you have perhaps seen a splendid work which we owe to the science and enterprise of a distinguished citizen of Edinburgh, I mean the "Physical Atlas of the World," an atlas which contains many maps exhibiting the distribution over the surface of the Globe of many of those phenomena which are the physical sciences and research. There is one map which I think is not contained in that Atlas, but which would strike us with astonishing results, I mean a map of the Christianity of the world. I do not mean that deeper Christianity which no human eye can measure, but which can only be measured by Him who is the Founder and Head of His Church, but I mean that outward and professed Christianity which we can measure, and number, and estimate. What would be the picture which such a map would present? The whole of Africa as black as the colour of her own children; a large part of America the same; ditto the whole of the vast regions, forming almost the half of the circumference of the Globe, which stretch from the Ni-