

THE CANADIAN UNITED PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.

VOL. III.

TORONTO, AUGUST 1, 1856.

No. 8.

Miscellaneous Articles.

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

To the Editor of the United Presbyterian Magazine.

Whilst deprecating controversy, we deem it necessary at times, to look in the face, objections that are raised against doctrines most surely believed among us, that we may be established in the present truth. In the following argument, a short and plain defence, of Baptism as held by the Presbyterian Church, is set forth. Those who would like to see a fuller and more elaborate defence might consult Wardlaw, Beecher, Halley, Taylor, or Miller, from whose works and others on this subject we have received no little assistance in our present attempt.

D. D.

To whom is baptism to be administered? We have been accustomed from our earliest years to reply to this question,—“Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church till they profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him, but the infants of such as are members of the visible church are to be baptized.” This answer points out two distinct classes as the proper subjects of the ordinance, adults converted to Christianity and the children of believing parents. In reference to the former little need be said. We are not aware that any who receive the ordinance as of permanent obligation, dispute the point: on this subject we believe all are agreed. Our missionaries in heathen lands regularly administer baptism to adults who turn from their idols to serve the living God, and in Christian countries the same practice is followed,—persons who had no connection with the church before, on casting in their lot with the people of God, are received into the church by the ordinance of baptism. This practice is founded upon the words of the Commission,—“go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost:”—thus the apostles acted on the day of Pentecost when 3000 were converted to the Lord—they baptized them. The right of those who are brought from the world, to join the people of God, to this ordinance cannot be questioned. It is inscribed on the statute book of the Kingdom.

With regard to the other class, viz., the children of Christian parents, we believe their right is equally good and the proof equally satisfactory and conclusive. This has been denied by some, and attempts have been made to throw ridicule upon the doctrine and to charge its supporters with ignorance, insincerity and superstition. It is an easy matter to be abusive, and conve-