

THE METHODIST CONFERENCE.

Veterans in the cause of truth, Not weary of the toil; Vigorous and impulsive youth, The enemy to foil;

Mingling in devotions warm, Rich harmonies of song— Ready duty to perform, And check incipient wrong;

If a vain aspiring thought, In word, or deed appears, Levelling influences brought, Soon quiet hopes and fears;

Happy to review our toils, The work for Jesus done; Numbering gratefully the souls, For the Redeemer won;

Whither shall our footsteps tend, The Master's will to do? Lord direct us and defend Wherever we may go;

Let not selfish arts prevail, To mar the holy cause; Never may the serpent's trail, The preacher's pathway cross;

Fixed localities in view, We hasten to the field; Every one a work to do, The vineyard must be tilled;

LETTER No. XI. MONCTON, N. B., May 13, 1878. Dear Sir and Brother,—

XVI. THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS. In our examination of the nature of the Covenant of the Church it seemed apparent that the Head of the church has graciously provided for the reception of infants into its discipleship by its initiatory rite.

Let us appeal to the Scriptures to ascertain whether infants are in the Covenant of the church or not, and are entitled to admission through the door to the church, and to the benefits of its nurture and admonition.

Deut. xxix. 10-12: "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives.....that thou shouldst enter into covenant with the Lord thy God," etc. Genesis xviii. 19, shows that the household was included.

Numbers iii. 27-28, shows that infants of a month old and upwards are included in the charge of the church. Joel says: "Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and those that suck the breasts," (Joel i. 16) Here children of the tenderest age were recognized as members of the church.

Numbers viii. 7, and xix. 13, the mode of purifying the people, and separating them from the unholiness is clearly indicated: "Sprinkle water of purifying upon them." Paul in Hebrews (9th chap.) also indicates how the sanctifying of the people was done. He says Moses used both blood and water. He sanctified—purified—"purged"—baptized, "the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry, and almost all things," by sprinkling them with blood, (Heb. ix. 21-22.) And he sanctified "all the people," by sprinkling them "with water," (Heb. ix. 19.)

What points are indicated here? 1. All the people were sanctified. 2. The people were sanctified by the sprinkling of water upon them. 3. Paul says all the people were sprinkled.

4. Paul calls these sprinklings baptisms. 5. Among the people were many infants.

250,000 INFANTS BAPTIZED. In 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, it is shown that all the Israelites were baptized unto Moses. There must have been, at least two hundred and fifty thousand infants among them, when they came out of Egypt. They were neither dipped, nor plunged nor immersed. They passed "on dry ground through the midst of the sea," (Ex. xiv. 16.) "The heavens dropped" rain; "the clouds poured out water" upon them, (Ps. 77. 17.) The Egyptians were immersed, but not baptized. The sprinkled people, Paul says, were all baptized under the cloud.

Here are some important points: 1. All the people of Israel were baptized. 2. They were not immersed, nor plunged, nor dipped. 3. They were baptized by the falling rain. 4. Many of the Egyptians were immersed, but there immersion was not a baptism. 5. Many thousands of the Israelites who were baptized unto Moses were infants. 6. Those infants were baptized by sprinkling. 7. The baptism of the Israelites was very different in mode from the baptism of the Baptists.

OTHER INFANTS BAPTIZED. The Rabbins, ancient and modern, bear testimony to the baptizing of proselytes, including infants, in the old dispensation. That the ceremony of baptizing was a prevailing custom in those times is apparent, from the question put to John, by those who were sent to him from Jerusalem: "Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not the Christ, neither Elias, neither that prophet?" (John i. 25.) They did not inquire: "What new rite is this? But why do you administer it?" Lightfoot says: "The baptizing of infants was a thing as well known in the church of the Jews, as ever it has been in the Christian church." Many authorities might be quoted indicating the same truth.

