

The Church.

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Poetry.

CHURCH AND STATE.

Hail to the Crown by Freedom shaped—To girl
An English Sovereign's brow! and to the Throne
Whereon he sits! Whose deep Foundations lie
In veneration and the People's love;
Whose steps are equity, whose seat is law.
—Hail to the State of England! And conjoin
With this a salutation as devout,
Made to the spiritual Fabric of her Church;
Founded in truth; by blood of Martyrdom
Cemented; by the hands of Wisdom reared
In beauty of Holiness, with ordered pomp,
Decent, and unrepined. The voice, that greets
The majesty of both, shall pray for both;
That, mutually protected and sustained,
They may endure long as the sea surrounds
This favoured Land, or sunshine warms her soil.
—And O, ye swelling hills, and spacious plains!
Bespent from above to shine with steeples-towers,
And spires whose "silent fingers point to Heaven!"
Nor wanting, at wide intervals, the bulk
Of ancient Minster, lifted above the cloud
Of the dense air, which town or city breeds
To intercept the sun's glad beams—may ne'er
That true succession fall of English Heirs,
Who, with Ancestral feeling, can perceive
What in those holy Structures ye possess
Of ornamental interest, and the charm
Of pious sentiment diffused afar,
—And human charity, and social love.
—This never shall the indignities of Time
Approach their revered graves, unopposed;
Nor shall the Elements be free to hurt
Their fair proportions; nor the blinder rage
Of bigot zeal madly to overturn;
And, if the desolating hand of war
Spare them, they shall continue to bestow—
Upon the thronged abodes of busy Men
(Depraved, and ever prone fill their minds
Exclusively with transient things)
An air and mind of dignified pursuit;
Of sweet civility—on rustic wilds;
—The poet, fostering for his native land
Such hope, and exulting that Servants may abound
Of those pure Altars worthy; Ministers
Detached from pleasure, to the love of gain
Superior, insusceptible of pride,
And by ambitious longings undisturbed;
Men, whose delight is where their duty leads
Or fixes them; whose least distinguished day
Shines with some portion of that heavenly lustre
Which makes the Sabbath lovely in the sight
Of blessed angels, pitying human cares.
—And, as on earth it is the doom of Truth
To be perpetually attacked by foes,
Open or covert, be that Priesthood still,
For her defence, replenished with a Band
Of strenuous Champions, in scholastic arts
Thoroughly disciplined; nor (if in course
Of the revolving World's disturbances
Cause should recur, which righteous heaven avert!
To meet such trial) from their spiritual Sires
Degenerate; who, constrained to wield the sword
Of dispute, shrunk not, though assailed
With hostile din, and combatting in fire,
And did, thereafter, battle their hands in fire,
So to declare the conscience satisfied;
Nor for their bodies would accept release;
But, blessing God and praising him, bequeathed
With their last breath, from the emouldering flame,
The faith which they by diligence had earned,
Or, through illustrious grace, received,
For their dear Countrymen, and all mankind.
O high example, constant divine!

WORDSWORTH.

THE CHURCH OF IRELAND DELIVERED FROM POPISH TYRANNY, IN 1690.

(From Bishop Mann's History of the Church of Ireland.)

King James had made an early resolution "either to die a martyr, or to establish Popery." He did not, indeed, die the death of a martyr, but he endured a sort of martyrdom in the loss of his royal dignity, and in final banishment from his home and his country, by his defeat at the Boyne on the 1st of July, 1690; about five years and five months after his accession to the throne, and somewhat more than one year and a half after his abdication of the English crown. The character of his mind, and the tendency of his actions, are strangely illustrated by the two last acts recorded of him, previously to the conclusive battle; namely, the appointment, in a Romish college at Kilkenny, of certain Popish priests to benefices in the diocese of Meath, from which the lawful incumbents had been forcibly driven; and the establishment, by royal charter, of a new Benedictine nunnery in Dublin, the patent for which bears date the 15th of June, 1690, a fortnight before his final defeat and dethronement.—To the Church of Ireland his reign, almost from its commencement to its conclusion, was a calamitous series of fallacious promises, of violated pledges, of unconstitutional and tyrannical decrees, of arbitrary impositions, of oppressions and persecutions the most bitter and relentless. These evils probably were the dictates of wicked counsellors, rather than of his own free will; but they resulted from his determination to incur any danger in order to the establishment of Popery. However this be, his failure was of incalculable importance to the religious condition of Ireland; for it laid a check for a while in the British empire on the aspiring, the restless, and the unchangeable spirit of that domineering power, and restored her legitimate rights and privileges, as previously secured, to the Church.

