

on you." (Acts i. 8.) This "come upon" expresses mode. Again, "the cloven tongues sat upon each of them"—in fulfillment of the promise, "He shall baptize you with fire." (Matt. iii. 11.) Believers are nowhere said to be dipped or plunged into the Holy Spirit. (See also Acts ii. 3, 17, 18; xi. 15, 16.) The inward baptism is said to be given in the way of pouring. (Isa. lvi. 1, 4; Heb. xii. 13; 1 Peter i. 2.) A man, then, is scripturally baptized when the baptizing element is poured upon him. We read of the washing of "tables and couches." The word used is *baptizo*. Were the tables and couches immersed? We read in Heb. ix. 10 of "divers baptisms," and we know that the greater part of these "divers baptisms" were accomplished by sprinkling or affusion. The word "sprinkle" is constantly occurring. (Compare Luke xi. 38 with Mark vii. 2, to show that washing is not dipping.) There is no command in the law of Moses enjoining immersion on priests or people. (See Numbers xix. 17, 18.)

Q. Did not John baptize in Jordan and at A'non, "because there was much water there?"

A. But to baptize where there was much water (or, Greek, "many waters") is the exception in Scripture, and not the rule. The eunuch was baptized in a desert, the jailer in a prison, the 3,000 in a single day at Jerusalem, where there was not much water. The presumption lies quite on our side. But if John baptized at Jordan and A'non, it was because no house could accommodate the multitude. He preached in the open air, and near the river side, where water, too, was required for the beasts of burden. Here is the argument, then: John might have chosen a place well provided with water, without dipping his hearers; therefore, the fact that he chose such a place can never prove that he dipped them.

Q. But it is said (Mark i. 4)—He was baptized of John in Jordan; or, literally, baptized in Jordan?

A. The preposition *into* (*eis*) is used sixty-five times without the idea of motion. (Acts. xxv. 15.) In John ix. 7 it is "wash in (or rather *into*) the pool of Siloam." They were to go first into the water and then wash. We find again, in 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, that "they were baptized in the cloud and in the sea." This was not immersion. The Egyptians were immersed, not the Israelites. The reference in 1 Peter iii. 20, 21, is not to immersion, for Noah is said to be "saved by water." He was not plunged into the water, but kept above it by the ark.

Q. But Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and came up out of the water.

A. So does a horse every time he drinks at a river, but he is not dipped. They both stood in the water, and Philip poured the water on the eunuch's head. The baptism followed, and was consequent upon, their both going down into the water. It is a subsequent transaction and is mentioned as a separate article of information. The Greek words mean "to the water and from it." The same words occur in Matt. xvii. 27—"Go thou to the sea and cast a hook."

Q. But believers are said to be buried by baptism. This implies immersion. (Rom. vi. 3, and Col. ii. 12.)

A. I answer—1. The external ordinance is not here referred to at all, not is the mode. 2. Our being buried with Him is the consequence of baptism into Christ's death, that is of the inward baptism here referred to. But the passage says not a word as to the manner in which the baptism is applied, in order to produce these consequences. 3. It cannot refer to the external ordinance, for, if so, Simon Magus was "buried with Christ by baptism." 4. Besides, the figure proves nothing itself. The Eastern mode of burial was not putting the body into the earth, but placing it in a vault on a level with the ground. 5. Again, Christ was not drowned but crucified. The apostle says we are baptized into his death; but immersion is no representation of the actual death Christ died.

Q. You attach too much importance to the inconvenience of immersion?

A. Certainly not. Think of them. It would be dangerous to immerse sick people. Aged Baptist ministers have no strength to dip heavy people. The immersion of females in public is hardly delicate. If you wish to follow the early mode, you ought to immerse them *naked*. This was the universal custom in primitive times.

Q. But immersion was the practice of the early Church?

A. It was in the age immediately succeeding the apostles, but many errors of doctrine and practice had crept in even then. But some of the most learned fathers quote—"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you"—frequently in reference to Christian baptism, and affusion and sprinkling were also practiced.

