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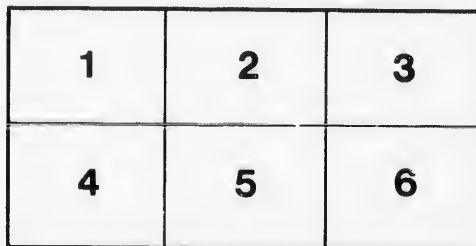
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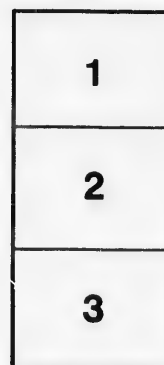
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THREE

LETTERS,

TO

THE REVEREND WILLIAM ELDER;

**IN WHICH THE NATURE OF THAT ORDINANCE IS
EXPLAINED; AND MANY OF THE UNSCRIPTURAL
OPINIONS AND FALSE REASONINGS, CONTAINED
IN HIS LETTERS TO THE REV. MR. JACKSON, ARE
EXAMINED AND REFUTED,**

BY

THE REVEREND DUNCAN ROSS,

WEST RIVER OF PICTOU.

PICTOU:

Printed at the *Weir* Durham Press.

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LETTER I.

REVEREND SIR,

On perusing your Letters to the Rev. Mr. Jackson, it has occurred to me, that your views of the ordinance of baptism, ought not to be circulated in the community, as the doctrine of the scriptures. From a desire, therefore, to contribute to the more general diffusion of divine truth, I have been induced to make them the subject of the following remarks; which I now beg leave to submit to your consideration.

In your preface you say, "We are of opinion that the scripture is the standard of faith and practice, and would be willing to rest our cause on that alone, were our opponents so disposed." This sentiment seems a little out of place in the preface to a book, where the plain language of the inspired writer is allowed little weight till it is twisted about by a Judson, the sentiments of a Jewish Rabbi, or a host of human authorities. I shall shew in what follows, that our practice stands in no need of these aids, and can be sufficiently defended from the oracles of God. That the subject may appear with some degree of clearness, I shall give a view of it unencumbered with controversy, and then

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point out your leading mistakes.

In order to this, I remark, that any special purpose of mercy and grace, toward man in general or the church in particular, is in scripture language termed a covenant; and the revelation of such a purpose is called making a covenant. Hence, the word, as found in the sacred records, is of greater extent than in other books. It includes not only agreement by mutual consent, but likewise any arrangement by decree, command, promise, or even testament. Inattention to this has given rise to much needless controversy. The system of ordinances given to the church of Israel, is by Moses called the covenant; by Paul in his epistle to the Galatians, the law; and in the epistle to the Hebrews, according to our version, sometimes covenant, and sometimes testament. The term in the original is the same.

Of these covenants, one called the covenant of works, and the other called the covenant of grace or redemption, have been frequently explained by divines; but I have no intention, on this occasion, of affirming or denying any thing concerning these, though I believe that the covenants to be mentioned, have all a relation to the covenant of grace, though some of them more closely than others.

The first of those requiring our attention, is recorded in Gen. ix. 9, 12, 13: *And I, behold I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you. — I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.* This covenant is absolute, everlasting, v. 16. and confirmed by a token or seal; and the event has been agree-

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able to this, and will continue so.

Again, God made a covenant with Abraham, recorded Gen. xv. 18: *In the same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given the land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.* This covenant is confirmed by no seal, nor called everlasting; and the event has shewed that it is, at least, capable of long interruption.

About fourteen years after, God made a second covenant with Abraham, in these words, recorded Gen. xvii. 7, 10, 26, 27: *And I will establish my covenant with thee and with thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee. This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, Every man child among you shall be circumcised.—He that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger.— In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son, and all the men of his house.* This covenant is confirmed by a seal, and expressly called an everlasting covenant. It contains the advantages of the former on a surer foundation; for the land of Canaan is promised to his seed, as his federal or covenant seed, and not as his natural seed: and the event has agreed with his view of the case; for the different branches of Abraham's natural seed were excluded from a right to the land of Canaan, as they ceased to be his federal seed. Thus, of his eight sons the posterity of seven ceased to be his federal seed, and never possessed Canaan. The same happened to the posterity of one of Isaac's sons; and finally, when the

Jews, by rejecting Christ, ceased to be Abraham's federal seed, they were driven from the possession of the land of promise: and it seems probable to me at least, that their being grafted into their own olive tree, (Rom. xi. 24.) and so becoming again Abraham's federal seed, and their restoration to Canaan, will be about the same time. Again, it is evident that the federal seed never were confined to the natural posterity of Abraham, for, at the very first, the seal of the covenant was extended to all the men of his house, and these, before the making of this covenant, amounted to three hundred and eighteen men fit for war, beside the younger males and those born afterwards. By this covenant a line of distinction was drawn between God's professing people and the world. (Elder's letters, p. 3.)

About four hundred and thirty years afterwards, (Gal. iii. 17.) God made a covenant with the Israelites, a part of Abraham's natural posterity: Exod. xxiv. 7, 8. *And he (Moses) took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people. And they said, All that the Lord hath said we will do and be obedient.* Concerning this covenant it may be remarked, that it was not an everlasting, but a temporary one, added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made (Gal. iii. 19.); and therefore when he came, it waxed old, and vanished away: (Heb. viii. 13.) Under this covenant, however, the Church received a system of ordinances, suitable to her state at that time.

Afterward, God conferred the government of his church upon David, and confirmed the same by an everlasting covenant: Psal. lxxxix.

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3, 4. *I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant. Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations.* By this covenant the government of the church was committed to David and his family, by hereditary right, but by no law settling the manner of succession: but the principal seed intended is our Lord, who is both David's son and David's Lord.

Finally, God, by the prophet Jeremiah, promised to his church a new covenant, in these words, Jer. xxxi. 31: *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their Fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt.*

Under these covenants the church underwent several changes in her appearance and form, but still continued the same church, and God's covenant people. This is a point of importance in the present controversy, and therefore deserves particular attention. That the Israelitish church was a continuation of the patriarchal is not questioned, yet, during the patriarchal state, the posterity of seven of Abraham's sons, and one of Isaac's, lost all the privileges of the covenant. The Jewish church, again, still retained all the privileges of the covenant; though ten tribes revolted from the house of David, and from the privileges of his church. But the greatest change took place, when Christ, the son of David, appeared in our world: and some question if the christian church be a continuation of the Jewish. Among this number I find you; and, therefore, I request your atten-

tion to the following arguments, which to me appear decisive.

1. The continuation of the same church appears from the covenant with Abraham. This is an everlasting covenant; and, in virtue of it, Abraham is reckoned the father of all believers whether Jews or gentiles: Rom. iv. 11. *That he might be the father of all them that believe:* v. 16, 17. *To the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law (viz. the Jews,) but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations.* Again, Gal. iii. 13, 14. *Christ hath redeemed us,—that the blessing of Abraham might come on the gentiles.* v. 19. *And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

Now, Sir, if the church be not continued the same body, what connexion have we with Abraham? Can we be Abraham's seed, and he the father of us all, in any other point of view than that of the everlasting covenant, by which he is made a father of many nations?