Actuated by a lively sense of the deliverance achieved for her by the victory of the Boyne, the ministers of the Church, resident in Dublin and its vicinity, waited in a body on the conqueror in his camp, and by the mouth of the venerable Bishop of Meath, who had been their great advocate in affliction, and who now conducted their rejoicing assembly, tendered to King William an address, expressive of their congratulations, their loyalty, and their prayers for his welfare. On the following Sunday, July the 6th, Dopping, bishop of Meath, and Digby, bishop of Limerick, with all the clergy who were in Dublin and his neighbourhood, the Primate having excused his non-appearance by reason of his great age and infirmities, attended his triumphant procession to St. Patrick's cathedral, whither he repaired to return thanks for his success. There a sermon was preached by Dr. King, who had been elected not long before to the deanery, commemorating the power, and wisdom, and the providence of God, in the protection of his people, and the defeat of their enemies. And this was followed by the king's permission for the appointment of a day of solemn thanksgiving, and for composing an occasional form of prayer. Thus pure religion, rescued from the encroachment of "Popish tyranny and arbitrary power," was again established by God's good providence in Ireland, under the safeguard of the law; and rescued from the arbitrary and tyrannical proscriptions of the Popish king, as she had been not long before delivered from the sectarian persecutions of the republican usurper, the Church of Ireland was again vindicated and secured as part of the con-

stitution of the kingdom; having all along, and independently of all secular support, preserved her character of a true and sound part of the holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ, by her three orders of the ministry, transmitted in an unbroken line from the apostles, and by her preaching of the pure word of God, and her ministering of the sacraments, according to primitive usage, as embodied in her Book of Common Prayer.

That this Apostolic and Scriptural Church was not at the same time enabled to exert her influence, and dispense the means of grace, over the whole kingdom and all its inhabitants, must be matter of the most sincere and deep concern with those who are capable of justly estimating her excellence. But whatever efforts now or at any other time were directed to that end, they were counteracted by impediments inherent in the politico-religious condition of the country, especially by the indefatigable energy and predominant influence of the Romish hierarchy and priesthood, which annulled all freedom of thought and action in the Popish community, so as to preclude the operation of Christian truth upon their minds, whilst they put forth all their powers for the secular aggrandizement and profit of their party. This object had been fully unfolded and boldly avowed in the last miserable reign, when every exertion was used for placing in the hands of the Papists all the property and political power of the kingdom. Such was the aim of their united efforts. And never can it be enough lamented that the united energies of Protestantism could not be brought into action on the other side; but that sectarianism was permitted to divert the natural resources, to weaken the powers, and to diminish the authority, of the Church; and thus to impede her efficacy in driving away the erroneous and false doctrines of Popery, and in spreading over the kingdom the blessings of the reformed and pure faith of Christ, and his ordinances, as professed and maintained in her Apostolic communion.

TIME.

(By the Rev. F. W. Faber.)

Let us think of some of the ways in which we are influenced and affected by time. We see that the whole external world is regulated by it. The sun rises and sets within his proper limits; and the moon is a faithful witness in heaven. The great sea keeps its own calendar by its tides; the earth by her seasons, spring and autumn, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest. Now all these are so many ways of marking time; for when twelve months are over, all things begin again as before. We are compelled, whether we will or not, to follow these changes, to obey them, and adapt ourselves to them. Our toil, our business, our pleasures, our dress, our way of living, are all forced to accommodate themselves to the changes of the year. We cannot help ourselves. Time is a law of God, and therefore it is too strong for us. We should often be glad to shorten one season or lengthen another; but it may not be. So here is one way in which we are affected by time.

