

any cause to be angry, that his children have not those badges of honour given them! Besides, it is very much owing to *parents* that there are so many *young* people, who can make no profession of godliness. They have themselves therefore to blame, if proceeding on the principles which have been maintained, there is like to rise a generation of unbaptized persons. If ancestors had thoroughly done their duty to their posterity in instructing, praying for and governing their children, and setting them good examples, there is reason to think the case would have been far otherwise.

"Insisting on this objection would savour of much *stupidity*. For the objection seems to suppose this country to be full of those who are *unconverted*, and so exposed every moment to eternal damnation; yet it seems we do not hear such great and general complaints and lamentable outcries concerning this. Now why is it looked upon so dreadful, to have great numbers going without the *name* and honourable *badge* of Christianity, when at the same time, it is no more resented and laid to heart, that such multitudes go without the *thing* which is infinitely more dreadful? Why are we so silent about this? What is the *name* good for without the *thing*? Can parents bear to have their children go about the world in the most odious and dangerous state of soul, in reality the children of the devil, and condemned to eternal burnings; when at the same time they cannot bear to have them disgraced by going without the honour of being *baptized*? A high honour and privilege this is, yet how can parents be contented with the *name*, exclusive of the *thing* signified? Why should they covet the external honour for their children, while they are so careless about the spiritual blessing? Does not this argue a senselessness of their own misery, as well as of their children's, in being in a *Christless* state? If a man and his child were both together bitten by a viper, dreadfully swollen, and like to die, would it not argue *stupidity* in the parent, to be anxiously concerned only about his child's having on a dirty garment in such circumstances, and angry at others for not putting some outward ornament upon it? But the difference in this present case is infinitely greater, and more important. Let parents pity their poor children because they are without baptism, and pity themselves, who are in danger of everlasting misery, while they have no interest in the covenant of grace, and so have no right to covenant favours and honours, for themselves nor children. No religious honours to be obtained in any other way than by real religion, are much worth contending for. And in truth, it is no honour at all to a man, to have merely the outward *badges* of a Christian, without *being* a Christian indeed, any more than it would be an honour to a man that has no learning, but is a mere dunce, to have a degree at college; or than it is for a man, who has no valour, but is a grand coward, to have an honourable commission in an army, which only serves by lifting him up, to expose him to deeper reproach, and sets him forth as the more notable object of contempt.

"Concerning the *tendency* of this way of confining baptism to professors of godliness and their children, to promote *irreligion* and *profaneness*; I would observe, first, That *Christ* is best able to judge of the tendency of his own *institutions*.—*Secondly*, I am bold to say, that supposing this principle and practice to have such a tendency, is a great *mistake*, contrary to Scripture, and plain reason and experience. Indeed such a tendency it would have to shut men out from *having* any *part* in the *Lord*, (in the sense of the two tribes and a-half, Josh. xxii. 25,) or to fence them out by such a partition-wall as formerly was between Jews and Gentiles; and so to shut them out as to tell them, if they were never so much disposed to serve God, he was not ready to accept them; according to the notion the Jews seem to have had of the uncircumcised *G* tiles.—But to forbear giving men honours to which they have no

title, and not to compliment them with the name and badge of God's people and children, while they pretend to nothing but what is consistent with their being his enemies, this has no such tendency. But the contrary has very much this tendency. For is it not found by constant experience through all ages, that blind, corrupt mankind in matters of religion, are strongly disposed to rest in a *name* instead of a *thing*; in the shadow, instead of the substance; and to make themselves easy with the former, in the neglect of the latter? This over-valuing of common grace and *moral sincerity*, as it is called; thus building so much upon them, making them the conditions of enjoying the seals of God's covenant, and the appointed privileges and honours, and sacred badges of God's children; this, I cannot but think, naturally tends to soothe and flatter the pride of vain man, while it tends to aggrandize those things in men's eyes, which they, of themselves, are strongly disposed to magnify and trust in, without such encouragements to prompt them to it, yea, against all discouragements and dissuaves that can possibly be used with them.

