

that the apostles, who had just received a spiritual baptism, by the effusion of the Holy Ghost, and announced it to their hearers, should follow the mode, in which this baptism was administered to them, in administering that baptism, which was symbolical of it, to their hearers." To object as some have done, that the Holy Ghost filled all the house where they were sitting, and that consequently the disciples were immersed, is to "do direct violence to the words of the Evangelist. St. Luke informs that the sound filled the house, beside, the metaphysical absurdity, and, as I think, indecency, of attributing place and extension, in this manner, to the Divine Spirit."

The other cases, which I would beg permission to contrast with that of the Eunuch, are those of Cornelius, Saul, and the Jailer, &c.

In the case of Cornelius it has been observed, that St. Peter's question—"Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized?" implies certainly that the water was to be brought for the baptism of the new converts, and not that they were to go out to the water. This idea will be the more forcible, in proportion to the importance which we attach to Whitby's Comment on the former clause of the following verse,—“And he commanded them to be baptized.” (r) “Whom did he command to do this? The Gentiles? It seemeth at first sight absurd that they who were not yet baptized should baptize others; or was it the Jews that came with him? they seem only to be Lay brethren who only were permitted to baptize in case of necessity; it seemeth therefore reasonable to say that he commanded water to be brought for their baptism, and then performed himself the office.”

There is nothing that I can observe, in the history of Saul's Baptism, to lead any one to suppose, that he ever left his lodging until after he was baptized, had taken food, and was strengthened. The order of the history leads us to the opposite idea. He appears to have been confined to his bed, when Ananias went to him, through fright, blindness, anxiety concerning his state, and fasting three days. For we are informed, that “He arose and was baptized. And when he had received meat he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples at Damascus.” (s) According to the order of the relation, “He arose and was baptized,—received meat, and was strengthened;” and “then” went out into the city, and “was certain days with the disciples.”

Nor is there any thing in the circumstances of the Baptism of the jailer and his house, to lead to an opposite conclusion, to that at which we suppose we properly arrive in the former cases. The whole transaction took place at midnight, certainly not a very proper time for a whole family to repair to a water sufficiently deep for their immersion. The truth of the case appears to be, that the apostles were never outside the prison walls, from the time of their commitment, to the time they were fetched out by the magistrates. The jailer had no right to let them go out without their command, and it appears he was faithful to his charge: for though he took them into his house, they were evidently considered prisoners, and considered themselves such, until released by the magistrates the next day. I do not think it unworthy of notice, Sir, that the baptism of the jailer and his house, is mentioned in connexion with the washing of the apostle's stripes, as though done at the same time, and by a similar quantity of water; and I suppose a person so tenderly concerned for their comfort and ease, as he evidently was, would make choice of any other means of performing this office of kindness, than those which would be furnished by a water, sufficiently deep, for their immersion, at midnight.—The passage in the history here referred to, you need not be informed, is as follows.—“And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.” (t)

From these considerations, Sir, I presume it is sufficiently evident, to every unprejudiced mind, that the historian of the Acts of the Apostles had his reasons for not informing us, as he has done in the case of the Eunuch, that the 3000 disciples on the day of Pentecost, Saul of Tarsus, Cornelius and his house, the jailer and his house, and others who might be mentioned, “went down into” or to, “the water;” and that these reasons are not very favourable to the doctrine of immersion,

2. It has been maintained, that the Greek word Baptize, and its root Bapto,

(r) Acts 10. 47, 48. (s) Acts 9. 18, 20. (t) Acts 16. 33.