But it is not only the natural world which is regulated and governed by time. The world which we make for ourselves,—the world of sin and sorrow, the world of trouble and pleasure,—this is also most completely beneath the hand of time. We have fixed days, and hours, and weeks and months, for doing all things. We contrive instruments for telling us how our very minutes are passing. We divide time into the smallest portions; and in every one of those portions we have something to do or suffer. So here is another way in which we are put beneath the dominion of time.

But more than this, time possesses an almost irresistible authority over our feelings, our affections, and our happiness. It is a sad thing to be in sorrow; yet there are many of us who have lost parents, or children, or friends, who would fain have kept alive within our hearts the same keen and lively memory of them, as we had when first they died. But time will not let us: it hurries us along; and our impressions grow fainter and fainter, till at last they almost die away. Then in our friendships and our loves time grievously interferes with us. It will not allow the glow of our affection to continue. We cease to love friends who have loved before, for no other reason than that the lapse of time has cooled our love, and we were not able to withstand its power. And as it interferes with our affections so does it with our happiness. Time is so unsatisfactory a thing when it is with us, that we are always discontented with the present. Young men are always wishing to be old, and old men to be young. Men can love the future, and they can love the past; scarcely any can rest contented in the present. Besides which, it often comes across us as a melancholy thought, that all this will go on just as well, just as happily, when we are dead and gone. Men will have our houses and our gardens, and will be glad and happy therein. They will walk about the same streets, and have the same joyous meetings, when we shall be slowly and neglectedly falling back into the cold earth out of which we came; and they who loved us will have laid us therein, shed a few slight tears upon our coffin, gone to their pleasure or their toil, and straightway forgotten all about us. And yet they are not unfaithful or unaffectionate. It is time's fault, not theirs.

Surely these thoughts about time are very profitable to us; or at any rate they may be made so: for they show us what a tyrant time is; how it bears us onward with an unfeeling violence, not allowing us one hour's respite for the quiet indulgence of our holiest and most natural affections. They show us, too, which is a great thing, that time is something quite distinct from ourselves; they point out that there is something within us which is continually craving for rest, which is weary of following time up and down in all its changes, and is miserable in that perpetual agitation and hurry and motion into which it is thrown by time. Nothing can prove to man more strongly his own immortality, than his dislike of time and his unhappiness while beneath its power.

Thus a thoughtful mind might have got so far towards seeing what a mystery time is, independent of the Bible. He might have seen that it was something which influenced all his thoughts and actions; something from which he could not escape, and which would leave him in the end he knew not where, only it would be helpless, and hopeless also. Thus it was, to get rid of this mystery, that the heathen of old days made time into a god; that is, they believed, or tried to make themselves believe, that time was eternal. Yet we, who are made heirs of heaven and partakers of the divine nature, who can die no more, because Christ has once died for us all; who have bread from heaven, even the Flesh of the Incarnate Word, whereon we feed, whereby we receive fullest remission of sins, and

take into ourselves the seed and the earnest of a blessed resurrection;—we who are thus from mere mortals made by holy Baptism into sons of God, think far less about time, about what it is, and what it means, and what we have to do with it, than the heathen did. They wondered at it: we let hour after hour slip by, and take no account of the mystery. They were uneasy and unhappy about it: it never disturbs us in our business or our pleasure; it never disturbs us even in our sins. They made a god of it, and worshipped it, and did all they could to propitiate its awful power; we never remember that it is a messenger of the one true God, that it tells us that the world's end keeps hastening, and that the fire of judgment draweth nearer and nearer to us day by day, and night by night. So far, then, independent of the Bible, we could see that time was a mystery.