2. The continuation of the same church appears from the covenant with David. God promised to build up his throne to all generations; and this promise is fulfilled in Christ: hence, the prophet says, Isa. ix. 6, 7. *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders;—Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom &c.* Compared with Luke i. 31,——33. *And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He*

shall be great, and shall be called the son of the Highest, and the Lord shall give unto him the throne of his father David. Now it is evident to all christians, that the promise made to David of the perpetuity of his throne and kingdom, is fulfilled in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. If, the christian church be a continuation of the Jewish, Christ is on the throne of his father David, according to the words of Gabriel : but if, according to your view, the Jewish church be extinct, and the christian church be a new one, then, the promise to David has failed, the everlasting covenant is broken. Such is the consequence of your view of the subject.

3. Besides, Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, clearly and beautifully illustrates the continuation of the same church, xi. 16,——27. The whole of this passage deserves a careful examination ; but a very cursory view must suffice at present. The church is compared to a tree, and individual members to branches ; the unbelieving Jews were broken off, the believing Jews who adhered to their king, were continued, and believing gentiles were grafted in. The tree, however, continued the same ; and so, when the Jews shall be converted, they will be grafted into their own olive tree. But, if the christian be another church than the Jewish, it will be impossible to graft them into their own olive tree again ; for on that supposition it does not exist.

4. It is by being admitted into fellowship with this church, that gentile believers have any right to the new covenant ; for it is made expressly with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah : Jer. xxxi. 31. Heb. viii. 8. Therefore, if the christian church be not the same church continued but another, it can have no claim to

the privileges of the former. The same truth may be confirmed from other passages of scripture; but these are reckoned sufficient.

You do not seem to consider what dreadful consequences to christians would follow, were you able to tear the church asunder, and make it two: as, in that case, christians would no longer have Abraham for their father,—have any right to his blessings,—nor be heirs according to the promise; and they would lose all claim to the new covenant: and all this to drive infants out of the church.

The external appearance and form of worship were greatly altered, when Christ, having finished the work of his humbled state, arose from the dead. Among other things, the initiating seal of the covenant was changed. There were two reasons which rendered this necessary. Under the former dispensation, there was no ordinance implying forgiveness of sins without shedding of blood, Heb. ix. 22. But under the new testament, there is no shedding of blood in religious worship. Again, one end of this seal of the covenant, was, to draw a line of distinction between God's professing people and the world; but after the Jews rejected their king, they still retained circumcision, and so another rite to answer this purpose became necessary; and our Lord instituted baptism for that end. This, I know, is denied by the baptists, and, therefore, the following proof of the assertion is submitted to your consideration.

1. You grant that baptism now draws a line of distinction between God's professing people and the world, as circumcision did under the former dispensation.

2. Circumcision was the rite by which con-

verts were admitted into the church under the former dispensation, and that baptism answers the same purpose under the present, cannot be reasonably denied.

3. Circumcision under the former dispensation showed the person's federal relation to Abraham, and baptism does the same under the present: Gal. iii. 27,—29. *For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

Finally, the Spirit of inspiration denominates baptism circumcision: Col. ii. 11, 12. "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. Buried with him in baptism." Again, Phil. iii. 2, 3. "Beware of the concision, for we (christians) are the circumcision." It is plain to any person of reflection, that the Apostle, by the concision, means the circumcision in the flesh, that is, the Jews; and by the circumcision, the christian church: showing that the former retained the external part, but christians enjoyed the substance.

Having taken this concise view of the subject, I shall state to you the reasons which influence our practice.

1. We find that from the time in which God drew a line of distinction between the church and the world, children were considered as a part of the church, and partakers of its privileges. It has been showed that the covenant by which they were admitted, is an everlasting covenant. Now as children are members of the church by an everlasting covenant, it is certain-

ly incumbent on those who would exclude them to show their authority. I find express divine authority for the admission of children, but never could find any but human authority for their exclusion. Had children never been admitted, the case would have been different. You admit p. 26. that "if it could be proved that our Lord or his apostles ever brought an infant in-
 " to the gospel church, or that they had a right
 " to it, then it would be necessary to shew when
 " that right was abrogated." This is correct, and brings the dispute to a fair issue. You however seem sensible that you are on ground where your standing is rather ticklish, and, therefore, try to guard ~~against~~ it as much as possible. You say, "by our Lord and his apostles." It has been shewed already that they were admitted, by himself doubtless, many hundred years before he appeared in the flesh, therefore, they needed not a second admission. The readmission of persons who are in the church already, involves a degree of absurdity; and we find that none of those who were believers in Christ at the time of his death were ever admitted into the church under the New Testament dispensation; because they were never out of it; for in them was the church continued. Paul however joined in the revolt, rejected for a time the Son of David, and was out of the church; therefore he had to be readmitted as another sinner. When circumcision or baptism is termed an initiating ordinance, it has a respect to converts: those who were, or are in the church, are, thereby, merely recognized as its members. That they had their right to it from the time of Abraham till the commencement of the christian era, has not, as far as I know, been questioned. Your

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only subterfuge then remains in the words *gospel church*. It has been proved already that the church is the same, and to this church they *were* admitted. As you say *gospel church*, I would ask, At what period was the church of God not the gospel church? It was so in the days of Abraham: "the scripture——preached "before the gospel unto Abraham," says Paul, Gal. iii. 8. The church in the wilderness was the gospel church: Heb. iv. 2. "For unto us "was the gospel preached as well as unto them. The new covenant was promised to that same church into which children were admitted, and it is by being admitted to it, that we have a claim to the new covenant. Now, though our Lord did not readmit infants, their admission having been sanctioned long before his personal ministry, he did all that could be desired to confirm their admission, in these words, *of such is the kingdom of heaven, of such is the kingdom of God*. Since the right of children to membership in the church, was granted by an everlasting covenant, and recognised by our Lord Jesus Christ, every attempt to deprive them of it by any man or body of men, must be highly offensive to the great head of the church.

