

IV. In regard to John's Baptism, it seems most probable that sprinkling or pouring was the mode of applying the water. It is not probable that the multitudes of men and women who came to John were immersed in the dress which they then had on; and that they were uncovered in that promiscuous assembly is not to be supposed; that they all had changes of raiment, or that they could or would have used them under such circumstances, if they had them, is incredible. Besides, they could go down into the water, and come up from, or out of, the water, as well if they stood and were sprinkled, as if they were immersed. They had only to leave their sandals on the shore, and adjusting their dress, which was convenient for such a service, step into the stream where the Baptist stood, receive the affusion of water from his hand, which would cost him but little effort compared to the labour of plunging and raising multitudes, and then retire for others to come around him in quick succession. That a human creature, especially one of whom it is said, "John did no miracle," could have endured the labour of plunging multitudes day after day, is amongst the many improbabilities of the case.

From this, it would follow that our Lord was not immersed. If he was baptized in Jordan, if he went into the river, and came up out of the water, all this it was most convenient to do in order to be sprinkled. How far into the river he went, we are not told. The improbabilities of immersion, in the other cases of John's Baptism, lead us to suppose that the Baptist took his usual place in the river, but only so far in as not to be obliged to stoop far to raise the water in his hand; and that Christ was thus baptized by affusion. The contrary cannot be proved, and this, under the circumstances, is most probable.

"John was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there," not because he immersed: for the words *much water* may be rendered *many waters*, or streams, convenient for the multitudes and their cattle. Had he baptized by immersion, one stream would have answered his purpose; and *many waters* would have been useless.

V. As to the *three thousand* on the day of Pentecost, it cannot be made at all probable that they were immersed. Did they stand all day in the clothes in which they were plunged? Or had they suits of apparel, or convenient places to prepare for immersion? Besides, it cannot be shown to be possible that the apostles could have immersed three thousand in the given time, even if their strength would have sufficed.

All these cases appear to us to have been cases of sprinkling or affusion.

WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THE precedence of the direct witness of the Spirit of God to the indirect witness of our own, and the dependence of the latter upon the former, are very clearly stated by three divines of great authority; to whom I refer the rather, because many of their followers of the present day have become very obscure in their statements of this branch of Christian experience.—*Rev. R. Watson.*

"St. Paul means, that the Spirit of God gives such a testimony to us, that he being our guide and teacher, our spirit concludes our adoption of God to be certain. For our own mind, of itself, independent of the preceding testimony of the Spirit, [*nisi praevenit Spiritus testimonio,*] could not produce this persuasion in us. For whilst the Spirit witnesses that we are the sons of God, he at the same time inspires this confidence into our minds, that we are bold to call God our Father."—*Calvin on Romans viii. 16.*

"Romans viii. 16. 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God: the witness which our own spirits do give unto our adoption is the work and effect of the Holy Spirit in us; if it were not, it would be false, and not confirmed by the testimony of the Spirit himself, who is the Spirit of truth. And none knoweth the things of God but the Spirit of God,' I. Cor. ii. 11. If he declare not our sonship in us, and to us, we cannot know it. How doth he then bear witness to our spirits? What is the distinct testimony? It must be some such

act of his as evinceth itself to be from him, immediately, unto them that are concerned in it, that is, those unto whom it is given."—*Dr. Owen on the Spirit, sec. 9.*

"The Spirit of adoption doth not only excite us to call upon God as our Father, but it doth ascertain and assure us, as before, that we are his children. And this it doth not by an untoward voice, as God the Father to Jesus Christ, nor by an angel, as to Daniel and the Virgin Mary, but by an inward and secret suggestion, whereby he raiseth our hearts to this persuasion, that God is our Father, and we are his children. This is not the testimony of the graces and operations of the Spirit, but of the Spirit itself."—*Poole on Rom. viii. 16.*

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

THERE were not only John and James, but Moses and Elias; and these were not shining statues—but they spake—and spake of the Saviour's decease. What a subject! What speakers! How delightful must have been their intercourse with them!—Moreover, there was the presence of Jesus. And surely it cannot be a question, why it is good to be where He is. With him we are safe, and nowhere else. He is the Source of all light and knowledge. He is the Fountain of honour and excellency. He is the Consolation of Israel. He is all and in all.

But where is he with his people? He is with them in the closet. There he manifests himself to them, as he does not in the world. There they enjoy an intimacy, a freedom, an unrestrained intercourse with him, such as other company will not allow. "Could these beams and rafters," said a good man, pointing to an unceiled roof, "speak, they would testify what hours of enjoyment I have had here, in communion with Him." Of the closet, therefore, they can say, *It is good for us to be here.*

He is with them in his Temple. Where would you look for a man, but in his own house. And the sanctuary is the place where the Lord's honour dwelleth. In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. And have they not found the promise true? Have they not seen his power and glory in the sanctuary? Of his house, therefore, they can say, *It is good for us to be here.*

He is with them at his Table. His cross is everything to a Christian: and here before our eyes Jesus Christ is evidently set forth crucified among us. What a sublime duty; what an exalted privilege, is the commemoration of his death! His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed! *It is good for us to be here.*

He is with them in the furnace. There the three Hebrew children found him. The flames only consumed their bands, and set them free; and they were seen walking in the midst of the fire—with the Son of God!