Now in the Bible no explanation is given at all: but mystery is made far deeper. We know that the world was 4000 years old when God gave His only begotten Son to take upon Him our nature and to be miraculously born of a pure Virgin. Yet the Bible calls Him the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. Abraham had been long dead and buried, and his sepulchre was in the Holy Land in the days of Christ's humiliation. Yet the Lord tells us that Abraham rejoiced to see His day and was glad. Nay, more than this, we are taught that Christ could not come before He did, that it was not well He should come before He did, because it was not yet the fulness of time. So you see time had power to keep back our blessed Lord from coming. And when He was on earth, He speaks of His time not being yet come; so that time had something to do with His death. Moreover, in the Scriptures we learn that time has nothing to do with God; that His power and wisdom are not bounded by what men call past, present, and future; that He is the first and the last, Who was and is, and is to be, in Whom and by Whom, and through Whom do all things consist, from Whom they spring, and upon Whom they most entirely and utterly depend. But the Bible not only deepens the mystery of time, but extends its power. The dead, that is, our friends and relations and forefathers who have left this world—the spirits, are under the influence of time. For their souls beneath the altar cry unto God, and say, "How long! O Lord, how long!" Lastly, we learn from the Bible also, that there shall be a very great day, whereon an Angel (Rev. x. 6.) shall go forth and swear by the God Who made all things and liveth for ever, that there shall be time no longer.

These things are very mysterious. But they are written for our instruction. We live in time, we shall be judged for what we do in time; we shall still live on, we shall still be alive, when time shall be no longer. With us eternity depends on time. Now then, if the Bible tells us all these mysteries about time, and many more which I have not mentioned, what does it tell us of time as connected with ourselves—as practical to ourselves? First of all these mysteries themselves are very practical; they make us afraid of time, of letting it slip away from us unseen, of mis-spending it. Secondly, God puts time before us as a witness, for or against us. We are to be judged by the things we do in time, and round. They make no noise as they go. Night steals quietly upon the day; and morning light breaks in the east in beauty and in silence. But every year, as it passes away from us, goes to lay its long and sad account at the foot of the throne of God. That throne is set up in its own place somewhere in the world. We cannot tell where it is; perhaps nearer ourselves than we imagine, perhaps in the midst of us. To this throne does each year come to testify of all things which it has seen, no matter how secret, which all the men in all the nations of the earth have committed; that God may note them in His Book. It is a faithful witness: it forgets nothing, it conceals nothing; it is God's minister going up and down among men to spy out all their actions. We cannot hide ourselves from time. It is like the eye of Him Who made it. It does not close: it does not sleep: it does not weary of its task: it is awake for evermore.

ON COMING UNWORTHILY TO THE LORD'S SUPPER.

(From Bishop Fleetwood.)

To come unworthily, is to come without any repentance or sorrow for past offences, and without any resolutions of amendment for the future. And such a coming as this, necessarily increases a man's damnation, because he does apparently despise his Saviour, and insult his holy ordinance; the whole design of which, and almost every word of which, supposes sorrow for his sins past, and purpose of amendment for the time to come. It is like a Jew's coming to be baptized, who hates Christianity in his heart, and intends to affront that sacrament, but comes to serve some secular interest and end; or if he comes not with contempt and malice, yet he makes a most solemn profession of a great many promises, none of which he has any design of keeping. Now such a one must certainly be in a worse condition than if he had never been baptized, and his baptism must certainly increase his damnation. And must it not be the same with those who come to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and there pretend most solemnly to repent and be sorry for their sins past, and to row all holy obedience for the future, and yet do neither, but purpose to continue in their grievous sins? Or if they do not positively purpose to continue in their sins, yet have no intention to leave them.—Such coming must unavoidably increase damnation, because here is a new and most provoking sin, of mocking Christ's ordinance, added to his old impenitence. But, truly, I believe, as well as hope, that not one sinner in a hundred thousand comes to the Sacrament without a general repentance, and some sort of resolution of forsaking his sins, though it be faint, and loose, and ineffectual. And of such, I know not how to conclude that they thereby increase their damnation, any more than they, who, without coming to the Sacrament, make such kind of resolutions frequently, and yet forget and break them, may be said also to increase their damnation; since every new sin does certainly add to our misery, and more and more endanger our souls. I will therefore yield to you, that to come unworthily is a greater venture than to stay away; if by unworthily you mean a positive intention not to leave your sins, but still to continue in them. But if by unworthily you mean such a repentance and resolution of leaving sin, as though when it is made, is hearty and sincere, yet afterwards proves ineffectual; then I will not yield, that to come unworthily is more dangerous than to stay away; because the breaking a good resolution (not intended to be broken when it is made) is not a greater offence than not to make that resolution, although you were obliged to make it. Cains, a great squanderer, owed me a hundred crowns, and upon my demand, promised to pay that sum at six months end, according to his obligation; the day came, but not my debtor; for though when he made that promise, he was in great earnest, and seriously intended to take up, and discharge himself, yet he fell into his old loose courses, and was thereby dis-

