

to some of their brotherhood. This is the way with churches and societies who are actuated by the *esprit de corps*.

It is easy to see that churches having no such principle of conservatism, and aggression will not hold their own among the others, but will sacrifice themselves to their own liberality. We have been teaching our people to be catholic, and liberal to others, and they have learned the lesson well, so well that they seem to love their neighbours a little better than themselves. Our liberality is fast relaxing into indifference, as though we held no principle worth contending for, as though all forms of belief were alike good. Can we be aggressive under such circumstances in the midst of others who believe what they hold to be truth? A spurious charity is not good. Let us, while we are liberal, contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

W. H. A.

PARIS, July.

### ON THE SCRIPTURAL TERMS OF ADMISSION TO BAPTISM.

The following is the paper read by the Rev. J. Wood, at the meeting of the Congregational Union in Toronto. It is still incomplete, but it has been thought better to publish it as it was originally presented. [Ed. C. I.]

The compass within which it is desirable to compress this paper, leaves us no room for preface or introduction further than the single remark that Baptists and Pædo-Baptists are at one in regard to the scripturalness of believers' baptism. All hold, that where it is has not been previously received, submission to this initial ordinance of the Christian faith, is the duty and privilege of every disciple of Jesus, when, for the first time, making public profession of faith in Him, and of a desire to follow in His footsteps. The point of divergence between ourselves and our brethren is, as to what constitutes baptism, and who are its proper subjects. Baptism, as we take it, is a *symbol* of the spiritual cleansing, of which every child of Adam stands in need, and which he must experience, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, before he can enter into the kingdom of God. It is also a *seal* of the covenant which God has graciously made in all ages with his people and their children, to be "a God unto them, and to their seed after them," in their generations. And it is to teach us at once our ruin, through the first Adam,

"Whose guilty fall  
Corrupts the race, and taints us all,"

and our restoration to the Divine favour again, through the covenant made with "the second Adam—the Lord from heaven," that baptism has been instituted, as circumcision was before it.

The teaching of these fundamental truths, in their relation to our infant race, seems to us especially important and salutary, and constitutes one of the principal "uses" of infant baptism, which we are sometimes challenged to point out. The baptism of an adult, even by what appears to us the unscriptural and ungainly mode of immersion, is a solemn and impressive ceremony; but it teaches us nothing regarding infant ruin and salvation, and thus fails to remind us just when it is most needed, that little children, so innocent and winsome as ours, require the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, and to assure us, when mourning their loss, of their interest in that covenant of which they have received the sign.

The argument for infant baptism has usually been based chiefly on the Abrahamic covenant—an unfortunate designation, by the way, inasmuch as it conveys the impression that it was a covenant first made with Abraham, and that it is only in a very figurative and qualified sense that a Gentile can claim any interest in it. So far from that being the fact, however, the covenant of which we speak, and which our Saviour says was "not of Moses, but of the fathers," was probably first established with our great progenitor immediately after the fall. We first