He is with them in the vale of death. How much will they need him then! Then all other friends and helpers leave them. Then heart and flesh will fail them. But they will not be without him. Though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death, he is with them; his rod and his staff they shall comfort them: and then they will have cause to say, *Lord, it is good for us to be here.*

How much more will they be justified in saying this in heaven? There he is with them immediately. There they will see him as he is—there, before the presence of his glory, they will possess fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

But none will be translated thither in person, whose hearts are not sent off first. None will have their residence in heaven hereafter, who have not their conversation in heaven here. None will be with the Lord forever, but those who find it their happiness for the Lord to be with them now.—*Wm. Jay.*

UNIVERSAL PHILANTHROPY.

LOVE is a debt due to every man: "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another." Romans xiii. 8. This debt is owing from every man; it must be continually paying, and yet it is ever owing. He that rendereth not love, payeth not his debts. This is a debt that grows due faster than it can be paid; and it must be continually paying.

ON THE WESLEYAN HYMNS.

BY THE REV. R. WATSON.

IN this collection, beside a few hymns by Mr. John Wesley, there are four or five from Dr. Watts. Several are translations by the Wesleys: one from the Spanish, "O God, my God, my all thou art," &c.; one from the French, "Come Saviour Jesus, from above;" and the others from the German hymns of the Lutheran and Moravian churches. Several of these translated hymns Mr. Montgomery has inserted in his "Psalmist," and marked "Moravian." They appear, indeed, in the Moravian Hymn Book, but in departments there, in which are also found the hymns of Dr. Watts, and other English authors. The preface of the edition of 1754, the first authorized collection of the English Moravians, and which embodies their former unauthorized publications, acknowledges "the foregoing labours of Mr. Jacobi and the Rev. Mr. Wesley," in the translation of German hymns of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, beside extracts of English ones of the eighteenth, from "Watts, Stennett, Davis, Erskine, Wesley," &c.; which acknowledgment was no doubt overlooked by Mr. Montgomery.

The hymns translated by the Wesleys, and said by Mr. Montgomery in his collection to be "Moravian," are, "Thou hidden love of God, whose height;" "Thee will I love, my strength, my tower;" "Shall I, for fear of feeble man;" "O thou who camest from above;" "Now I have found the ground wherein;" "My soul before thee prostrate lies;" and "Holy Lamb, who thee receive." Now all these were published by the Wesleys before the Moravian Hymn Book of 1754, in which the "foregoing labours of Mr. Wesley," in translating from the German, are acknowledged; and, indeed, most of them appear in the very first hymn books published by John and Charles Wesley, two of which bear date so early as 1739, fifteen years previous to the publication of the authorized Moravian collection. As translations, they are not therefore "Moravian;" and, when they are translated from "the German," it does not follow that they all have a Moravian origin, though some of them may; for the Moravian German book, like the English, as we learn from the preface to their English hymn book, "consists as well of hymns out of preceding church collections of their neighbours, as of others composed by themselves." The hymn, "High on his everlasting throne," marked "Moravian" by Mr. Montgomery, and mentioned also in his preface, is a Moravian German hymn; but the translation is by Mr. Charles Wesley; whilst "Give to the winds thy fears," also marked Moravian, is a German hymn of the Lutheran church, and the translation is Mr. Charles Wesley's. Of this hymn there is a version in the Moravian English Hymn Book; the last stanza of which, when placed beside Mr. C. Wesley's, will show what strength of internal evidence his translations distinguish themselves:—

WESLEY'S.

Thou see'st our weakness, Lord,
Our hearts are known to thee:
O lift thou up the sinking hand,
Confirm the feeble knee!
Let us in life and death,
Thy steadfast truth declare;
And publish with our latest breath,
Thy love and guardian care.

MORAVIAN.

O Lord, thou see'st our weakness,
Yet know'st what our hearts mean:
Against desponding sickness,
Our feeble knees sustain.
Till, and beyond death's valley,
Let us thy truth declare;
Yes, then emphatically,
Boast of thy guardian care.

Some other comparisons might be made between Mr. C. Wesley's translations from German hymns and those from the same originals found in the Moravian Hymn Book, which would sufficiently show that the Moravians, then at least, had no translator into English verse at all comparable to him; and, indeed, they had sufficient taste gene-