abled from approving himself an honest man. Titius, another squanderer as great as he, owed me the like sum, under the like obligation, but when I called upon him, made me no answer, affirming afterwards that he would not promise, because he intended not to leave his ill courses, which would certainly disable him from paying his debt. Am I more obliged to Titius, for not promising, because he intended not to perform, than to Cains for promising, and intending to perform? Do I owe him more favour, who refuses to promise what he is in reason obliged to promise, and in justice to perform, than I owe to him, who promises in good earnest, and intends at that time to perform, though afterwards he forgets and fails? Put these two men under equal obligations, and equal abilities of discharging them, and you will see to which of them most kindness is owing from the creditor. To promise, with a purpose of not paying, is to deceive me, and abuse me; and to promise with a purpose of paying, though he do not pay, is only to disappoint me. I say, therefore, (to make a short application,) that to come to the Sacrament, with a general sorrow and concern for sins past, and a general resolution to live better for the time to come, although men afterwards fall into sin again, and forget their good resolutions, is not a worse and more hazardous thing than to stay away from the Sacrament, without any repentance at all of past sins, or any resolutions of living better, but going on still in their old course of wickedness. If it were, indeed, a voluntary thing, and left at people's liberty, whether they would come to the Sacrament, or stay away, then it were safer not to come; but since it is a duty laid upon men by Christ's command, and all men are obliged to come, by virtue of the obedience they owe to their Saviour, I can see no safety in refusing to come; and this refusing to qualify themselves and come, must as certainly increase their damnation, as coming less qualified than they ought to be. I would not encourage any one to come unworthily, i. e. without repentance, without faith, and without charity; for certainly such coming must be hazardous. But I can see as much hazard in disobeying Christ, in refusing to come as he commands, because men live (and still resolve to live) without repentance, without resolutions of amendment, without faith, and without charity. In a word, there is no safety but in repentance and obedience, both of which, by the grace of God, are in every Christian's power.

INFANT BAPTISM.*

NO. I.—ITS REASONABLENESS.

No reader of the Scriptures can fail to be impressed with the words of our Saviour,—introduced, on account of their peculiar appropriateness, into the admirable Baptismal Service of the Church,—“Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.” These words are quoted from St. Mark's Gospel; and in the parallel passage in St. Matthew, the motive of the parents of these “little ones” is more strongly and clearly expressed: “they were brought unto Jesus that he should put his hands on them, and pray;”—a circumstance which seems to shew that an expectation of spiritual benefit to the children animated those who thus anxiously brought them to Christ.

When we carefully consider this circumstance, and mark our Lord's very positive encouragement to those who brought children to him for his blessing, we shall not wonder that it is adduced as an argument, of no mean weight, for making them partakers of that solemn rite by which, according to our Saviour's appointment, we are admitted into the Kingdom of God. Baptism has too many divine sanctions,—is too holy in its origin, and too strongly and too frequently impressed as an obligation upon Christian believers, both by our Lord and His Apostles, to permit us to view it with indifference or to treat it with neglect. For this reason, we find the Christian world at large, with but few exceptions, making Baptism a part and portion of their religious obligations; yet, with this general respect for the ordinance, we are aware that no considerable number are of opinion that infants or children are not meant to be included amongst those who could properly be made partakers of that sacrament.

It seems strange, however, that such an opinion should prevail after the evidence contained in our Lord's declaration, above quoted, that children are thought to be fit partakers of His prayers and blessing. If it be argued that because they are unconscious of the solemnities, the professions, the vows and prayers, and formal dedication which take place in Baptism, they are not qualified for that ordinance, the same must prove just as strong an argument against the acts of our Saviour, which are above recorded; for, no doubt, the children alluded to were equally unconscious of the tender notice taken of them, on that occasion, by the Redeemer of the world,—equally unable to comprehend the prayers which He breathed over them,—equally incompetent to be affected by the words of blessing which He graciously pronounced upon them.