Q. We have changed Christ's formula of baptism—(Matt. xxviii. 19)—and baptize now simply in the name of Christ?

A. Yes, some of you. You base your practice on Acts xix. 5—"They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." But why did Paul baptize at all? Was it not in obedience to Christ's command in that very passage of Matthew? If so why should we alter the formula prescribed in his very commission to preach and baptize so far as to omit the names of the Father and the Holy Ghost? The passage in Acts is in no way consistent with the commission. You might as well say that wine should not be used in the Lord's Supper, because it is called "a breaking of bread." (Acts ii. 42.)

I HAVE an indignation that cannot be expressed when I think of the physical limitations of woman, and of the manner in which she is obliged, when standing alone in the world, to strain all her strength to obtain half a man gets for the same labor.—*Joseph Cook*.

THE stairways of temptation are very numerous. Fashion carpets some of them gorgeously and claims that they are safe. But we pastors know how often young converts venture on the slippery places only to catch wounding falls. The moment that a Christian goes where he cannot take Christ with him he is in danger. The Master will not keep his hand under our arms when we go on forbidden ground. Presumptuous Peter needed a sharp lesson, and he got it. That bitter cry at the foot of the stairs bespoke an awful fall. How many such are rising daily into Christ's listening ears.

THE RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION OF THE YOUNG

BY REV. W. A. MACRAE, B.A., WOODSTOCK

"Feed My lambs." John xxi. 15.

This verse and the two following ones contain a remarkable conversation between our Lord and His apostle Peter. Three times Peter had denied Christ, and three times Christ here puts to him the searching question "Lovest thou Me?" Thus He gently reminded Peter of his sad fall. Having received from Peter a public profession of his love, He bids him prove the reality of that love by devoting himself to the great work of shepherding souls: "Feed My lambs," said Christ.

I do not, with some, apply the word "lambs" exclusively to the young in years. I believe it means those who are young and weak in spiritual experience, whatever their years may be. Peter, remembering his own weakness, was not to despise the youngest or the weakest in the flock of Christ.

But though the text does not apply exclusively to children, it undoubtedly includes them, and bears very directly upon the responsibility of parents and church members in regard to the religious instruction of the young.

The following are the points which the Presbytery of Paris, at its last meeting, enjoined on its ministers to bring before their congregations.

1. The inalienable responsibility of parents to attend to the religious instruction of their families, and of practically co-operating with the Church in this matter.

2. The responsibility resting on the membership of the Church, conscientiously and devotedly to give themselves to the work of teaching in the Sabbath school, and of using every means within their reach in classes for training, and teachers' meetings, for the study of the lesson from week to week, thus fitting themselves for the greatest possible usefulness in this part of church work.

3. The importance of our youth being well instructed in definite doctrinal truth, as set forth in our Catechism and Confession of Faith.

In considering these points I shall change the order in which I have now read them, and speak of the third point first—first the teaching, and then the teachers.

1. We are to consider "the importance of our youth being well instructed in

DEFINITE DOCTRINAL TRUTH,

as set forth in our Catechism and Confession of Faith." The General Assembly of our Church has, on this matter, repeatedly expressed its judgment. In the last report of its Committee on the "State of Religion," I find the following words:—

"Your Committee are impressed with the importance of giving due prominence to the distinctive principles of the Church, both in the pulpit and in the instruction of the young, and while carefully avoiding the cultivation of a polemical spirit, and everything that would justly mar harmonious co-operation with other evangelical churches, would still lay stress on the faithful maintenance of those principles which we have inherited from the days of the Reformation."

