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received his grammar learning. Who will suitably befriend Dorchester, that a decent chapel may be erected there; monumental, in honour of Wesley and of White? At Preston, there has been a Wesleyan chapel and society for some time. To this the writer, some few years since, was accustomed regularly to go; and in truth he may add, seldom without holding sorrowful communion with one who has thus become cradled in the warmest sympathies and affections of the heart. In this and that house; lonely dell; retired spot, amid the rocks on the shore; he has seemed to behold, converse, and sympathize with him, the man whose spirit was crushed; the Christian hunted to obscurity; the Minister, whose lamp though lighted in the skies, was wickedly quenched in the rampant spirit of persecution. He has then gone to the churchyard to seek his grave;—but no stone tells where he sleeps! May British Christians be devoutly thankful to God for better days; and may they long, long continue! May Christian and moderate men rule in the state, and in our churches; and may honour and deference be ever cheerfully tendered to whom they are due.

### Chrological.

#### THE NATURE, SUBJECTS, AND MODE OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

BY REV. R. B. A. G.

THE obligation of baptism rests upon the example of our Lord, who, by his disciples, baptized many that by his discourses and miracles were brought to profess faith in him as the Messiah; upon his solemn command to his Apostles after his resurrection, "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. xxviii. 19; and upon the practice of the Apostles themselves, who thus showed that they did not understand baptism like our Quakers, as a mystical sense. Thus St. Peter, in his sermon upon the day of pentecost, exhorts, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost," Acts ii. 38.

As to this sacrament, which has occasioned endless and various controversies, three things require examination,—its NATURE; ITS SUBJECTS; and ITS MODE.

I. ITS NATURE. The Romanists, agreeably to their superstitious opinion as to the efficacy of sacraments, consider baptism administered by a priest having a good intention, as of itself applying the merits of Christ to the person baptized. According to them, baptism is absolutely necessary to salvation, and they therefore admit its validity when administered to a dying child by any person present, should there be no priest at hand. From this view of its efficacy arises their distinction between sins committed before and after baptism. The hereditary corruption of our nature, and all actual sins committed before baptism, are said to be entirely removed by it; so that if the most abandoned person were to receive it for the first time in the article of death, all his sins would be washed away. But all sins committed after baptism, and the infusion of that grace which is conveyed by the sacrament, must be expiated by penance. In this notion of regeneration, or the washing away of original sin by baptism, the Roman Church followed St. Augustine; but as he was a predestinarian, he was obliged to invent a distinction between those who are regenerated, and those

who are predestinated to eternal life; so that, according to him, although all the baptized are freed from that corruption which is entailed upon mankind by Adam's lapse, and experience a renovation of mind, none continue to walk in that state but the predestinated. The Lutheran Church also places the efficacy of this sacrament in regeneration, by which faith is actually conveyed to the soul of an infant. The Church of England, in her baptismal services, has not departed entirely from the terms used by the Romish Church from which she separated. She speaks of those who are by nature "born in sin," being made by baptism the "children of grace," which are, however, words of equivocal import; and she gives thanks to God "that it hath pleased him to regenerate this infant with his Holy Spirit," probably using the term regeneration in the same large sense as several of the ancient fathers, and not in its modern theological interpretation, which is more strict. However this be, a controversy has long existed in the English Church as to the real opinion of her founders on this point; one part of the clergy holding the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and the absolute necessity of baptism unto salvation; the other taking different views not only of the doctrine of Scripture, but also of the import of various expressions found in the Articles, Catechism, and offices of the Church itself. The Quakers view baptism only as spiritual, and thus reject the rite altogether as one of the "beggarly elements" of former dispensations; while the Socinians regard it as a mere mode of professing the religion of Christ. Some of them indeed consider it as calculated to produce a moral effect upon those who submit to it, or who witness its administration; while others think it so entirely a ceremony of initiation into the society of Christians from Judaism and paganism, as to be necessary only when such conversions take place, so that it might be wholly had away in Christian nations.

We have called baptism a federal transaction; an initiation into an acceptance of the covenant of grace, required for us by Christ as a visible expression and act of that faith which he has made a condition of our salvation. It is upon this, however, of so much importance to establish the covenant character of this ordinance, and so much of the controversy as to the proper subjects of baptism depends upon it, that we may consider it somewhat at large.

That the covenant of Abraham, of which circumcision was made the sign and seal, Gen. xvii. 7, was the general covenant of grace, and not wholly, or chiefly, a political and national covenant, may be satisfactorily established.

The first and chief argument is, that God would "greatly bless" Abraham, who by promise, although it comprehended the promise of spiritual inheritance, we learn from St. Paul, in reference to the blessing of his justification by the imputation of a faith for righteousness, with all the temporal advantages consequent upon the relation which was established between him and God, in time and eternity. The second promise in the covenant was, that he should be the father of many nations, which we are also taught by St. Paul to interpret in reference to his spiritual seed, the followers of that faith whereof cometh justification, than to its natural descendants. "That the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to that which is by the law, but to that also which is by the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,"—of all believing Gentiles as well as Jews. The third stipulation of God's covenant with the patriarch, was the gift to Abraham and his seed of "the land of Canaan," in which the temporal promise was manifestly but the type of the higher promise of a heavenly inheritance. Hence St. Paul says, "By