It may fairly, therefore, be affirmed that this act of our Saviour, coupled with the general command, that all disciples, converts, or proselytes, should be baptized, forms a sufficient justification for bringing children to Christ even in that solemn manner; it may fairly be affirmed that, unless some authority be adduced from Scripture positively excluding infants from that sacrament, these words of our Lord are to be interpreted as a sanction for their admission to it; they plainly vindicate the general practice of the Church of Christ in regard to the Baptism of Infants. Annexing these words and acts of our Saviour to the commission to His Apostles to baptize all nations, we should be justified in calling upon the opponents of Infant Baptism to bring forward some direct Scriptural authority against it, before we advanced a single further argument or attestation in its favour. But while we may safely challenge the production of any such authority, it is easy to shew that the whole spirit and letter of the Divine economy, under both the Old and the New Dispensation, is in favour of the admission of infants to its privileges and blessings.

The very nature and meaning of Baptism would imply the necessity of rendering infants sharers in its benefits. By that ordinance alone, according to our Lord's specific appointment, uniformly acted upon by His Apostles and first ministers, we are admitted into the Christian covenant,—that is, to the privileges of Christ's death; to our freedom from the condemnation of sin, and our deliverance from its power through the grace of the Holy Spirit. Now an infant, innocent as he may be of actual transgression, and of willful offence against the law of God, is nevertheless born with that original corruption which is inherited from our first parents by all mankind, and which was the consequence of their fall. Of this there can be no denial or doubt: all the infant as well as the adult, are “concluded under sin,”—“in Adam all die,” both young and old, until they are “made alive in Christ” in the words of our ninth Article, which is built upon the most certain Scripture authority, “every person born into the world is deserving of God's wrath and condemnation.” Even infants, therefore, are amenable to our divine judgment against sin, which is implanted in our nature and is inherited by all; and if this be a truth which cannot be contradicted, without contradicting the Holy Scriptures also, it is surely necessary that infants should, as well as adults, be made partakers of that covenant by which we are secured of the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection; and if so, by what outward and formal act can they be so admitted more appropriate than the one which our Lord himself has appointed, even Baptism? Why should they, being born in

sin and liable to its condemnation, be excluded from that sacramental ordinance by which they become members of Christ, and have a “part and lot” in his meritorious sacrifice? Why should they be excluded from the only revealed method of admission into the Christian covenant? why debarred from that spiritual grace of which this ordinance is a constituted means? “If we speak of original sin,” says an eloquent writer,† “the fountal source of corruption, from which are the issues of death, is there any condition under which this can be removed, independently of the grace of God, and the energy of his Holy Spirit? And what is there in the state of infancy unfavourable for the reception of ‘these great benefits?’ Is there no spirit couched beneath the infant form? If there be, is it debarred from free mercy? Does it afford no residence for that Spirit, in whom is the power of truth, and the source of light? Is it incapable of commencing union with Christ? If not, is there any fitter time to initiate the life of God in the soul, than at the beginning of the life of reason?” It is thus forcibly argued by another writer, already quoted from,‡ “The little child necessarily receives the ‘kingdom of God’ as a helpless, unopposing being, without advancing any claim on the ground of faith, good works, or any thing whatsoever. Self-righteousness there is none. We, that are grown up, be we ever so wise or holy, must come at all times, if we come at all, not trusting in our own righteousness any more than the new born child: for we have as little to recommend ourselves to the favour of an infinitely holy God as the little child. We are, indeed, much more unworthy, because, to the original depravity of our nature, we have added all our actual transgressions in thought, word, and deed. Hence it will appear, as a just inference from the rejection of infant baptism, on the pretence that children have not faith, that we suppose ourselves endowed with something meritorious, which they, by reason of their tender age, cannot have, and, therefore, make salvation, in some shape, to flow from works, not of grace, contrary to the gospel of Christ.—But Jesus Christ received infants, and also blessed them.—They could have set up no claim whatever. As they received the blessing, so must we, and, therefore, boasting is for ever excluded.”