"This way of proceeding greatly tends to establish the negligence of *parents*, and to confirm the stupidity and security of wicked *children*.—If *baptism* were denied to all children, whose parents did not *profess* godliness, and in a judgment of rational charity appear *real saints*, it would tend to excite pious heads of families to more thorough care and pains in the religious education of their children, and to more fervent prayer for them, that they might be converted in *youth*, before they enter into a married state; and so, if they have children, the entail of the covenant be secured.—And it would tend to awaken *young* people themselves, as yet unconverted, especially when about to settle in the world. Their having no right to christian privileges for their children, in case they should become parents, would tend to lead them at such times seriously to reflect on their own awful state; which, if they do not get out of, it must lay a foundation for so much calamity and reproach to their families. And if, after their becoming *parents*, they still remain unconverted, the melancholy thought of their children going without so much as the external mark of Christians, would have a continual tendency to affect them with their own sin and folly in neglecting to turn to God, by which they bring such visible calamity and disgrace on themselves and families. They would have this additional motive continually to stir them up to seek grace for themselves and their children. Whereas the contrary practice has a natural tendency to quiet the minds of persons, both in their own and their children's unregeneracy. Yea, may it not be suspected, that the way of baptizing the children of such as never make any proper profession of godliness, is an expedient originally invented for that very end, to give ease to ancestors with respect to their posterity, in times of general declension and degeneracy.

"This way of proceeding greatly tends to establish the stupidity and irreligion of *children*, as well as the negligence of *parents*. It is certain that unconverted parents do never truly give up their children to God; since they do not truly give up themselves to him. And if neither of the parents appear truly pious, in the judgment of rational charity, there is not in this case any ground to expect that the children will be *brought up* in the *nurture and admonition of the Lord*, or that they will have any thing worthy the name of a christian education, how solemnly soever the parents may promise it. The faithfulness of Abraham was such as might be trusted in this matter. See Gen. xviii. 19. But men that are not so much as visibly godly, upon what grounds are they to be trusted? How can it be reasonably expected, that they should faithfully bring up their children for God, who were never sincerely willing that their children or themselves should be his? And it will be but presumption to expect

that those children who are never given up to God, nor brought up for him, should prove religious and be God's children. There is no manner of reason to expect any other than that such children ordinarily will grow up in irreligion, whether they are baptized or not. And for persons to go about with the name and visible seal of God, and the sacred badge of Christianity upon them, having had their bodies, by a holy ordinance, consecrated to God, as his temples, yet living in irreligion and ways of wickedness; this serves to tend exceedingly to harden them, and to establish in them an habitual contempt of sacred things.—Such persons, above all men, are like to be the most hardened and abandoned, and reclaimed with most difficulty; as it was with the wicked Jews, who were much more confirmed in their wickedness, than those heathen cities of Tyre and Sidon. To give that which is holy to those who are profane, or whom we have no reason, from the circumstances of parentage and education, to expect will be otherwise, is not the way to make them better, but worse. It is the way to have them habitually *trample* holy things *under their feet*, and increase in contempt of them, yea, even to *turn again and rend us*, and be more mischievous and hurtful enemies of that which is good, than otherwise they would be."

CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.

This is the title of a new periodical to be published monthly, in Toronto, by A T McCord, Esq, under the editorial management of the Rev. James Pyper, pastor of the Baptist Church in this city. It is well got up—contains 16 pages quarto, and costs a dollar a year, payable in advance.

The first number, which was issued in the beginning of January, is filled with excellent articles, both original and selected. The *Observer* will be the organ of the Baptist denomination, and if we may judge of the paper from the first number, we would say that it merits the support of the religious public generally. The subjoined article is the editorial leader. We regret that our limited space prevents us from giving another of its papers—"Geology pointing to a new heaven and new earth."

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

"Since men began to multiply on the face of the earth, the world has been in motion; but of late years it has been literally in commotion.—There was a time when man was free, when the human body knew no manacle, and the rational spirit bowed only to God's teachings in sacred things. But families soon grew to tribes; tribes grew to nations; and nations expanded to empires. The authority of a father was easily assumed by the head of a tribe, and the increase of power corresponding with the increase of the subjects of his government was the natural result. The monarch took the place of the chieftain with still increasing authority, and the emperor in his greatness, soon sealed the fate of millions of human beings with a nod. Stealthily was a man robbed of his civil rights; inch by inch reduced to vassalage. He was led within the enclosure of a snare, and perceived not that there was a snare until he was fast in its toils. To burst the bands asunder now requires a desperate effort.

"But his civil bondage, however galling it may have been, dwindles down to a mild philanthropy when contrasted with his moral vassalage. To say nothing of the heavy burdens which the priests of Israel bound upon men's shoulders, while they themselves would not touch them with one of their fingers; or of the desperate moral thralldom in which the masses in heathen lands were held by designing knaves, or cunning philosophers falsely so called; what has been for ages