It remains now to be inquired how far the inspired writers of the New Testament confirm this view of the subject. In this part of the subject, if any doubt had been in my mind, you would have removed it; for it is plain to any reader of discernment, that you are under the necessity of mistating or wresting every passage you bring forward in defence of your opinion. You say, p. 2. "I conceive we cannot discover "from the law of circumcision, who are fit subjects of baptism, as the covenant of circumci-

“ sion has waxed old and vanished away, and a
 “ new and better covenant has been brought in,
 “ which embraces the believing Jew and Gentile,
 “ and it is from this new covenant that we are
 “ to learn who are interested in it, and what
 “ laws they are to obey. ”

Seldom can so many and so gross mistakes be found in the same number of words. In the first place, you confound two distinct covenants, the everlasting covenant made with Abraham, and the temporary covenant made with the Israelites, four hundred and thirty years after. The former of these being everlasting, cannot vanish away; the latter not being so, has waxed old and vanished away. Heb. viii. 7,—13. Secondly, you say that the new covenant embraces the believing Jew and gentile. But, Sir, what interest has the believing gentile, on your principles, in a covenant made expressly with the house of Israel and Judah? Heb. viii. 8. Jer. xxxi. 31. If you hold with us, that the church is still the same, our interest in the new covenant is plain, and the membership of children, and their right to the seal of the covenant is equally so; for you know that they enjoyed it in the church of Israel: but if you hold that the christian church is another and a distinct church, please inform us what right this new church has to a covenant made expressly with the church of Israel. Thirdly, you say “ it is from this covenant that we are to learn——what laws they are to obey. ” Did you, Sir, read the covenant? I have read it both in Jeremiah’s prophecy and in Paul’s epistle, but can find no law there. It is a covenant of free promise.

To invalidate the argument for the membership of children, drawn from Christ’s recognis-

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ing them, as such, in these words, *of such is the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God*, you try to twist it round and round: you ask, "Did Christ baptize them?—baptism was then in use." Here you confuse the mind of your readers. Baptisms were in use since the days of Moses: the dispensation under which the church then was, stood in diverse baptisms, Heb. ix. 10.: but the ordinance about which we are disputing, was instituted by our Lord after his resurrection, and therefore could not be in use then. You plead for the article, that it should be read, *Suffer the little children to come unto me*. This is granted: but then you wish to have the article turned into the pronoun, and instead of *the children*, you, under the direction of Judson, would read *those children*. This cannot be allowed: our Lord said, Mark x. 14. *Suffer the little children to come*; and no man has a right to change *the children* into *these children*. But even this twist will not invalidate the argument, which rests upon these words, *of such is the kingdom of God*. You seem sensible of this, and ask, Does he mean such in age, or in humility? I answer, Such in age; for the disciples would hinder none to come, for their humility, but for their age; and our Lord was displeased with them, not for hindering humble persons, but little children. You insinuate that your principles originated with the disciples, and here I would date its commencement. But as our Lord was much displeased with his disciples then, there is no reason to believe that he is less displeased with those who imitate them in this particular now.

An argument of no small importance is drawn from Peter's words on the day of Pente-

cost, Acts ii. 39. "For the promise is to you and to your children." You, Sir, start away from the argument, and enquire, (p. 7.) What promise? This is shifting the ground; the question is, Do these words, 'The promise (be it what it will) is unto you and to your children, favour the continuation of the right of children to the promise? Or does it give the least hint of their exclusion? It should be kept in view that children from the days of Abraham till the death of Christ, had the same interest in the promises with their parents, and if ever they were excluded, this was the time. This is the first public instruction given under the New Testament dispensation. Now Sir, I leave it with the candid reader, I leave it with yourself, is there the least hint of cutting children off from an interest in the promise? Yea, is not the continuation of their relation to it plainly expressed? But Sir you pass by the principal promise; you need not go so far back as the 17 v. for it; you will find in the 30 v. the promise to David, accomplished in the resurrection of Christ to sit on his throne, and the shedding forth of the Holy Ghost was the consequence and proof of it. The appearance of the Messiah was the leading promise under the former dispensation. Acts xiii. 23, 32. The people had no reason to repent in reference to the Spirit immediately; but great reason to repent of the manner in which they had used their king. And this promise extended to them and their children, for he had declared that of such is his kingdom.

You insinuate (p. 7.) that the Apostles did not yet understand that the gentiles were to be called. I cannot see what connection this has with the subject under consideration, unless it

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be to hint, that Peter might mistake the privileges of children; but you should recollect, that he spake then, not from his own knowledge, but by immediate inspiration. You say (p. 8.) "we do not read of God's calling infants, &c." Did you ever read Isaiah xlix. 1. *I have called thee from the womb.*

An argument is commonly drawn from the apostles' practice of baptizing households, p. 8, 9. This you shun by bringing forward a number of others to take the burden off your shoulders. The argument however stands thus; the law for admitting proselytes, Exo. xii. 48. says, *When a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, &c.* It has been shown that baptism is in the room of circumcision. Now it appears plain that the Apostles' practice was in strict conformity with this law. You, Sir in the case of the Philippian Jailor, (Acts xvi.) bring in one of your auxiliaries saying, concerning his house, "Who it seems were equally impressed with Paul's sermon as the Jailor himself was." This, Sir, is in direct contradiction to the text, which says, *He rejoiced believing.* The words *rejoiced* and *believing* are in the singular number, and what is rendered, with all his house, is expressed in the original by one word (panoiki) an adverb. Here we have an express example of several individuals baptized, when there was but one believing, in perfect conformity to the long established law of the church, cited above.

You have expressed (p. 8.) rather a new notion concerning seals. You say, "A seal is for confirmation of some transaction already taken place!!! Then the rainbow is a confirmation that there was a flood, but no ground of hope,

that there will be no more floods. A seal annexed to a grant of land, is a confirmation of past possession, not of future right. Is this true? Is it sense? You add in the same page, "Circumcision was a national mark of distinction, to separate the seed of Abraham after the flesh from all other people." I say it was not, Gen. xvii. 23. *And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin.* See also, v. 27. Ishmael was his only son then.

Another argument, to prove the church membership of infants, is taken from 1 Cor. vii. 14 *Else were your children unclean, but now they are holy.* This text has cost the baptists a great deal of pains, and you have bestowed on it not a little. Your own conclusion however, is a sufficient refutation of all you have advanced; for you say, (p. 13.) "If this be the true meaning of the text, then it establishes no difference between the children of believers, and those of unbelievers." The scriptures however, establish a difference, therefore, your view cannot be the true meaning. The terms *unclean* and *holy*, are of frequent occurrence in the bible, and every attentive reader may observe, that no unclean thing could be presented to God; on the other hand the term *holy* is applied to what was dedicated or ought to be dedicated to God. Luke ii. 22, 23. They brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord, as it is written in the law of Moses, *Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord.*

Thus were the children in 1 Cor. vii. 14 holy. This holiness is more than legitimacy, for

the children of married heathens were quite legitimate but still unclean. Nor does the Apostle maintain that the unbelieving wife is sanctified by marriage with her husband, but by his faith. Tit. i. 15. The Apostle clearly argues that if the faith of the believing, did not sanctify the unbelieving parent, the children would be unclean, but since it does they are holy: yet you say that this scripture establishes no difference, between the children of the believer, and those of unbelievers. You might as well say there is no difference between unclean and holy, Paul means the same thing by both words.

Now, Sir, to present to you the reason of our conduct in one view, I shall recapitulate what has been said.

1. Children were admitted into the church by direct divine appointment, and their right confirmed by an everlasting covenant. They possessed this privilege two thousand years without dispute, and their right is still maintained by a vast majority of Christians.

