

little he knows. I once laboured with great pleasure with two pious and able preachers of the gospel, the one quite "strict," and the other "open." When the church sat down to break bread, the strict brother would not partake. I asked his reason, saying that the church were all baptised. He answered, Don't you see Elder ——— there? What of that—is he not a baptized believer? But, says he, do you not fellowship pedobaptists by him? Not here, for not one of them is sitting down with him. But still, such is the power of education and early habit, that he could not partake with us.

Secondly: As to the other, the propriety and consistency of having fellowship with these brethren in the churches to which they belong, and consequently with pedobaptists in these churches, is a point which seems at first glance *inconsistent* with "strict" principles. But, after mature deliberation and viewing the subject in all its bearings, I offer the following reply. A man must forbear in another what he, thinking and believing differently, could not do. So I may be called to bear, in a church with which I may enjoy occasional fellowship, with some things I cannot approve. Yea, a number of cases may be carried against me in the church to which I belong, quite contrary to my convictions and feelings, which yet would never justify me either in dissent or division. All I can do is to vote and testify in my place against them, and so clear my own conscience; and if the matter is wrong, they, and not I, must bear the blame of it. A person disposed to leave a church, on his finding himself in the minority in a case of common occurrence, that does not destroy the constitution or character of the Church of Christ, had better not be united with it. For the proverb holds true in the church, as well as in the world, "Many men, many minds." The

Jew and Gentile converts, and Paul and Barnabas, did contend and differ, but never thought of breaking church fellowship on that account. So, when I sit down with an "open" church, I may disapprove of a number of things, as well as their receiving a pedobaptist to fellowship. But perhaps that may not be the proper time to find fault, neither should I be thought to approve nor be held responsible for every part of their conduct. I do not find fault with the believer's commemorating his Saviour's love, for that he ought to do. But if he is wrong, the fault lies in the *neglect of a previous duty*, which is principally between himself and the pastor, in which the stranger has no voice, and over which he has no control. Therefore he may forbear and commune, and yet consistently refuse communion in the church in which he himself is either a member or pastor. The cases are quite different; in the first the stranger has no voice, in the other he has one, and is the *actor* in receiving the candidate, and is responsible at the bar of God and conscience for the manner he discharges his duty.

OBJECTIONS.

1. Am I not responsible for the conduct of such churches as I commune with? Ans. I may disapprove of many things in their faith and practice, on the subject of ordination—plurality of Elders—*Agapæ*, or feasts of charity—kiss of charity—&c., &c., &c.,—which I may forbear in them, but cannot perform myself when called to act.

2. Is not the constitution of the church destroyed when the candidate is not baptised? Ans. The constitution of the church may be *affected*, but not destroyed; and it may be so by different other things with which a person may forbear, but perhaps cannot approve, and therefore cannot be expected to promote.