

stringent Close Baptist says, "It were to be wished that many of our own people (Baptists) were like them."

Mr. Duncan anticipates the question, "Do you unchurch all the Pedobaptist Ministers?" and he ventures unhesitatingly to answer in the affirmative. The fact, he says, that Pedobaptists have subverted the commission, proves that they actually are unchurched!! I pretend not to quote him verbatim; but sure I am I do not misrepresent him. I think I see Mr. Duncan complacently surveying his terms, set in the syllogistical form, and admiring the cogency of his conclusion, thus,—

None who reverse the order and change the subjects and mode of baptism can have a place in the Church of Christ; but all Pedobaptists reverse the order and change the subjects and mode of baptism.

Therefore no Pedobaptists can be in the Church of Christ!

But is it possible that Mr. Duncan can have arrived at the conclusion to which this syllogism inevitably leads?

While we have in view certain Pedobaptists of a cold, suspicious character, whose pretensions to genuine piety are rather unprominent, and are told these are the men who have reversed the order, &c., and have therefore no place in the Church of Christ, we may feel strongly inclined to question the propriety of communing with them. But when we have in our eye, men, whose ardent piety and devotedness place them far above suspicion—and many such there have been, and are—and should any Baptist point to these and say,—Behold the men who, having reversed the order and changed the subjects and mode of baptism, have therefore no place in the Church of Christ; we should not hesitate to spurn the assumption, and could only view it as betraying the grossest ignorance of the nature of the religion of Christ. Did Mr. Duncan never, in all his travels through the world, nor in his intercourse with Christian men, meet with a Pedobaptist of whom he would have hardly dared to say, he has no place in the Church of Christ? Could he not at least call to his recollection the remains of some who were known as Pedobaptists—subverters of the authority (according to him) of a portion of the word of God, to whom it would look rather unseemly to say, thou hast no place in the Church of Christ? Could Mr. Duncan address himself even to Watts, one of the sweetest singers of the Christian Israel, and say, Isaac, thou art a subverter, a rejector, a despiser &c.; thou canst therefore have neither part nor lot in our Zion; thou enterest not in by the door; thou art therefore a thief and a robber? Watts was only one of thousands that could be named who lived the life of faith, and "who being dead yet speak."

But am I right in supposing that Mr. D. really means to deny that any Pedobaptists can have a place in the Church of Christ? Certainly his reporter makes him speak so. If this be his opinion, it may

be granted, Mr. D. is at least a consistent close-communicationist; and we solemnly assure him that he has only to prove his position to make us as close as he would wish us to be; but, in the meantime, we tell him that what he views as proof, falls far short in our estimation.

The strong conviction we have, that many Pedobaptists are in the Church of Christ, and in equally close and endearing intimacy with him as even *Regular* Baptists, makes us feel very confident in our position. Though there were no other argument that could be brought to bear, the very supposition that God would forbid us to commune with those with whom he evidently communes himself, appears too abhorrent both to reason and revelation for us to entertain it a moment.

We will not pretend to defend everything that Mr. Ball may have advanced. His reference to the 500, whether they were baptized or not, might have well been spared, for he had no need of such assistance.

Mr. Duncan calls it an inference from a mere *supposition*, and says it is a *specimen of open-communication logic*.

We beg leave, however, to tell him, that we have something else than *mere suppositions* to draw our inferences from. And first we ask him, if it be not a positive and glaring fact that the Saviour enjoined on his disciples the duties of love and forbearance? and also, that he prayed earnestly that they might *all be one*, that the world might be constrained to believe? He knows that these are not *mere suppositions*. The inferences which we draw from these are, 1st, that the union prayed for, and the love enjoined, must be *exhibited* to the view of the world, otherwise it could not be seen, and unseen it could not produce the desired effect. 2nd. We infer that the world will never be constrained to believe by the *exhibition* of repulsive principles and practice among the disciples of Christ. But here the question arises, are Pedobaptists disciples? If we ask Mr. Duncan, does he *undisciple* all Pedobaptists? He will of course answer, "the affirmative is proved by the fact, &c." If they are not in his church they are not his disciples; if not disciples they have, of course, no right to the privileges of disciples, and we repeat it, let him prove his position and the controversy is settled.

But secondly it is a glaring fact, and not a "*mere supposition*," that the duty of forbearance is often insisted on in the apostolic writings; from which we infer that differences of opinion among the disciples existed even then, but there is not one word in all these epistles to countenance divisions among the disciples, but the reverse. As to the nature of *their* differences it may suffice to know that it was such as not to affect their acceptance with God; and precisely such is the nature of the difference between us and Pedobaptists, as we firmly believe, but of course this will be questioned by Mr. Duncan: well, we say again, let him prove his position,—let him show that the error of Pedobaptists affects their acceptance with God, and his point is gained; persuaded as we are