

SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

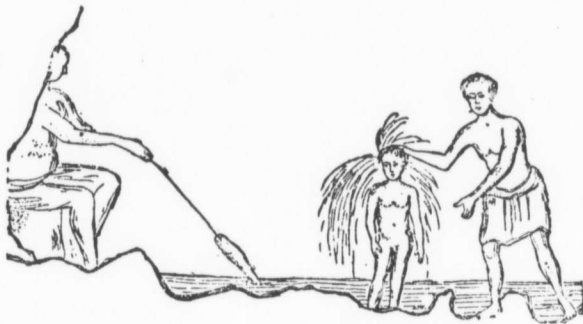
for

TEACHERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. XXVI.]

NOVEMBER, 1892.

[No. 11.]



ANCIENT FRESCO OF BAPTISM FROM THE CATACOMBS.

Subjects and Mode of Baptism.

In the notes on Philip and the Eunuch in the September BANNER, the views of several prominent writers are given on the subject. Most of these concur in the opinion that while the mode of baptism is not stated in the lesson, yet the circumstances and the references in the New Testament to baptism are all in favor of sprinkling or pouring. One of the writers of these notes, however, seems to intimate that immersion was the method practised by the early Church, as indicated by the recently discovered document entitled, "The Teaching of the Apostles," where the injunction is given to "baptize in living or running water, but if thou hast not living or running water, baptize in other water."

The argument deduced therefrom does not appear to us conclusive. We, some years ago, examined this subject very fully and came to the conclusion that the valid, rational and scriptural mode was that of aspersion or affu-

sion. But even if this could not be proven the mode is not to our mind the subject of paramount importance, for baptism with water is only the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace, baptism with the Holy Ghost. The Schaff-Herzog Cyclopedia gives two articles on baptism, one by an immersionist, and the other by an affusionist. The latter, the well-known Dr. Dale, declares that in pagan usage, "an altar ceremonially cleansed by water sprinkled upon it is ceremonially baptized." In ancient Jewish times the ashes of a heifer mixed with pure water had a cleansing power for ceremonial defilement. As the touch of a grave defiled the whole body, so a touch of this ashes and water purified the whole body. The *sprinkling* being used by inspiration to imply the blood of the type lamb of the flock, and to express the anti-type blood of the Lamb of God (1 Peter i. 2), we have divine authority to apply the water symbol of this anti-type blood; by sprinkling and no other essentially diverse way is authorized.