INFANTS PARTAKERS OF CHRIST'S BAPTISM. The several occasions on which Christ had contact with infants—his making them a standard of Christian character; his affirming that "of such is the kingdom of heaven," his blessing them; and his displeasure shown towards those good people who would keep infants from being brought into close relationship with Jesus; all go to show, that our Lord recognized, as still unrepealed, the provision of the covenant which entitled children to a place in the church. We should remember that Christ spoke thus concerning children as a Jew, to Jews who had always regarded infants as in church relationship with their parents. If our Saviour had intended to cut off infants from the benefits which, through the covenant, they had for ages, surely he would have given to his disciples an intimation thereof. It is manifest that no such intimation was given.

250,000 INFANTS BAPTIZED.

What points are suggested by this circumcising of children, in the apostolic age, long years after the day of Pentecost? 1. The old church was not abolished though there were changes in its ritual. 2. The changes that were made did not exclude infants from the church. 3. Therefore infants are still entitled to the initiatory rite into the church.

OUR AUTHORITY FOR BAPTIZING. Our authority for baptizing either infants or adults, is the command given by Christ, just previous to his ascension into heaven: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations," by first "baptizing them" (as one of the oldest and best versions reads), and then "teaching them," etc. (Matt. xxviii. 19-20.) In all the New Testament writings the references to household baptisms, and church membership, are in thorough accord with the theory that infants are entitled to admission to the fold of the church.

Hence we may infer as follows: 1. Make disciples—learners, adherents of all: it is impossible to do this without making disciples of infants. 2. God has provided that persons should be made disciples—learners, adherents in infancy. 3. Being a disciple—learner, adherent, involves previous baptism. 4. Therefore infants are entitled, from the beginning of their discipleship, to its sign and seal, which is baptism with water.

5. The commission is as wide-reaching, and all-embracing, as the atonement of Christ; make disciples—learners, adherents, of all for whom Christ died; all nations; which, of course, includes all infants whom you can bring into the fold. 6. Christ died for all infants. They have been bought with his most precious blood. Therefore they are his. Bring them as early as possible into the fold. Claim them for him. Put upon them Christ's mark—his sign and seal, which is baptism with water, in the beginning of their days. Treat them as his disciples—learners, adherents; and train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

INFANTS FORBIDDEN. The most formidable objection urged against infant baptism is that it is nowhere "expressly commanded" in the New Testament. The weakness of this point will appear if we remember that there are many things that may rightly be done that are not expressly commanded in the Scriptures.

1. There is no mention made in the New Testament of women taking the Lord's Supper. We think there are good reasons why women should take the Lord's Supper, as there are good reasons why infants should be baptized. But Baptist logic would exclude them. 2. There is no record that John the baptizer was ever baptized. 3. It is not expressly mentioned that John ever baptized a woman, or boy, or girl. 4. It is not said that "the twelve" ever baptized a woman, or boy, or girl, and yet Baptists do this, without any express command, or apostolic example. 5. There is no record that any of the seventy disciples were baptized. 6. There is no record that ever any one was baptized by them. 7. There is no record that shows that Ananias, who baptized Paul, was himself baptized. 8. There is no record of the baptism of the seven deacons. 9. Hence we are not to infer that because certain things are not "expressly" mentioned, therefore they never transpired. 10. The genius of the New Testament requires of us many things that are not "expressly commanded," such as Sabbath Schools, Bible Societies, Temperance organizations, etc.

INFANTS BAPTIZED BY THE FATHERS. The testimony of the Fathers of the early church, in reference to infant baptism, was clear, and their practice was thoroughly in accord with the requirements of the Scriptures. Justin Martyr, who wrote about forty years after the apostolic age, speaks of some who must have received baptism in infancy, before the death of the apostle John. Irenaeus, born while the apostle John was still living, testifies to the fact of infant baptism in the church. Origen, a learned Father, born in the year 185, speaks of infant baptism as universally prevailing. Tertullian, born in 160, found infant baptism a universal practice in the church. The council of sixty-six bishops, one hundred and fifty years after John's death, in the year 254, found infant baptism prevailing universally throughout the Christian world. Infant baptism has been an ordinance of the church in all the intermediate ages. If infant baptism had not prevailed in apostolic times, and come down from the apostolic days, its introduction, as a new doctrine, and a radical change, would have been resisted, with a storm of opposition.

