

Gihon and Siloam, and also the brook Kidron, at the foot of the walls," yet this brook, which "receives all the rivulets about Jerusalem, is generally but small, and sometimes dry." (a) Those then who infer from John's going down to Jordan because there was much water, or "many waters," there, as some translate it, that he went for the opportunity it afforded him of dipping his disciples, and from this infer, that we ought to be dipped, are bound for the sake of consistency to suppose, that Peter and the other disciples, went at least out of the city, but I think out of the vicinity, of Jerusalem, for the same reason, and especially as despatch is so evident on the face of the history, for they baptised 3000 on "the same day," which was, undoubtedly the manner in which they were added to the church. If they believe this, they ought, in order to keep themselves in countenance, to inform us, where they believe they baptised; to prove that they had time to remove with all the disciples, and baptize them, in the course of one day; and then to account for the silence of the sacred historian, notwithstanding his having, in every other proceeding of the day, detailed the transactions with scrupulous exactness; and according to their opinion, been so significantly specific in his details, in a solitary instance certainly of much less importance in a history of the primitive christian church. Secondly; Those who were baptised on the day of pentecost, by the apostles; "certainly came to hear them without having prepared any proper dress, in which to be baptised: for they could not even know that they would baptize them." It will not therefore be misstated, that this promiscuous assembly were immersed naked, (if at all,) to have immersed them, with their clothes on, would have exposed them to certain disease and death." And I must confess, that I cannot see, how to have immersed them in this state could have answered any of the purposes of that religion, the prominent feature of which, is purity in thought, word and deed, and its peculiar exhortations, that it checks iniquity in its very origin, and enforces it on its disciples as a duty, that they "abstain from all appearance of evil." (c) There is something so extremely indelicate in the very idea, that I assure you, Sir, it should never have been penned by me, but in imitation of my predecessors on this subject, to show the futility of the arguments by which it is intended to be proved, that immersion is essential to christian baptism, because as is supposed, it was invariably practiced by the apostles.

"In a nation, whose manners are like ours, says an able writer on this subject there is, to say the least, a degree of impropriety in the practice which is very unhappy. It will be sufficient to say, that, whatever impressions may be made by this practice in countries where bathing is a standing custom; here, they are of a very unfortunate nature, and such are directly opposed to every religious feeling. I speak from facts, and not opinions; and from facts, repeated through a century, and therefore operating, not by their novelty, but by their nature. (p)

But thirdly; both the prophet Joel, and John the Baptist, in foretelling the descent of the Holy Ghost; and the apostle Peter, and St. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, furnish us with almost indisputable evidence, that the disciples on the day of Pentecost, did not consider baptism and immersion as inseparable. Joel says, "He shall pour out of his spirit upon all flesh." St. Peter quoting this prophecy, makes use of the same words, John the Baptist foretelling this glorious event, says—"He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire;" and St. Luke makes use of the same expression. (q) What, I would ask is the legitimate inference from the indiscriminate use of the words pour and baptize by teachers who were all inspired by one spirit, but the pouring is baptism? Under these circumstances, I conclude, that, "It seems almost a thing of course

in Sept. and "the latter," in March. As the Jewish month Nisan answered to a part of two of our's—March and April, and the passover was held on the 14th day of this month, the latter rains would be falling about the time of the passover. From this to the feast of pentecost, they reckoned seven weeks, (Lev. 23, 15, 16) which brings us just to the time of their wheat harvest, on account of which this feast was called also, "the day of the first fruits"; whereas the latter rains fell at the time the ears were filling, and "it was principally from them that they derived their hopes of a fruitful year."

(n) See Crogther's Scrip. Gaz. Articles Jerusalem and Kidron. (o) See Matt, g. 28. and 1. Thess. 5. 22. (p) Dwight's Sys. Theol. v. 5. p. 240, 241. (q) Compare Joel 2. 28, Acts 2. 17 and 11, 5, Matt. 3. 11.

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