2. Their right has been recognised by Christ the Head of the church, in these words "Of such is the kingdom of God."

3. At the commencement of public teaching under the New Testament dispensation their right, so far from being questioned, was plainly confirmed in these words, *The promise is to you and your children.* Compare this with the promise to Abraham, "I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed."

4. In strict conformity to the established law of the church, while children were unquestionably members, the Apostles baptized households, and we still do the same. Do you baptize households?

5. The Spirit of inspiration calls the children of believers holy, why then, should the seal of the covenant be denied to them as unclean?

6. The principles you have embraced involve you in many difficulties to which you have not adverted. Some of them I shall submit to your consideration.

1. You found your principles upon a supposition that an everlasting covenant has vanished away. Sir, did the word everlasting never occur to your mind, when studying this subject?

2. You continually confound Abraham's natural with his federal seed, or as Paul says, (Rom. ix. 7, 8.) the children of the flesh with the children of the promise. You say (p. 24) " A descent from Abraham was the very thing that entitled to circumcision, and all the privileges of the Jewish church." Pray Sir, were the Ishmaelites, the Edomites, or the Midianites entitled to all the privileges of the Jewish church? They all descended from Abraham.

3. As your principles put an end to the everlasting covenant, so they place a barrier in the way of accomplishing the promises made to Abraham and his seed Christ. To Abraham it was promised that, according to the tenor of the covenant, he would be the father of many nations. (Gen. xvii. 4, 5. Rom. iv. 17, 18.) But according to your principles, he is not federally the father of any nation, for you say (p. 17.) " What nation do you conceive has succeeded into the place of the Jews? " I answer, every christian nation. Hosea ii. 23. *I will say to them which were not my people, thou art my people; and they shall say, thou art my God.* Rom. ix. 24, 25, 26. You add, " The good people of Scotland once attempted this, in their

"solemn league and covenant: but it soon fell through." When you mention the term covenant, you seem bewildered; for you mistake the solemn league and covenant, for the national covenant of Scotland; you mistake the design of it, which was not to become God's people, for they professed to be his, and the object they had in view was the continuation of the true religion among them; it did not fall through; for they succeeded, and their descendants enjoy the benefit. The good people in Scotland, not excluding others, are as really the people of God as ever the Jews or Israelites were.

It was promised to Christ, Psal. lxxii. 11. *All nations shall serve him*: and Psal. lxxxvi. 9. *All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee*. According to your principles no nation, as such, can serve or worship him; for this presupposes that they are subjects of his kingdom. The same may be said of the commission given to the Apostles. On your principles, it can never be fully executed, and so the kingdoms of this world can never become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, Rev. xi. 15. since all children are excluded from his kingdom.

You say (p. 26.) "We have another objection against infant baptism, viz. that it destroys the distinction, which the New Testament makes between the church and the world." Again, "Infant baptism has a tendency—to bring into the church the whole population of the land." Now Sir, did not Christ commission his apostles to convert and bring into the church all nations? Is it not the duty of the whole population, of every land, to come into Christ's church? If not, pray, inform us whose duty it

is to keep out. We hope the time is coming, when the whole population of the land shall be brought into the church. In the meantime it rejects all members who have not a consistent conduct. You seem not to advert to the difference between the churches learning the way of the world, and the world's coming into the church.

4. Passing over some other things, your principles place the children of professing christians in a strange situation. You endeavour (p. 15.) to refute Mr. Jackson's argument from Paul's address to the churches of Ephesus and Colosse. But Sir, did not the trouble you found in evading the force of it, convince you that you were on untenable ground, when you had recourse to children of twenty or thirty years old. It is evident that the authority of any law is confined to the subjects of the kingdom. Pray, Sir, inform your readers at what age does the law of Christ make it the duty of children to obey their parents.

Now Sir, if the children born in the church are not members of it, what are they? You will not say they are Jews or Mahometans; they therefore must be christians or heathens. Pray tell us in your next publication to what class they belong.

Christ in both the old and new testaments is called a shepherd, and you do not deny that under the former, his flock was like other flocks consisting of sheep and lambs, but under the latter a strange anomaly has taken place, and Christ's sheep bear not lambs but kids, which must be turned out to feed with the goats. But Christ will not so give up with his lambs. He gave a charge to Peter, "Feed my lambs." John xxi. 15.

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5. Again your principles afford no ground of hope concerning the state of such as die in infancy. You, Sir, seem to be much displeased with Mr. Jackson for a hint of this kind, and say (p. 10.) "We have good hope through the mercy of God that all infants dying in that state are fitted for the employment of a heavenly state, and through the death and sufferings of the Saviour, are brought into that rest which remains for the people of God." But the question is what is the ground of this hope. A christian should be ready to give a reason of the hope that is in him. 1 Pet. iii. 15. Now your reasoning cuts off all ground of hope; for you grant (p. 10.) "they are implicated in the transgression of the first man, so as to be partakers of a depraved nature, and to be liable to pain, sickness, and death: and (p. 24.) you say that faith and repentance are necessary to baptism; and "we never find the scriptures making any exceptions in favour of infants" Now the scriptures make faith and repentance as necessary to salvation, and you can find no exception in favour of infants, what then must be the conclusion?

You exclude them from the sheep for whom Christ laid down his life, and will not allow them a place in his kingdom. Now Sir, is their being born and dying in the kingdom of Satan the way to that rest which remains for the people of God.

On the other hand we hold that the infants of believers have an interest in that everlasting covenant in which God saith I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed; that they are subjects of the mediator's kingdom and a part of his flock, to which he pays special attention. Isa. xl. 11. *He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and*

carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

Again, when your children survive infancy, your principles cast impediments in the way of their instruction, of which you are not aware. You ask (p. 28.) "What privilege then have the children of a pious pedobaptist over those of a pious baptist? The children of a pious baptist have the advantage of his prayers, instruction and example, and of the preaching of the gospel, and whenever they believe in the Lord Jesus with all their hearts, the doors of the church are wide open to receive them." It is granted that the children of both are by nature the same, but in privilege very different, if the pious baptist acts according to his principles. To illustrate this, I would recommend to your attention Rom. iii. In that chapter the apostle proves that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin. v. 9. But foreseeing an objection, he anticipates it, v. 1, 2, 3. What advantage then hath the Jew who is in the church? Or what profit is there of circumcision or baptism? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. From this we learn that the oracles of God are committed to the church, and this the apostle counts a great privilege. The bible is the law of Christ's kingdom: the source of christian instruction. Now when we put it into the hands of our children, we may say, This is the law of the kingdom to which you belong; you are under its authority, and bound to conform to its rules. But if you speak to yours, according to your principles, you must say, This is a good book, I recommend it to your consideration: perhaps you may hereafter come under it; but now you are not under its

jurisdiction, for you do not belong to the kingdom whose law it is. You cannot, in your instruction, urge the authority of Christ, as your children are not, on your principles, of his kingdom.

