

refused its initiatory rite? Now, in the Acts and the Epistles we find traces of many controversies in the early churches; but not the slightest trace of controversy in regard to the baptism of infants. This fact is easily accounted for, on the supposition that the apostles so interpreted their commission as to include the infant children of their converts, but is utterly inexplicable on the supposition that they were excluded.

All that is said in the "Acts" respecting the practice of the apostles and their coadjutors, in regard to baptism, is quite in harmony with the view which we have proved to be the only credible one,—that they took the wide, and not the restricted, view of their commission. It is quite true that we do not read expressly of their baptizing infants: if we are right in our previous reasoning, they would do this as a matter of course, without making any special record of it, which is the practice of our modern missionaries. We do read, however, of the baptism of entire "households;" (an argument in our favour which we shall afterwards dwell on at greater length;) and it would be an assumption altogether incredible, that none of the numerous heads of families, which were converted in apostolic times, had any infant children.

Well, but it is said, that the commission is our only guide; that it plainly restricts the rite of baptism to believers; and therefore necessarily excludes infants, who are not capable of believing. Those who take this ground must, of course, take all its logical consequences. Let us see what they are.

This argument, then, if it has any force at all, will not only exclude infants from baptism, but also from salvation. If the expression in the commission, "he that *believeth* and