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EDITORIAL.

CIRCUMCISION.

When the advocates of infant baptism are pressed for a scriptural command for it, and can produce none, they resort to the best circumstantial evidence within their reach. God has commanded infant *circumcision*, and they infer that baptism came in the room of circumcision, and argue that children should now be baptized, because God had commanded infants to be circumcised. One passage is quoted to make it appear that baptism is the circumcision of Christ, viz. Col. ii. 11, 12. Now, it is true that in that passage both baptism and the circumcision of Christ are mentioned, but it is not true that they are mentioned as synonymous. It is there stated that the circumcision of Christ is made without hands. But baptism is not made without hands, therefore they are not the same. We will quote the passage: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised Him from the dead." Here we see that the circumcision of Christ is a work on the human heart made without hands by the invisible energy of the Holy Spirit, by which the love of sin is destroyed, the old man with his affections and lust crucified and put off, and the individual prepared to be buried with Christ in baptism, and to rise with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who raised Christ from the dead. Nothing is plainer than that baptism is not the circumcision of Christ.

I have offered to show that both baptism and circumcision were practiced by inspired men at the same time—that they were both in together, and the consequent impossibility of one coming in the room of the other.

First. In Acts xv. 1, 2, is the following: "And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said—Except ye be circumcised, after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When, therefore, Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of them, should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question." Verse 6:—"And the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter."

Unless the believing Jews continued to circumcise their children, there could be no grounds for imposing it upon believing Gentiles. We have not the least hint in Scripture of the discontinuance of circumcision among believing Jews, but in this case the strongest circumstantial evidence that they still observed it. The apostles and elders did

not meet to consider whether believing Jews should continue to circumcise their children. So far as we are informed, this point was never in dispute. Their object was to consider the propriety of believing Gentiles circumcising their children. If the Jews did not circumcise their children, no reason could arise for these men to teach the Gentiles that they must do it, nor for Paul and Barnabas to go up to the apostles and elders about it, nor for them to meet to consider the matter. We thus judge that it was continued.

Second. When Paul came up to Jerusalem with the offerings of the Gentiles (Acts xxi.) the brethren received him gladly. After hearing of his great success of preaching among the Gentiles, they informed him of certain slanders that were in circulation, greatly to his injury. One of these was that he taught the Jews that were among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, &c., &c. If circumcision had been abolished at the death of Christ, as it is contended, Paul would be solemnly bound to teach believing Jews not to circumcise their children. This would be an essential part of his ministry. Instead of this, however, both Paul and the apostles at Jerusalem treated this as a slander. We know that Paul taught no such thing, but that he taught the opposite doctrine, as we find in 1st Cor. vii. 18: "Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised," &c. Here Paul instead of teaching believing Jews to discontinue circumcision, taught them not to become uncircumcised, or give it up.

Third. That circumcision was continued in the apostles' day is further evident from the fact that Paul circumcised a Christian who was afterwards an eminent minister of the gospel. We are told in Acts xvi. that Paul circumcised Timotheus who was a son of a certain woman who was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek. Would an inspired apostle so dishonor the religion of the Lord and Saviour as to perform a ceremony that had been abolished to give place to Christian baptism, and that, too, on a Christian who had doubtless been already baptized? We think not. The conclusion that this inconsistent conduct was practiced by an inspired apostle, and recorded by an inspired historian without a hint of disapproval, seems too glaring to be entertained for a moment.

Circumcision was not abolished in the apostles' day. It held the place then which it had ever held. And it was perfectly right for Paul to circumcise the son of a Jewess, and to tell believing Jews to abide in circumcision after they were called into the liberty of Christ. There is, therefore, the strongest evidence that circumcision was not done away, but continued with the apostles long after baptism was instituted and practiced by them. Hence it is certain that baptism did not come in its room.

Here come up some important questions, viz.: Did not Jesus abolish in His flesh the law of commandments contained in ordinances, or in other words the religious ceremonies of the Jews? He did. How then can it be said that He did not abolish circumcision? Circumcision is not a religious ceremony of the Jews. It is a national institution, separating the family of Abraham from the rest of mankind. A careful and candid examination of its treatment in the scriptures will make this abundantly evident. The death of Jesus did not abolish the national institutions of the Jews. Paul circumcised one Christian, and tells other Christians that if they were circumcised Christ would profit them nothing. We may well wonder why he would do to one Christian what he declares would eternally ruin other Christians. The mystery is explained when we remember that circumcision belonged to Abraham's family as a national mark. Timothy was a son of Abraham, through his mother, and it was lawful for him to receive it as a national mark. The Galatian Christians were not

of the family of Abraham, and could not receive circumcision as a family mark. If they received it at all, it must be on religious grounds, and, in so doing, they would relinquish the religion of Christ and ruin themselves. It was lawful for Abraham's family, but not for others, to be circumcised.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

A GENUINE "FAITH CURE."

BY W. H. EATON.

Much has been said, written, and preached concerning the faith of Abraham, of whom it is recorded that "he believed God, and it was accounted unto him as righteousness." Much has been said and written concerning the faith of other notable Old Testament worthies, whose names have been handed down to us as being worthy of all honor and praise for their faith in God—some of them, it must be acknowledged, exercising their faith in the face of very discouraging circumstances. But Mark has put on record for our edification an example of faith in the power of the Son of God that might well make many nineteenth century Christians blush for very shame, as they contrast their own halting faith with that of the poor, afflicted woman, to whose faith the Saviour paid this remarkable tribute: "Daughter, thy faith has made thee whole; go in peace!" It may not be without interest to glance briefly at the circumstances attending this genuine "faith cure." Jesus had been going about doing good—teaching both by word of mouth and by hitherto unheard-of miracles. His fame had, in fact, "spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee." It had reached the ears of Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, whose little daughter was sick, and who, when he saw Jesus, fell at His feet and besought Him to go and lay His hands on his dear child, that she might live. Jesus hastened to comply with the loving father's request, and it was while on His way to the home of the "ruler" that the notable cure to which I refer was effected. A certain woman had been afflicted for twelve long years—as many years as the daughter of Jairus had lived altogether. She had suffered many things from many physicians (not very complimentary to the doctors of those days), and had spent all her worldly wealth in the unsuccessful pursuit of health. But at length the fame of the "Great Physician" reached her ears, and we find her in the crowd that followed Him as He went forth with the ruler of the synagogue. "If I may touch but his clothes I shall be whole!" She may not have had a very intelligent faith; she may not have been very well instructed as to the real scope of the Messiah's mission to earth; but she certainly had a remarkably strong faith in His ability to heal the diseases of those who came in contact with Him. She touched His garment, and "straightway she felt in her body that she was healed of her plague." Her strong and persevering faith met with an immediate reward. The Saviour knew that virtue had gone out from Him, and He turned about to see who had touched Him. Seeing this, the poor, trembling woman came and fell before Him and told Him all the truth. Did He rebuke her for the strength and persistence of her faith? No! "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." Even the succeeding narrative of the wonderful manner in which the Saviour restored the "ruler's" daughter to her sorrowing friends, fails to drive from our minds the impression made by the simple recital of the case of this poor woman, and did space permit we would like to enlarge upon it. But the readers of THE CHRISTIAN can draw their own conclusions. Unlike this woman, they have had the advantage of learning much of the Saviour's mission that she