In giving this deliverance, our Presbytery, as well as the Assembly's Committee, were alive to the fact that, in many places our young people are left in entire ignorance regarding the scriptural foundation of our church polity, and that even some of the doctrines of grace fail to be taught with that clearness and prominence which they deserve, and which they receive in the Word of God, as well as in our Catechism and Confession. A strong dislike to all definite doctrinal truth is one of the most conspicuous signs of the present time. Some there are who never speak of doctrines but in tones of bitterness and with expressions of contempt. They would have us throw away all catechisms, creeds, and confessions, as only fetters to the minds of modern advanced people. Then again, what multitudes seem quite indifferent what doctrines are taught, if only the teacher is in earnest. Earnestness with them is the great and only test of a true teacher. No matter who the teacher be, male or female, ex monk or ex nun, known or unknown, certified or uncertified, if there be only earnestness, all is right, and they who hesitate to accept such earnest persons as their teachers in spiritual things, are denounced as narrow-minded, illiberal, perhaps even unchristian.

In vain you tell these people that earnestness is no

test of truth. In vain you remind them that Pharisees and Jesuits had earnestness enough to compass sea and land to make one proselyte. In vain you try to explain to them the necessity of sound doctrines to a good life. In vain you remind them of your Lord's frequent warning against false teachers and false doctrines. They will listen to nothing. They are too good to argue. They only know that the man is earnest, and by earnestness they mean not sacrifices of person or purse, but frequently nothing more than loudness of voice and violence of gesture. And so the last preaching tramp is their idol until another more "earnest" than he comes round. I do not think I have overdrawn the picture. I can give facts, sad facts, in illustration and proof.

Or look at much of the religious literature of the present day, some of which finds its way into our Sabbath school libraries, and most of which is read by our young people, and you cannot but observe how carefully all distinctive truths are ignored. You will find plenty of great swelling words—out virtue, and charity, and light, and manliness, and large-heartedness, and broad views, and free thought; plenty of high-sounding abstract terms, such as "the true" and "the just" and "the beautiful" and "the good," but you will find no solid positive doctrine, no food for a hungry soul. In vain you will search for a clear exposition of regeneration, faith, justification, for a distinct statement of the way of pardon and peace with God.

In my judgment this wide spread aversion to distinctive doctrinal truth is very serious, and is already doing an immense amount of harm, especially among the young. It furnishes a plea for indifference and indecision in matters of religion. It creates and keeps up an immense amount of religious instability and dissipation. It fills our land with what has been well called a "jelly fish christianity," that is, a christianity without bone, or muscle, or power. No wonder that under such influences so many are tossed to and fro, like children, by every wind of doctrine; carried away by every new excitement and every sensational movement, ever ready for new things because they have no firm grasp of the old, and utterly unable to render a reason for the hope that is in them; now they belong to one denomination and now to another, according to the fashion or sensation of the time, and they generally end by renouncing all church connection and rushing into the arms of Plymouthism or infidelity.

Where all this is to end I dare not predict. There are breakers ahead, and I care not to contemplate the future. God save us from a broad latitudinarian church believing this or that, anything or nothing, according to the whims and sensations of the time!

How important at such a time as the present, the injunction of our Presbytery, that the children of our Church should be taught definite doctrinal truth so that they may have a solid foundation on which to build their hope, and be saved from the multiplied delusions of the day. As members of our Church they are surely entitled to something more than a few vague, hazy generalities about religion. To teach our children nothing more than this is unworthy of intelligent Christians who have themselves conscientiously embraced certain clear, well defined views of Divine truth. For the maintenance of these truths many of our forefathers shed their life blood, and we are unworthy of the privileges they have bequeathed to us if we fail to hand them down in all their integrity to our children and children's children. If we believe that our doctrines and polity are worthy of our own adherence, if we deprecate the evils of family disunion, if we desire that our children should grow up with us in the same faith and worship, let us strive to impart to them an

INTELLIGENT DISCERNMENT OF THE DOCTRINES

we hold and of the principles on which our system is founded. To fail in doing this is not an intelligent liberality, as it is usually called, but a shameful want of fidelity to solemn vows, an indifference to acknowledged truth, and an ignorant compromise with external influences. True liberality will never flourish over the grave of truth.

Especially on such doctrines as the following ought there to be no indistinct testimony. The inspiration and supreme authority of the Bible, the awful nature of sin and the deserts of the sinner, the divine person, character and work of the Lord Jesus; the complete atonement He made for sin on the cross; His intercessory work on the right hand of God; the continual