You say, when they believe, the doors of the church are wide open to them. But, Sir, does not your own mode of reasoning stop you even here. You cite the following words from Dr. Campbell, (p. 7.) "There are manifestly three things which our Lord here distinctly enjoins his Apostles to execute, *viz.* to convert them to the faith, to initiate the converts into the church by baptism, and to instruct the baptized in all the duties of the christian life." "This is the language" you add "of common sense and will immediately strike every candid person as the true meaning of the passage, and it forever forbids the baptism of all persons, old or young, who are not converted, disciplined, or taught." This, Sir, is the way in which you bewilder yourself and your readers. You use a number of words partly agreeing and partly differing in sense, and by this means you are away from your subject before you or some of them are aware. This is the case with convert and converted, for every convert is converted but every converted person is not a convert. The term convert means one who has changed his religious profession. One gained over to the Romish faith, is termed a convert to Popery, but the children of Papists are not. Thus when a Jew or a heathen embraces christianity, he is called a convert to christianity, but one born of christian parents is not a convert. Any person who has not left one religious profession and embraced another, is not a convert, and on your principles cannot

be baptized. You plead that there is no mention made of the Apostles ever baptizing an infant. I say in return, there is no example of their baptizing any who was not a convert, gained from Judaism or heathenism. You say farther, that we have no instance in the first two centuries, of any infants baptized; and I say that during all that time you have not an instance of the descendant of a christian parent baptized. So you may see that this note upon the apostolic commission, that commission which contains the very institution of baptism, forbids forever the baptism of all persons old or young, who are not converts. This you say is the language of common sense, pray then, how do you open the door of the church to your own children, not converts, but remaining in the principles you teach them. You follow neither precept nor example.

Now, take a view of the subject on our principles, and the case will be plain and clear, I have given some reason for believing that baptism is in the room of circumcision. and holding this, it is to be administered to converts and to their infant seed: and where the case is plain, and the practice general, no particular attention is paid to recording of instances. You reason against baptizing infants from the consideration that in the Acts of the Apostles, containing the history of the church for thirty years, there is no express mention of baptizing an infant: and are you not equally struck with the fact, that the Old Testament contains the history of the church for near two thousand years with only ^{one} ~~two~~ example of infant circumcision. On one occasion, Josh. v. we read of the circumcision of above six hundred thousand persons, and no mention

of an infant among them.

I may here mention your inconsistent views of the right of infants to the passover and the Lord's supper. Mr. Jackson and you come to close quarters on this point. He asks, why our children have not as good a right to baptism as the Jewish children had to circumcision: and you retort as an effectual refutation, (p. 12.) "why our children have not as good a right to the Lord's supper as the Jewish children had to the passover." Now, Sir, do you really suppose that the Jewish children eat the passover as soon as they were circumcised? What idea have you of a child eight days old, with his loins girded and his staff in his hand, eating roasted lamb in haste? The truth is they were circumcised when eight days old, and had a right to eat the passover as soon as they were fit, and so it is with us. It would be of service to distinguish the right from its present enjoyment; and to direct you in this, Gal. iv. 1, 2. is recommended to your consideration.

Now Sir, I have given you the reason on which we found our practice, and considered whatever I reckoned of any weight on your side, and several things that had hardly any. I have referred you and the reader to the bible alone, as few of our readers have the means of examining many authors, but every one may and should consult the bible. Besides it is by the bible alone that this point should be decided.

LETTER II.

REVEREND SIR,

In the preceding letter, I have shewed you my reasons for baptizing the infants of such as are members of the visible church; in this one, I claim your attention to the mode of administering that ordinance. In controversial writings, it is necessary to state the subject in dispute plainly, that the reader may have a clear idea of the point at issue: in this you fail exceedingly. You say in your preface, "It is contended for by many, that sprinkling is baptism. We also believe that immersion, and that alone, is baptism." This is very inaccurate; for baptism is an ordinance of religion, and peculiar to the church of Christ: but sprinkling and dipping are common actions, performed, on various occasions, by men and by women, by the pious and the profane, by christians and by heathens. According to your statement of the matter, baptism is practised by Turks and heathens, as well as among christians; for they all both sprinkle and dip, as occasions require.

Had you attended to Mr. Jackson's expression, you would not have fallen into this mistake; for he, as quoted by yourself, holds, "That sprinkling is a scriptural mode of admi-

nistering that ordinance." If you are unwilling to learn accuracy of expression from an opponent, you may learn it from the oracles of God; Num. viii. 6, 7. *Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: sprinkle water of purifying upon them.* Thus you may see that the thing to be done, and the mode of doing it, are distinguished by the Spirit of inspiration. Attention to this plain and necessary distinction, will discover many of your mistakes, and afford the means of rectifying them.

Again, you lead the ignorant part of your readers into a gross mistake, by producing the term *bapto* instead of *baptizo*. As you produce these as Greek words, many of your readers will not advert to the difference: but were you to use the same freedom with English words, and write *bush* for *bushel*, or *lint* for *lintel*, every reader would see the mistake, and perceive that error must be the result. Now rectifying this mistake, discovers the fallacy of almost all that you advance in favour of immersion.

In your Letters, p. 32. I found, with no small degree of surprise, the following words: "In the Greek translation of Lev. ix. 6, 8. (It " should beiv. 6, 7.) the three terms are all " used in the following manner: And the priest " (*bapsei*) shall dip his finger in the blood, and " (*prostranei*) sprinkle of the blood seven times " before the the Lord, and (*ekchei*) shall pour " out all the blood of the bullock at the bottom " of the altar. Here we find the three words " to express baptizing, pouring, and sprinkling, " are very different in the original, and are " translated by three different words. See *Brid-*

“win on Baptism. We see also from the text
 “that to baptize does not mean to wash or
 “cleanse. In short, Sir, I think when the
 “scripture says that 3000 were baptized, it is
 “favourable to the doctrine of immersion, and
 “so in every other instance.”

Permit me, Sir, to ask you a few questions concerning this passage. How did the Greek translation become the original? How did you find the word *baptize* in the text which you have quoted? In the Greek I find *bapsei*, and in the English I find *dip*; but I can find *baptize* in your Letters only. As the term *baptizo*, adopted into English, is *baptize*, so were *bapto* adopted, it would be *bapt*: now where did you find the *iz*, by which you turn *bapting* into *baptizing*? Is it consistent with common honesty to add a syllable to a word, and then impose it upon the unlearned? Both these words occur frequently in the scriptures: the one signifies to baptize, the other to dip.

How does this favour the doctrine of immersion? If you produce this as an example of baptizing, it appears far liker our manner of administering that ordinance: the priest dipped his finger, so do we; he then sprinkled, so do we; he poured out the rest, so do we; but what bearing has this on the doctrine of immersion?

Again, you say in the above quotation, “We
 “see also from this text that to baptize does not
 “mean to wash.” Now, Sir, can we see the meaning of a word from a text in which it does not occur? We may, however, see from this text, that *to dip* does not mean *to cleanse*. This may be farther confirmed by the texts which you produce p. 41, 42. from Dr. Chapin; such as, Deut. xxxiii. 25. *Let him dip his feet in oil*.

