

loss to conceive. To invest any rite which, at best, is only a *circumstance* of religion, with such immeasurable importance,—to make it little, if any thing, less than an essential of salvation, has too much the appearance of Pharisaism, to accord well with the spirituality of the Gospel, or with the present state of religious knowledge in the world. "Such strenuousness" says Professor Stuart "I am most fully persuaded, is a zeal without a proper degree of christian knowledge and liberality on this point. It is a zeal for the *costume* of religion, rather than the true spirit of it.—So far as it goes, I must believe it to be really and truly *sectarianism*."* That there exist ample grounds for the formation of the sentiment thus delivered by the learned Professor, candid Baptists will themselves at once concede. We have their recorded admissions respecting this matter—their *denunciations*, they might rather be termed, against their brethren, who, in the exuberance of their zeal about a ceremony, appear at least, more solicitous to promote the predominance of their party, than the vital interests of the Gospel of salvation.

In the constellation of eminent men who have adorned the Baptist persuasion, enumerated by Mr. Crawley, Bunyan, 'a name equally dear to genius and piety,' and the ever-to-be-remembered Robert Hall, shine with distinguished lustre. Let the estimate then which these men formed as to the importance of a perfect coincidence in the observance of outward ordinances among Christians, be heard in their own words—by Baptists—by *every class* of the Redeemer's disciples. The honest author of 'The Pilgrim's Progress' addressing his strenuous brethren on this point, says, "In my simple opinion, your rigid and church-disgusting principles, are not fit for any age or state of the church. I say they are babes and carnal, that attempt to break the peace and communion of churches, though upon no better pretences than *water*;—I am still of that mind, and shall be, so long as I see the effects that follow, viz. the breach of LOVE taking off Christians from the more weighty things of God, and to make them quarrel and have heart-burnings one against another." — More *polished*, of course, but not less *pointed*, are the shafts which Mr. HALL directs against "this loftiness of pretension and arrogance of language" as he expresses himself. "We reason" he says "as we conceive conclusively, in favour of adult, in opposition to infant baptism; our Pedobaptist brethren avow their inability to discern the justice of

* Bib. Repos. No. x, p. 376. † Treatise on Baptism, pp. 133, 134.

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