

ed, by preaching the necessity of regeneration, as a change of heart or a turning to God by faith and repentance; but now their efforts are counteracted not only by the old orthodox party, but also by the New Lights of Oxford, whose zeal is specially consecrated to the revival of this and other Popish errors. These English mongers of the traditions of the Fathers, who bid fair to rival the dealers in the Vatican, retail baptismal regeneration as one of their choicest wares. What the principles and aims of this party are, can best be learned by reading the memoirs of Froude, who was a zealous accomplice in this conspiracy against Protestantism.

But even this gross and fatal error is pretended to be founded on Scripture. Many passages are said to countenance this doctrine, though generally the chief stress is laid on John iii. 5.—“Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” It is important, therefore, to ascertain the correct interpretation of this obscure passage. However much it may seem at first sight to support the tenet of baptismal regeneration, it will be found on careful examination to convey a totally different meaning. The sense must evidently depend on the import of the term *water*, which the abettors of the error in question take to mean baptism in water, but in which others find no reference to that rite. To the opinion that water in this place denotes baptism, it may justly be objected, that there is no clear instance in the New Testament in which the simple term, apart from any qualification, has this meaning, and that our Lord could hardly refer, in this passage, to baptism, which did not obtain its proper place and full significance as a Christian rite, till a few years after, when the commission was given (Mat. xxviii. 19) to baptize converts in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

There are some who understand by ‘water’ the word of God. But this opinion also is untenable, not indeed because it savors of Popery, but because it is not supported by the *usus loquendi* (the usage of speech) of the New Testament. There are, indeed, passages to prove that the word is instrumental in bringing about the new birth; but there is no instance in which the term water is employed to designate the word. On the contrary, there is one passage (Eph. v. 26) where an evident distinction is made between water and the word.

But there is another interpretation, less liable to objection, and therefore more defensible, which effectually undermines the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, so far as its rests on the verse under consideration. It is necessary, however, before stating this more approved exposition, to explain the principle on which it proceeds, lest the reader should deem it violent and inadmissible. Grammarians then, it must be observed, point out, among other figures of speech, the *Hendiadys* (*ἐν δια δυσι*) by which is meant a construction that expresses one complex notion (such as that conveyed by a noun qualified by an adjective, or by a verb qualified by an adverb) in the form of two distinct simple notions (either two substantives or two verbs) joined together by the conjunction *and*. Numerous examples of this construction occur in the Greek and Latin classics; thus Virgil in *Georg. ii.* 192, has ‘*pateris libamus et auro*,’ where *pateris et auro* (in chalices and gold) stand for the more customary expression, *pateris aureis* (in golden chalices), and in the Bible itself, the same usage is easily perceived in many passages. In *Gen. iii.* 16, *thy sorrow and thy conception* must be considered to mean, *the sorrow or pain of thy conception*, or still more clearly, *thy child-bearing pain*; in *Jer. xxix.* 11, *an expected end* stands for the more