

tween *christian* and what you call *sacramental* communion? We say it is not.

(2.) You barely give them credit for sincerity, &c. (See pp. 106, 127, 225.) But suppose you did, what has that to do with what is required? Nothing.

(3.) What matters it to the question that those exercises were duties before the institution of baptism? Verily nothing; unless the Supreme Legislator had given express intimation that associating with Pedobaptists in the one was according to his will, and in the other against his will? Assuredly the strong presumption is, that he who made it the duty of his people to manifest their love and union by associating in those exercises in which you do associate with pious Pedobaptists, has not made it their duty to repel each other from communion in that ordinance, which more than all other was de-signed to symbolise their union with each other and with Christ their Head.

(4.) We nevertheless hold your course to be glaringly inconsistent with your views as to the unlawfulness of communing with the unbaptised. It is vain to say it is impossible.

(5.) You may pursue it as you please for us; but as you charge us with delinquency for communing with pious Pedobaptists at the Table of the Lord, we have a right to enquire whether you be not equally to blame for communicating with them in those exercises: and we must hold you to be so, until you show a satisfactory reason for the distinction which you allege.

(6.) Infant sprinkling will not, in your view, be christian baptism when you associate with them in those exercises any more than it would be should you commune with them at the Table of the Lord. What it is, or is not, in the one case, it is or is not in the other; so that a relevant distinction is still wanting as much as ever.

(7.) This is a strange position, and utterly unsatisfactory as a reason for making the alleged distinction: for the Pedobaptists with whom you associate are either not in the church at all, or if in it, they have entered by an *unauthorised* mode, so that, for anything that we can see, communing with them in the one, may be equally displeasing to God as communing with them in the other. For our part we think it might be equally appropriate to say that every religious exercise in which a Pedobaptist engages is unauthorised; yea, his very joining with Baptists in religious exercises of any description is, on this ground, unauthorised. So that the distinction perfectly foundered again. In fine, if Dr. H. heard a religious teacher belonging to any other denomination teaching that an external ceremony, call it a *sacrament*, or anything else, is the only authorised mode of entrance into the Church of Christ, he would denounce it as Puseyism, or worse.

Dr. Howell is much offended with Mr. Hall for alleging that the Gospel economy is too spiritual in its nature to admit the supposition that men of the most eminent piety are to be refused its privileges solely for the want of immersion. The passage of Mr. Hall in reference to this is quoted by Dr. Howell and admitted to be of dazzling beauty of style; but it is not more remarkable for beauty of style than for scriptural correctness of statement. In respect to both, indeed, it must commend itself to the conscience and judgement of every unbiased mind, at all acquainted with the New Testament. It is as follows:—"The genius of the Gospel is not ceremonial but spiritual; consisting not in outward observances but in the cultivation of such interior graces as compose the essence of virtue, perfect the character, and purify the heart. These form the soul of religion;

all the rest are but her terrestrial attire, which she will lay aside when she passes the threshold of eternity. When therefore the obligations of humanity and love come in competition with a punctual observance of external rites, the genius of religion will easily determine to which we should incline."

In vain does Dr. Howell carp and cavil at these beautiful sentiments. It is astonishing, indeed, that their verity should be for a moment questioned by a Baptist D. D. He attempts to make it appear that Mr. Hall denies that the Gospel has any thing to do with external ceremonies. "By whom," the Dr. asks, "is the assertion authorized?" It might be replied by Dr. Howell himself; for just after asserting that the great Author of revelation gives no countenance to such a dictation, he confesses that "Spirituality is an essential, and the most essential feature in the religion of the Cross;" and this is saying quite as much as Mr. Hall says; for the *genius* of the Gospel is certainly its most *essential* feature, and *vice versa*. Surely the Dr. ought to have known that the *genius* of the Gospel is its grand peculiarity; and who will deny that to be its spirituality? It is really too much for the Dr. to assert that the great Author of revelation, in no part of His word, gives any countenance to the opinion advanced by Mr. Hall, and then himself yield all that Mr. Hall's language fairly implies.

However much the Dr. may be surprised at the allegation that "the obligations of humility and love may come into competition" with a punctilious observance of external rites, it is, nevertheless, a fact that they are brought into competition. Yea, he himself furnishes a fine illustration of their being brought into competition, when (p. 22) he speaks of an eminently religious gentleman with whom he delightfully associates in the service of the Redeemer, &c. When, as he says, he walks with him to the house of God, the obligations of humility and love would suggest the propriety and desirableness of taking their seats together at the Table of the Lord; for, he informs us, "Nothing would be more pleasing to us than to go with them to the Lord's Table, but we are repelled by the fact that a preliminary duty is essential"—the *external rite* is wanting! Here, then, is a clear case of competition, and in such case the *genius*—the peculiar spirituality of the religion of Christ—easily determines the Open Communist to go forward and take a seat at the sacred Table with the "*eminently religious gentleman*," even though deficient of the external ceremony, assuredly believing that in doing so he is acting agreeably to the express law of his divine Master, as laid down, Romans xiv. chap., and Acts xi. xv. chapters, and implied in the tenor of His word throughout. But, alas! for the human intellect that it should be liable to be so perverted by its prejudices! Dr. Howell, though he "*delightfully*" walks to the very threshold of the house of God with the "*eminently religious gentleman*," and though he solemnly declares "*Nothing would be more pleasing*" than to go with him to the Lord's Table; and on p. 110 he speaks of the *painful* alternative of separating, yet, when the external rite presents itself in competition, the Dr. gives back—he decides in its favour! Who knows how many such thrilling scenes may transpire at the very threshold of the house of God! "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked to us by the way?" &c. Yes, but the external rite, like a thunder-bolt, separated between the disciples who were all but knit together in love!

Dr. Howell asks the following, and a variety of similar, questions:—"Is not obedience to the Christian commands the very criterion, not only of love to the Saviour, but also of love to our brethren?" Of