The following points are suggested: 1. Infant baptism prevails in the Christian church to-day. 2. Infant baptism has prevailed in the Christian church, in all ages, since the time of the Fathers. 3. Infant baptism was the faith of the martyrs. 4. Infant baptism was practised in the catacombs. 5. Infant baptism was taught and practised by the Fathers who immediately succeeded the apostles. 6. Hence we may infer that infant baptism, was the practice of the church, in the days of the apostles. 7. Infant discipleship existed in the church two thousand years before the time of Christ. 8. Infant discipleship has existed in the church, nearly two thousand years since. 9. If there is any force in the theory of "the survival of the fittest," the recognition of the discipleship of infants in the church will probably continue for some ages to come.

Yours, &c. D. D. CURRIE.

THE REV. WILLIAM McCARTY. There have already appeared in the WESLEYAN several short notices of the death and life of him whose name heads these lines, but largely because of that very fact no extended notice has thus far appeared. While we could wish that this task were undertaken by one who had the advantage of a longer friendship, it is to us a privilege to be permitted to twine a wreath, however plainly it be done, for the memory of him who has been to us class-leader and pastor, by whom we were introduced into the ministry, first chairman of District and ever "a father in the ministry" in affectionate counsel and help.

The Rev. Wm. McCarty was born in the city of St. John, in May 1816, and died in the town of Digby on the 17th of November, 1877. He was from earliest years a member, and for years, an active and successful teacher in the German St. Sabbath school, and with maternal regard for the institution hallowed by tenderest youthful associations, while enjoying the rest of super-numerary life, it was his pleasure frequently to give it his presence and counsel. All that we know about his conversion is, that he remained under conviction for about a year, and that under a sermon preached by Dr. Wood he was able to enter into the liberty of a child of God. Though the change was so gentle as that its results were scarce perceived by others because of the uniformly exemplary life which preceded it, it was distinct to him, and he could do what every Christian ought to be able to do, tell the time when, and the place where he first knew that there was lifted upon him the light of God's countenance. But most convincing were the evidences in the life of the change in the heart. Before there was ever the high moral character, now there is the wrestling of a spirit that knows God and desires to know him more fully. Often, he has told us, used he to get away into the storeroom, and behind bales of goods where no eye save One could see and pour out his soul in prayer. We may without much spiritual life engage in a sort of prayer at stated times, but when from the business of the day one is impelled to retirement there must be a sharp appetite, a strong felt need, a longing after God. This sure evidence to himself, gave equally convincing evidence to others, in his earnest unwearied effort for their salvation. Specially remembered in this connection, are the cottage prayer-meetings, at this time undertaken, with results that did much in shaping St. John Methodism. Concerning this period of his life Dr. Wood writes: "From the time he was converted to God he was a consistent and devoted member of the church, distinguished for his humility, spiritual-mindedness, and observance of all the ordinances and means of grace. From the first start in the Christian race he gave promise of successfully obtaining a prize of no ordinary lustre. These early indications have been fully realized." Having for a year exercised his gifts as Exhorter, he was received as Local Preacher, and in the preaching places round about St. John was made very useful. The ever-important question of Conference to candidates: "Has he any fruits," could in this case be answered, so that when the Rev. Mr. Smallwood reuniting to Woodstock found so large a circuit, he sent for Mr. McCarty to come to his help. Recommended to District by Quarterly meeting he was by the Conference of '45 sent to the Putticediac circuit, a circuit 70 miles in length, travelled on horseback, a circuit including what is now the Moncton, Coverdale, Hillsboro', Salisbury, Shediac, and part of the Dorchester circuits, a fact showing at once the growth of our work and its pioneer character at that time. Thence he went in 1847 to Pownal as assistant to Dr. DeWolfe on the Charlottetown circuit. Ordained in 1849 and mar-