Ruth, ii. 14. *Dip thy morsel in the vinegar.*—
 Job, ix. 31. *Yet shalt thou plunge me in the
 ditch.* Psal. lxxviii. 23. *That thy foot may be
 dipped in blood.* You add “Here is certainly
 “sufficient proof that to baptize is to dip or im-
 “merse.”

These appear to me very strange instances
 of baptism, and on reading them, I could not
 help concluding, that here is certainly sufficient
 proof that the blind has been leading the blind.

The term *baptizo* I baptize, does not occur
 in any of those texts. In each of them it is *bap-
 to I dip*. Now, Sir, consider them and see how
 they would appear according to your view of
 the term: “Let him baptize his feet in oil.”—
 “baptize thy morsel in the vinegar.” “Yet
 “shalt thou baptize me in the ditch.” “That
 “thy foot may be baptized in the blood of thine
 “enemies.” I would suppose that the impro-
 priety of these phrases would convince you that
to dip and *to baptize* are very different; espe-
 cially as you say p. 38. “that baptism represents
 “the washing away of the filth and pollu-
 “tion of sin: And again, “The two principal
 “things (it represents) are a washing, and a
 “death, burial, and resurrection.” Is not
 plunging in the ditch a strange kind of washing?

You say, p. 41. “Again, we are informed,
 “that the inspired penmen have used no other
 “word than *bapto* and its derivatives to convey
 “the idea of immersion, in the New Testament;
 “nor have they ever used this word in any other
 “sense.” You add “I believe it is admitted
 “that the Greek is a very copious language. If
 “the word *bapto* do not signify to immerse in
 “its plain and literal sense, is it not surprising
 “that the sacred writers did not choose some o-

"ther word that would?"

Had you searched the scriptures with care, and depended less on information, you would not be so deeply immersed in error. The term *immersion* does not occur in our version of the bible; but the idea of immersion is implied in several passages, and expressed by different terms. In confirmation of this, the following texts are submitted to your consideration: 2. Pet. iii. 6. *Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with (kataklystheis being immersed in) water, perished.* Washing clothes implies immersion: Rev. vii. 14. *These are they who came out of great tribulation, and (aplynan) have washed their robes.* Luke, v. 2. *But the fishermen were gone out of them, and (apeplynan) were washing their nets.* Mat. xviii. 6. *It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that (katapontisthe) he were drowned or immersed in the depth of the sea.* Mat. xiv. 30. *And beginning (katapontizesthai) to sink, or go under water, he cried.* It is evident that our Lord, in the former of these texts, represents a state of imminent danger; for were drowning the idea intended, there would be no need of mentioning a millstone or the depth of the sea: but a person immersed in deep water, with a weight hanging to his neck, would be in extreme danger: besides, in the latter text, Peter was not beginning to be drowned, but to go under water. Luke, v. 7. *And they came, and filled both ships, so that they began (bythizesthai) to sink or go under water.* The same word occurs 1. Tim. vi. 9. . . . (bythizousi) *drown or immerse men in destruction and perdition.*

What becomes now of your information? for

here are four words, *kataklyzo*, *plyno*, *kata-pontizo*, and *bythizo*, each of them implying the idea of immersion, all in the New Testament, and none of them *bapto* nor any of its derivatives. From this you may learn,——to receive information with caution,——the necessity of searching the scriptures for yourself,——and, that, if the Greek be a copious language, your informers do not dip very deep into it. Besides, you may learn not to express much surprise at any piece of information, till you search and find it true: for you may now see that the inspired penmen of the New Testament did choose words that signify immerse, as often as they had occasion.

You have laboured hard to force *bapto* into your service, yet something more was necessary; as you maintain the necessity of complete immersion; for though *bapto*, commonly, means I dip, yet it does not imply complete immersion; as may be seen by attending to some of these texts which you produce from Dr. Chapin; Lev. xiv. 15, 16. *And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand; And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand.* It is evident that the priest could not completely immerse his right finger in the oil which he held in the palm of his left hand. Again, v. 51. *And he shall take the cedar wood, and the hyssop, and the scarlet, and the living bird: and dip them in the blood of the slain bird.* All those things could not be completely immersed in the blood of the slain bird.

You, however, maintain that baptism requires complete immersion; and say, p. 31. "They who were buried in water, were overwhelmed

“ or covered all over with water, which is the proper notion of baptism. ”

This would require better proof than you can afford. Your readers, however, ought not to complain; for you give them the best you can, and inform them, p. 33. that “ Maimorides, (I suppose you mean Maimonides,) “ a learned Jewish Rabbi, says, *Wherever in the law, washing of the flesh or of the clothes is mentioned, it means nothing else than the dipping of the whole body in a laver; for if any man dip himself all over except the tip of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness.*”

Could neither you nor Mr. Judson find any proof from the bible? Here your own words to Mr. Jackson are applicable: “ Is it because there is no lawgiver in Israel, that we must be thus sent to Baalzebub the god of Ekron ? ”

The title of your Letters says that the subject is weighed in the balance of the sanctuary; but I fear you have been imposed upon, and instead of the balance of the sanctuary, have gotten that of a Jewish Rabbi, which he used for perverting the law. It is very remarkable, that that in all the texts which you have produced, either from the Greek translation of the Old Testament or from the New Testament, in defence of immersion, the term *baptizo*, which means *I baptize*, occurs as far as I could notice, but once: in every other instance, it is *bapto I dip*. The sum of your reasoning, if it can be called reasoning, is this, To dip means to dip, therefore to dip is to baptize!!!

You, speaking of baptism, say, p. 40. “ Our translators have not translated it into English, “—it is a Greek word,—it means immersion.”

I would remark here, that the terms baptism, baptize, and christian, were admitted into the language of England, when the christian religion was introduced into the nation, and notwithstanding all the changes which the language has undergone, have kept their station; so that it would be hard, if not impossible, to produce other three terms in the present English language of so old a standing. Those terms may, therefore, be reckoned English terms, though, like many others, derived from the Greek. If you were to translate the New Testament, and render baptism *immersion*, it might be objected, "*Immersion* is a Latin term and compared with the term *baptism*, but lately adopted into the English language; and were you to translate *baptize dip*, it might be said, This is but the Greek word *dypto* in an English dress."

Besides, our translators could not use other terms; for neither the English language, nor any other, to the best of my knowledge, can afford other words to express the meaning of baptism and baptize.

To baptize, in the case of converts, means to admit into communion by means of a purification with water: in the case of infants, it is a recognition of their membership, by the same means. You are so intent upon the mode of administering baptism, that you pay little or no regard to its principal use, namely, admission into fellowship. The inspired writers, however, paid more attention to this, than to the mode of administration: Rom. vi. 3. *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death*: the meaning of which is, as many as were admitted into fellowship with Jesus Christ, were admitted into

fellowship in his death. 1. Cor. xii, 13, 27. *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body. Now ye are the body of Christ.* That is, by one Spirit are we all admitted into fellowship with Christ's body the church.

