

BAPTISM.

An Essay, by Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, D. D., Dean of Westminster.

There was one form of this idea which continued far down into the Middle Ages, long after it had been dissociated from baptism, but which may be given as an illustration of the same idea represented by the same form. The order of Knighthood in England of which the banners hang in King Henry the Seventh's Chapel in Westminster Abbey, and which is distinguished from all other orders as the "most honorable," is called the Order of the Bath. Why is this? It is because in the early days of chivalry the knights, those who were enlisted in defense of right against wrong, truth against falsehood, honor against dishonor, on the evening before they were admitted to the Order, were laid in a bath and thoroughly washed, in order to show how bright and pure ought to be the lives of those who engage in noble enterprises. Sir Galahad, amongst King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table, is the type at once of a true ancient Knight of the Bath and of a true apostolic Christian.

My good blade carves the beams of men
My tough lance thrusteth sure;
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is true.

2. This leads us to the second characteristic of the act of Baptism. "Baptism" was not only a bath, but a plunge—an entire submersion in the deep water, a leap as into the rolling sea of the rolling river, where for the moment the waves closed over the bather's head, and he emerges again as from a "momentary grave;" or it was the shock of a shower-bath—the rush of water passed over the whole person from capacious vessels, so as to wrap the recipient as within the veil of a splashing cascade. This was the part of the ceremony on which the apostles laid so much stress. It seemed to them like a burial of the old former self and the rising up again of the new self. So St. Paul compared it to the Israelites passing through the deep waters of the flood. "We are buried," said St. Paul; "with Christ by baptism at his death; that like as Christ was raised, thus we also should walk in the newness of life." Baptism as the entrance into the Christian society was a complete change from the old superstitions or restrictions of Judaism to the freedom and confidence of the gospel. It was a complete change from the idolatries and prophecies of the old heathen world to the light and purity of Christianity. It was a change effected only by the same effort and struggle as that with which a strong swimmer or an adventurous diver throws himself into the stream and struggles with the waves, and comes up with increased energy out of the depths of the dark abyss.

This, too, is a lesson taught by Baptism which still lives, although the essence of the material form is gone. There is now no disappearance as in a watery grave. There is now no conscious and deliberate choice made by the eager convert at the cost of cruel partings from friends, perhaps of a painful death. It is but the few drops sprinkled, a ceremony undertaken long before or long after the adoption of Christianity has occurred. But the thing signified by the ancient form still keeps before us that which Christians were intended to be. This is why it was connected both in name and substance with Conversion. In the early Church the careful distinction which later times have made between Baptism

Regeneration, Conversion and Repentance, did not exist. They all meant the same thing. In the apostolic age they were, as we have seen, combined with Baptism. There was no waiting-till Easter or Pentecost for the great reservoir when the catechumens met the Bishop—the river, the way-side well, were taken the moment the convert was disposed so to turn, as we say, the new leaf in his life. And even afterwards, in the second century, Regeneration which gradually was taken to be the equivalent of Repentance and Conversion. A long and tedious controversy about thirty years ago took place on the supposed distinction between these words. Such a controversy would have been unintelligible to Justin Martyr or Clement of Alexandria. But the common idea which they represent is still as necessary, and has played as great a part in the latter history of the Church as it did at the beginning. Conversion is the turning round from a wrong to a right direction; Repentance is a change of thoughts and feelings which is always going on in any one who reforms himself at all; Regeneration is the growth of a second character, always recurring, though at times with a more sudden shock. With us these changes are brought about by a thousand different forms: education, affliction, illness, change of position in life, a happy marriage, a new field of usefulness—every one of these gives us some notion of the early Baptism in its better and more permanent side, and in every one of these that better side of the early Baptism may be reproduced. We lie down to sleep and we wake and find ourselves new creatures, with new hopes, new affections, new interests, new aspirations. Every such case which we have known, every such experience in ourselves, helps us better to understand what Baptism once was; and the recollection of that original Baptism helps us better to apply to ourselves the language of the Bible concerning it—to that which now most nearly resembles it. We must, if we would act in the spirit of the apostolic Baptism be not once only, but "continually," "mortifying," that is, killing, drowning, burning out our evil and corrupt affections; and not once only, but "daily," proceeding advancing—daily renewed, and daily born again in all virtue and godliness of living.

(To be Continued)

ATTITUDE IN PRAYER.

There is stealthily creeping in among us the indifferent, irreverent, unscriptural custom of sitting during prayer, and this, sometimes, with the sanction of the preacher. To what extent it prevails we cannot say. While members scattered through the churches generally are thus inclined, we have met but one church that, as a church, sits during prayer and thanksgiving for the bread and the wine. We have searched in vain for a reasonable excuse for this prayerless attitude of prayer. It is simply a fact that, in our congregations, those most destitute of the spirit of prayer are those who assume the indifferent attitude of sitting while others stand or kneel. No one ever knew the pious element thus to act. What, then, must we think of the spirit that leads a whole church to adopt the custom? We believe that one may pray acceptably while sitting, or in any other attitude, when circumstances require it; but we search in vain for justifiable circumstances in a comfortable house, when they have neither the rheumatism nor

the gout. Attitude is important as it indicates spirit; that we fear for the pew and the pulpit that manifests its spirit of prayer by sitting upright in the house of the Lord.—*Old-Path Guide.*

Continued.

To the Editor of the WORKER.