But we shall hear it asserted, that an infant is incapable of entering into covenant with God, and therefore his formal enlistment into such covenant by baptism appears unreasonable and even absurd! Strange that such an objection should be advanced in the face of the most direct Scriptural authority,—in opposition to language like this addressed by Moses to the Israelites, “Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains, your elders, your officers, your little ones, your wives, * * * that thou shouldst enter into covenant with the Lord thy God.” (Deut. xxix. 12.) Here we perceive that the “little ones,” or the children, of the Jews, were very expressly included amongst those who were to enter into covenant with the Lord; and more than this, it was specially commanded that infants should be admitted into this covenant by the rite of circumcision, and the time was specified, viz. at eight days old. Now, in the words of the Rev. Derwent Coleridge, “If Circumcision was to be suspended by Baptism, the type by its antitype; if Christians were the true children of promise, the Church the true Israel; and if both Jews and Gentiles were to be baptized into one body, circumcision being thus rendered superfluous,—in exact proportion as these analogies became known, would the prejudice in favour of infant baptism increase, unless this point of resemblance were expressly excluded by some authority?—The Lord and His Apostles, particularly St. Paul, who touches upon the subject perpetually, is conclusive that no such distinction existed, but that the analogy held throughout. And on this analogy the early Church must have acted. Had it been otherwise, had the practice of the first Christians resembled that of the modern Baptists, as they are called, is it conceivable that no mention of baptism should occur in any of the apostolical epistles, except as of something past, a matter pre-supposed in the fact of their Christianity? that among all the practical directions with which these epistles abound, descending not unfrequently into minute details, (directions relating to marriage, to legal proceedings, to dress and behaviour, to points of conscience and expediency in the intercourse of Christians with Heathens,—above all, to the constitution and conduct of Christian assemblies, no information should have been afforded as to the time or circumstances under which the children of Christian parents were to be ‘added to the Church?’ that the preparation of a young person for baptism should never be so much as touched upon? that no allusion to this most solemn and interesting event in a Christian family should ever occur? that the question of previous fitness for baptism should never be raised, except in the case of adult heathens; and then be dispatched in no summary a manner?—‘They that gladly received the Word,’—‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’ As if all that was required was a trustful willingness to begin that course of holy discipline and instruction, consequent upon a state of salvation,—that renovation of life by which (the necessary aid of the Holy Spirit having been in baptism supplied) salvation itself was with fear and trembling to be wrought out; a condition entirely fulfilled, as we have seen, in the child of a Christian parent, able and determined, engaged by every religious motive, and by all the charities of a Christian society effectually assisted, to ‘bring him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.’”

The greatest proportion of early converts to Christianity were necessarily Jews; and if persuaded, as the Apostles laboured to teach them, that the rite of circumcision was to be abolished, they would naturally look to some other ordinance by which their children should, under Christ, be in no worse condition than they were in under Moses,—by which they should have a covenant right to a visible and formal engraving into the privileges of that new dispensation to which they were transferred from the old. “If the Christian Jew,” to quote the words of Bishop Jeremy Taylor, “whose children were circumcised, and made partakers of the same promises and title, and inheritance and sacraments, which themselves had at their conversion to the faith of Christ, had seen their children now shut out from their new sacraments, it is not to be doubted but they would have raised a storm, greater than could easily have been suppressed; since about their circumcision they had raised such tragical and implacable disputations: and there had been great reason to look for a storm; for their children were circumcised, and if not baptized, then they were left under a burthen which their fathers were quit of, for St. Paul said unto you, ‘Whosoever is circumcised, is a debtor to keep the whole law.’ These children therefore that were circumcised, stood obliged for want of Baptism to perform the law of ceremonies, to be presented into the temple, to pay their price, to be redeemed with silver and gold; to be bound by the law of pollutions and carnal ordinances, and therefore if they had been thus left, it would be no wonder if the Jews had complained and made a tumult: they would do it for less matters.”

We gather as well from St. Paul's Epistles as from the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles, that wherever there was the slightest reason for complaint, the Jews were always forward to advance it and demand a remedy: we find, indeed, that the most prominent at least of these were stated, and we are furnished in the writings of the Apostles with a solution of the difficulties which were started; but observing no mention of

* The Rev. Derwent Coleridge.

† Rev. James Reid.

* By a Correspondent of The Church.