To be admitted into fellowship with Christ, and into fellowship with the church are modes of expression familiar to christians, and explain those texts. I submit to the judgment of the reader the propriety of such expressions as these, immersed into Jesus Christ, immersed into the church.

Attention to those and several other passages in the New Testament, will shew the propriety, even the necessity, of distinguishing the substance of baptism from the mode of administering it, and, as soon as this plain, but necessary, distinction is made, the impropriety of many of your assertions will appear, especially of these, "Immersion alone is baptism, immersion and baptism are synonymous terms."

It is the mode of administering that ordinance which is now under consideration. You justly remark p. 32. "That the meaning of the word *baptize* was certainly well known as it was a word in common use" among the Jews. The word is used by the inspired writers to express the Jewish purifications and the ordinance now under consideration. To prevent mistake, it may be necessary here to remark, that while I deny that to baptize means to dip, I likewise deny that it means to sprinkle. There are several of opinion, that it must mean either the one or the other. It means, as far as the present question is concerned, to cleanse or rather to purify; and the manner of purifying must be learned from other considerations.

You alluding to Heb. ix. 10. say (p. 4.) "That
 "the Jews had divers immersions or baptisms en-
 "joined upon them by the law of Moses in cases
 "of ceremonial uncleanness is evident." Here
 you give a specimen of your manner of treating
 the subject, you take for granted that those bap-
 tisms were immersions; that should be proved
 first. You, again, quote Heb. ix. 10. (p. 30.)
 and would have those divers washings (G. bap-
 tisms) divers immersions, on account of the
 variety of things and persons to be immersed.
 When I read those passages I noticed that you
 did not pay sufficient attention to the meaning
 of divers, and thought it might be owing to your
 not understanding its exact meaning, but when
 I found you (p. 50.) addressing Mr. Jackson in
 these words "Now if immersion, pouring, and
 "sprinkling, be each baptism, they would not be
 "one but divers baptisms." I could not avoid
 suspecting that the former misunderstanding
 was wilful. *Divers* means different kinds, and
 is inconsistent with the notion that those bap-
 tisms were all immersions. When Sisera's mo-
 ther expected that her son had gotten a prey of
 divers colours, Jud. v. 30. had he taken a prey
 consisting of a variety of persons and things all
 of one colour, could it, with any propriety, be
 called a prey of divers colours?

That those baptisms were divers, will appear
 by an investigation of the texts to which you re-
 fer for confirmation of your opinion: and, as you
 frequently refer to the Greek version of the Old
 Testament, I shall use the same freedom.

The first text which you cite is, Lev. xi. 32.
 There the law concerning unclean animals
 stands thus, *And upon whatsoever any of them*
when they are dead, shall fall, it shall be un-

clean: whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel it be, wherein any work is done, it must be put into (bapsetai) water, that is literally, dipped in water, from bapto I dip.

Your other reference is to Num. xxxi. 21, 22, 23: to which I add verses 19 and 24: *And do ye abide without the camp seven days; who-soever hath killed any person, and whosoever hath touched any slain, purify both yourselves and your captives on the third day and on the seventh day.* The law for purifying such persons is recorded, Num. xix. from the eleventh verse to the end. V. 16. *Whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword, or a dead body,—shall be unclean seven days.* V. 18. *And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water and sprinkle it,—upon him that toucheth a bone or one slain.*

The twentieth verse directs them to purify all raiment: it means the raiment taken in the war. This purification was by dipping. Next, they were to purify the gold, silver, &c. This was to be done by making it pass through the fire; but the purification was not complete till the water of consecration was sprinkled upon it. v. 23.

Still they had to wash their own clothes v. 24. *Ye shall wash (plyneisthe plunge) your clothes.*

Thus, Sir, by an investigation of a passage which you produce p. 30. to prove that the divers baptisms mentioned Heb. ix. 10. were all immersions, I have found four modes, expressed in the Greek by different terms: 1. to dip by *bapto*, 2. to sprinkle by *periraino*, 3. to pass through the fire, by several terms, 4. to wash by

plyno I plunge.

I cannot pass this quotation of yours without some remarks. You produced it to prove the baptisms mentioned by the Apostle were immersions, and so grant, that the Jewish purifications are called baptisms by the spirit of inspiration. If this witness, upon cross examination, turns against you, whom have you to blame?

Again Num. xix. 18. which I produce to show the manner in which persons were purified, is one of those texts, which you produce from Dr. Chapin to prove baptism by dipping, only you or rather the Dr. stops short, and only produces these words *And a clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water.* Why did he not add *and sprinkle?* This shows how near a person may come to the discovery of truth and yet miss it.

Now, Sir, as you cite this text in defence of dipping, may not I plead it in defence of sprinkling? I refer to the candid reader, I refer to yourself, whether the dipping or the sprinkling constituted the purification. If you say the former, then the hyssop was baptized and the persons left in their uncleanness: if you say the latter, then here we have persons baptized by sprinkling. If you say that this text does not refer to baptism, why then do you and Dr. Chapin quote it?

If you quoted those words from Dr. Chapin without consulting your bible, you may now see whether your guides have been leading you; and if you read the whole verse, it required no small degree of boldness or prejudice to say, as you do, p. 9. "I think you will find those who are most conversant with Jewish customs, are of opinion, that these baptisms were literal im-

"mersion." Why refer to those who are conversant in Jewish customs? Have we not the bible? "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Isa. viii. 20. I refer to any person who can read Numb. xix. whether dipping or sprinkling was the general mode by which persons were purified from ceremonial uncleanness according to the law of Moses.

Sprinkling was not the only mode, and to those mentioned, may be added rinsing. Lev. xv. 11, 12. "And whomsoever he toucheth who hath the issue, and hath not (*neniptai*) rinsed his hands in water, shall be unclean. And every vessel of wood shall be rinsed." The term *nipito* when persons are the subjects, is confined to washing the face, hands, and feet. When the washing of the body is denoted, a different term is used. Exod. xxix. 4. "And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and (lou-seis) shalt wash them with water." The same word is used Acts, ix. 37. "Whom when they had washed, they laid in an upper chamber." This was done by the application of water to the body, for Aaron and his sons could not be immersed at the door of the tabernacle, and few will be disposed to think that the body of Dorcas was washed by immersion.

Having thus examined those baptisms or purifications enjoined by the law of Moses, instead of finding them all immersions, laying aside the use of oil and blood, there appear no fewer than five different modes, expressed in the Greek by as many different terms, illustrating the Apostle's expression *divers* baptisms.

I use the terms purification and purify, rather than washing and wash, because the terms are more general, and can with greater propriety be applied to the different subjects to be purified, and the different materials to be used in these purifications. It seems rather improper to speak of washing gold, silver, &c. or washing with oil or blood.