"These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." (The number of names together were about an hundred and twenty.)

Had he meant to give the apostles any preeminence, the relative pronoun "who" would undoubtedly have been used thus. "And he was numbered with the eleven apostles," who when the day of Pentecost was fully come, were all with one accord in one place." To see the absurdity of claiming "they" as referring to apostles on any grammatical grounds, let us look at a parallel case, Luke 22:27, "For I say unto you that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, and he was reckoned among the transgressors. For the things concerning me have an end, and they (the transgressors) said Lord, behold here are two swords."

Let us for further light on this subject, look at Acts 19:45 "And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." Then answered Peter (to those astonished Jews) can any man forbid water that these Gentiles should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we Jews? Acts 11:15, "And as I began to speak the Holy Ghost fell on them as on us (Jews) at the beginning, then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said John indeed baptized in water but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Ghost." "Forasmuch then as God gave them (Gentiles) the like gift as he did unto us (Jews) who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I that I could withstand? God? Although Peter had not given the expression quite so straightforward an interpretation as G. J. B. yet it is evident he had not hitherto dreamed of so extended an application. Acts 15:8 "And God which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness giving them the Holy Ghost even as he did unto us (Jews) and them (Gentiles) purifying their hearts by faith."

If G. J. B. still adheres to his position, let him give satisfactory answers to the following questions: 1st. How did the remaining 108 get into the Kingdom? 2nd. How did Peter find among eleven men in the prime of life representatives of the six different classes spoken of by Joel, namely, sons, daughters, old men, young men, servants, handmaids, because they must have been there for what Joel predicted and Peter declared was fulfilled before their eyes must have been true? 3rd. How did the ordinary measure produce a transformation on believers so sudden and delightful as that described in the latter part of chapter 28 of Acts, and so altogether unlike the way it operates in

our day? 4th. If the three thousand received only the ordinary measure, where did the brethren find seven men, containing the greatest measure to those as deacons? How did Barnabas get the greatest measure, and all the disciples throughout the region where Paul and Barnabas preached?

G. J. B. denies that Peter gave those convinced Jews to understand most distinctly that if they renounced their sins and turned to the Lord, they would receive the very same measure and asks for the proof. He would also like to see the scripture which says Jesus gives the spirit without measure, to all whose hearts are open to receive Him, and thinks it must be in the same chapter which teaches that he promised to do it. Yes that is just where it is to be found: 1st as to Peter Acts 2, 39. For the promise is unto you and your children. What promise? The promise of the Holy Ghost. The Lord had said, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh; and I will give you an heart of flesh; and I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgements and do them." Of course Peter had called their attention to what they saw around them, as the fulfilment of Joel's prediction, in reference to the manner in which the promise was to be fulfilled, at the same time explaining to them, by, and through whom it was fulfilled, even through Jesus, who had purchased it by shedding His blood. "And having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." And that three thousand did receive the very same measure, because Peter says, Acts 5:32, "And we are his witnesses, of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that they obey him." All of this is so exceedingly plain, that one is ready to exclaim, "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?"

Jesus says John 4:14, "Who-soever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." He also declares John 7:38 that he who believed on Him should receive the spirit as abundantly as rivers of living water. Can G. J. B. measure that quantity? and does he know it is faith, or trust, that opens the heart and keeps it open for the living waters to flow through? Jesus designs his spirit to flow from Himself to His people and from them in blessing to the world around them, but so long as the heart is closed by unbelief, or the channel obstructed by idols or debris of the world, no wonder that a very small measure of the vital fluid can find its way through, and no wonder that the world is ready to deny that there is such a thing as the spirit of God animating His people, when they so often fail to discover it themselves.

If the Gospel makes provision for any measure, but the greatest, it has not come within

my horizon. The Lord says, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. Is that the ordinary measure?" "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled." "And the Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that heareth say come and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." Of course the Lord is obliged to make a very sad provision for those who willfully remain away from the feast, or fail to clothe themselves in the wedding garment, or neglect to keep their lamps filled with oil or refuse to trade with the talent committed to their trust.

If the Galatians were children without the Spirit, Paul says to the Romans, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." He says also to the Corinthians, "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be rebaptized?"

If Paul says in Ephesians "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism," he says also in Corinthians "We are all baptized in one Spirit" Paul and S. are perfectly in accord.

Paul says also, "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit," and the Spirit divides these gifts, "so every man severally as he will." But G. J. B. says there are diversities of measures of the same Spirit; and the two first measures always produced tongues, miracles etc., (whether.

the Spirit will or not) and "I deny" that we are all baptized in one Spirit, for the "two measures referred to, were bestowed only on a small part of the early church for a specific purpose, and ceased when the purpose was accomplished;" all the rest received only the ordinary measure.

Of course he would not willingly come in direct collision with Paul; but that is just where his position leads him.

And now, finally, but let me say to him, the "baptism of the Spirit" is what you need, what every individual Christian needs, and must have, before "The kingdoms of this world" can "become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ." God can pour out His Spirit just as easily, on one hundred and twenty millions, as on one hundred and twenty individuals, providing they continue long enough in prayer and supplication, to show Him they mean to have what they are asking for. The Lord says, "I will yet, for this, be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them." "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." When you have got the baptism of the Spirit, you have found the Lord, and not before, for he comes right into your heart, and you know that He is there, as well as you know that you exist. "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, saying, know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

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