

and of Methodists on original sin, because some knowledge of this point is necessary to understand his and their doctrine on the subjects of baptism and of infant salvation.

It was the doctrine of Wesley that it is by baptism that infants are freed from this condition in which they are by nature, and become the children of God, and heirs of glory. In his sermon on the marks of the new birth, he asks his hearers, "Who denies that ye were then (in baptism) made children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven?" Again, in his sermon on the new birth, he says:—"It is certain our church supposes that all who are baptised in their infancy are at the same time born again; and it is allowed that the whole office for the baptism of infants proceeds upon this supposition." The doctrines, be it observed, set forth in these extracts, are the doctrines of Wesley's followers, the various bodies of Methodists, his sermons forming the principal part of the standards of Methodism. In his treatise on baptism, he enunciates his views on this subject still more explicitly and at greater length, as will be seen from the following extracts. In considering the benefits "we receive by baptism," he says, "the first of these is the washing away the guilt of original sin, by the application of the merits of Christ's death;" "the merits of Christ's life and death are applied to us in baptism," &c. 2. "By baptism, we enter into covenant with God," &c. 3. "By baptism, we are admitted into the church, and consequently made members of Christ its head," &c. 4. "By baptism, we who were by nature children of wrath, are made the children of God. And this regeneration which our church in so many places ascribes to baptism, is more than barely being admitted into the church, though commonly connected therewith: being grafted into the body of Christ's church, we are made the children of God by adoption and grace." "By water, then, as a means, the water of baptism, we are regenerated or born again." "Herein a principle of grace is infused which will not be wholly taken away, unless we quench the Holy Spirit of God by long continued wickedness." 5. "In consequence of our being made children of God, we are heirs of the kingdom of heaven." Wesley declares, likewise, his approbation of the rubric attached to the baptismal service of the church of England:—"It is certain, by God's word, that children who are baptised, dying before they commit actual sin, are saved."

All this is certainly plain enough. Baptised infants that die in infancy are saved: by baptism they are saved from the guilt of original sin, that corruption which in every one born into the world deserves God's wrath and damnation, and are regenerated or born again. But what, according to Wesley, becomes of the unbaptised who die in infancy? Does he speak with equal confidence, or with any confidence, of their salvation? The following extract from the same treatise of his on baptism is his answer:—

"If infants are guilty of original sin, then they are proper subjects of baptism; seeing, in the ordinary way, they cannot be saved, unless this be washed away by baptism. It has been already proved that his original stain cleaves to every child of man, and that hereby they are children of wrath, and liable to eternal damnation. It is true, the Second Adam has found a remedy for the disease which came upon all by the offence of the first. But the benefit of this is to be received through the means which he hath appointed—through baptism in particular, which is the ordi-