

or in their ordinary garments? Decency would forbid the former, and a due regard to health and life the latter. Then did they come furnished with bathing-dresses? Many of them, when they left home, had not the slightest intention of being baptized. They went, doubtless, influenced only by motives of curiosity, in many cases, to hear the popular preacher, and never thought of receiving baptism until they had been awakened by his powerful ministry. Bathing-dresses, then, in such cases, were out of the question. But suppose (though it is violating all probability) that the people came furnished with the requisite bathing-dresses, where could they undress and dress? On the banks of the river? men and women together! Who could believe this? especially considering the retiring habits of Eastern women.

That John baptized his converts by dipping is, as we have seen, utterly incredible. We now advance another step in the argument, and say that it was *physically impossible*. The precise number baptized by John cannot, of course, be ascertained; but the language of Scripture intimates that it was very large. "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him." Some have estimated John's converts at two millions. Perhaps this estimate is too high. Mr. Godwin's estimate is three hundred thousand; which is certainly sufficiently low; and yet he shows that the *dipping* of this number by one man would have taken twelve years. Now, when it is remembered that John baptized personally, and not "by his disciples," as our Lord did, and that his ministry only lasted a year, at the longest, (some say only six months,) it will be seen that it was physically impossible for him to have *dipped* a