THE REV. WILLIAM McCARTY.

lowing circuits: Maitland, Guysboro', Wallace, Amherst, Digby, Aylesford, Moncton, Sussex and Bear River. On this last circuit his health failed. After a year's rest he returned to his loved employ at Dorchester, but his term of service then finished his active work, and he settled as supernumerary in St. John. On all these circuits he had seals to his ministry, in Guysboro', Wallace and Digby particularly. The Wallace revival, besides giving to the church very many who in other spheres of usefulness have adorned the doctrines of their Saviour, also gave some faithful and eminently successful ministers. The influence of the revival in Digby is widely felt to-day in persons now seemingly indispensable in the church, who then found pardon in Christ. From the confusion of the St. John fire he sought quiet there. This last trial of his life, being deprived of his comfortable home where he had hoped to enjoy life's evening, was borne as by one whose house cannot be touched. When sympathized with by a friend, he replied in lines of his favorite hymn.

We have a house above, Not made with mortal hands, And firm as our Redeemer's love, That heavenly father stands.

On the first Sabbath in October in the Digby church he preached his last sermon from a text whose truth had been the inspiration of his life, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." He was but permitted to return from taking part in the marriage ceremony of his son, when quietly the messenger came to summon to the faithful servant's rest. A short time before the end he said to her who so anxiously waited upon him, "I have no fear of death. I am in the Lord's hand waiting his will." Without any other indications of the end than growing weakness, of him it may most literally be written, *In Jesu Christo dormivi*. Any words of high flown eulogy would ill accord with a life so retiring, would be as painful to him as unnecessary to the reader, since "his works follow him." The life has its own voice, the character unvarying through half a century, piety ever unimpeached, faithful and earnest in the work of life, warmly attached to his own church, a lover of its polity, a careful student of its theology, yet with warmest sympathies for "all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in both theirs and ours." Surviving in its completeness the finished life, we would from it gain fresh determination to be as worthy when our life's day shall have closed, to hear the Master say, "Well done, good and faithful servant! thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS. THIRD QUARTER: STUDIES IN LUKES GOSPEL. B. C. 4. LESSON I. BIRTH OF CHRIST THE LORD; or, The Glad Tidings. Luke 2. 8-20. July 7.

EXPLANATORY. VERSE 8. SAME COUNTRY. The word neighbourhood would more precisely express the meaning; for it refers to the pasture-fields near Bethlehem. Shepherds. For the high honor of receiving the first news of the greatest event in earth's history, God selects not eminent priests, or learned philosophers, or noble princes, but plain men of secular life; workers, plying their vocation. Thus does God ennoble honest toil. There is an ancient legend of one of the saints who vainly sought for God in self-torture, and acts of devotion, but received a revelation from on high while engaged in weaving the cloth for his garment. (1) Good comes to men in the daily walks of life. Abiding in the field. In Oriental countries shepherds remain with their flocks at night upon the pasture ground, sleeping and watching by turns. Keeping watch. "Watching by sections;" to guard their flock from robbers and wild beasts, and to keep them from straying.

9. ANGEL OF THE LORD. (2) The king of heaven even in his earthly humiliation has heavenly attendants. An angel had predicted to Mary his coming; angels comforted him in his temptation at the beginning of his ministry; and in his agony at the close an angel rolled away the stone from his sepulchre, and a host of angels accompanied him home to the skies. Come upon them. A sudden appearance; literally, "burst upon them." Glory of the Lord. A divine radiance, such as appeared in all heavenly manifestations from Sinai to the revelation of St. John. (3) How glorious must he be, whose servants are thus apparelled! Soe afraid. (4) Even good men fear when heavenly beings are suddenly revealed to them. No human heart can be brought face to face with the unseen word and not tremble as its content is lifted.