It may be remarked here, that our Lord appointed two positive ordinances, commonly called sacraments, in his church. First the Lord's supper, in which he ordered bread to be blessed, broken, and eaten, and the cup to be drunk, in remembrance of his death. Now as those actions were well understood, no new directions were necessary, and it is quite needless to search Greek authors for the meaning of the word supper.

In like manner, when he, after his resurrection, instituted the sacrament of baptism, by which converts were to be admitted into the church, as baptisms were in frequent use among the Jews, he gave no directions about the mode of administering it; and only enjoined, that it be administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and for a new purpose namely to distinguish christians from the rest of the world,

Our Lord made no alteration in the mode of baptizing. This is granted by yourself, otherwise there would have been no reason for your being at so much pains in attempting to prove that the Jewish purifications were all immersions: and you say (p. 32.) "The meaning of the word 'baptize was certainly well known as it was a 'word in common use.'" In this meaning we ought to understand it, and it is of no use to search the Greek classics for its signification;

for, if the heathen had not such an ordinance, they could not use the term in the same meaning with Jews and christians. Inattention to this has given rise to much cavilling on the subject.

It may be of service now, to state plainly the point at issue. It is agreed upon by both parties, that christians, by the command of Christ, have to undergo a purification with water; and the question is, whether the water is to be applied to the person, or the person put into the water, therefore sprinkling and pouring are on the one side, and dipping and immersion on the other.

Now, as I maintain the former, and you the latter, to be the scriptural mode, I shall submit my reasons, for your consideration.

I. My first reason is, that after a close examination of the divers baptisms under the Old Testament, I cannot find a single instance of one person dipping another by way of purification. There were immersions of clothes and vessels ceremonially unclean, but persons were uniformly cleansed by the application of water, and except Aaron and his sons by sprinkling. In this manner was the tribe of Levi cleansed, Num. viii. 6, 7. In this manner was every leper cleansed, Lev. xiv. 7. In this manner was every one who touched a dead body, or a grave, or a bone of a man, or came into a house in which was one dead, Num. xix.

Now, Sir, can you give a single instance of one person dipping another by way of cleansing or purifying? No you cannot, nor of a precept to that effect in the bible.

II. My second reason is, that Paul, treating of the divers baptisms, mentions only sprinkling as the mode: Heb. ix. 13, 14,—19, 21. *For,*

if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ.—For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he —sprinkled both the book and all the people. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. Enough has been said already to expose your notion that the divers baptisms mentioned v. 10. should be rendered divers immersions, had you read the context, and considered the connection, the Apostle would have led you to sprinkling instead of immersion. The person who can read the ninth of the Hebrews, and believe that divers baptisms mentioned v. 10. were divers immersions, is certainly very deeply immersed in prejudice.

III. My third reason is, that the water in baptism is a symbol of the blood of Christ in its cleansing efficacy, and this is called the blood of sprinkling: Heb. xii. 22, 24. *But we are come unto the mount Zion,—and unto Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling.* 1. Pet. i. 2. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father thro' sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus.* You may perhaps say, the Apostles in these texts do not mean baptism. To this I would answer by asking, to what do they allude? According to our view of the subject, these texts refer to the blood of Jesus in its purifying efficacy, as prefigured by those purifications under the former, and by baptism under the present dispensation. What do you attach to these words, *the blood of sprinkling?*

IV. My fourth reason is, because I find that when the Gentile nations are brought into the church, they are sprinkled; Isa. lii. 15. *So shall he sprinkle many nations.* It is evident, that the prophet is speaking, in the context, of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which would follow; for he mentions his visage as marred more than any man; and then the success of the gospel, that which had not been told them shall they see, and that which they had not heard would they consider. Now it is evident, that the gospel, when first sent into a nation, will bring to their ears what they formerly did not hear, and their considering it is the means of their embracing the gospel, and their consequent admission into the church by baptism.

The Spirit of inspiration foretold that many nations would be admitted into the church and this text informs us that many nations shall be sprinkled. According to our view of the subject, when nations embrace the christian religion and are baptized, this promise is so far accomplished: but how do you suppose it is or will be accomplished? Have you a promise in all the Bible that many nations, or any nation, or even one individual shall be immersed?

V. My fifth reason is, the promise to the Jews at their conversion; Ezek. xxxvi. 25. *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean.* The preceding verse shews, that this promise is to be accomplished, when they are gathered out of all countries, and the following verse agrees so well with the tenor of the new covenant, that there can be no doubt of its referring to that dispensation. This promise I consider partly accomplished, by the admission into the church by baptism of such Jews as have

embraced the christian religion, and have been baptized; but its full accomplishment shall be, when they as a people are grafted into their own olive tree; Rom. xi. 24. I cannot however find any account of their immersion on that occasion.

VI. My sixth reason is, that this bears an analogy to baptism with the Holy Ghost. We believe that this was by pouring, for this simple reason, that the scriptures say so expressly: and so does Mr. Elder. You however endeavour to press this into your service and say (p. 31.) "It filled all the house. This is that which our Saviour calls baptizing with the Holy Ghost. So that they who sat in the house were as it were immersed in the Holy Ghost, as they who were buried in water, were overwhelmed or covered all over with water, which is the proper notation of baptism." Had you read the passage Acts ii. 2. you would have found, that what filled the house was a sound, if persons are baptized by being immersed in a sound, we likewise immerse; for we never administer the ordinance in silence, and the person baptized is surrounded with the sound. You are very zealous for immersion, but not very particular about the thing in which the person is to be immersed; for a person is baptized by being in a house filled with sound, or by being plunged in a ditch!

Again you say (p. 44.) "The baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire which John declared Jesus should baptize with, meant that extraordinary pouring out of the Holy Spirit, which took place on the day of Pentecost, when the house where they sat was filled, and they were filled with the Spirit; and cloven tongues as of fire sat upon their heads, and they were ena-

“bled to speak forth the wonderful works of
 “God in various languages. This was termed
 “baptism in allusion to being immersed in water,
 “because the Spirit was poured forth in such rich
 “effusions, they might be said to be immersed in
 “it.”

• In this dispute pouring and immersion are the
 opposite sides of the question, therefore an ad-
 mission of the one, is a denial of the other, if it
 was pouring, it was not immersion. The Spirit
 of inspiration calls it pouring, and you in the a-
 bove quotation twice call it pouring, how then
 can you, with any degree of consistency, call
 it immersion? You say, “They might be said to
 “be immersed in it.” Your words will amount
 to this, The truth is, it was poured upon them,
 but to help in a strait, they might be said, in op-
 position to truth, to be immersed in it.

You however think, that it might be called
 immersion on account of the richness of the effu-
 sions: but let the effusion be ever so rich, it is
 still effusion. You may with equal propriety
 maintain, that a thing is so very black, that it may
 be said to be white!!!

But, Sir, might they be said to be immersed
 in the cloven tongues, as of fire, which sat upon
 their heads? Those cloven tongues were the fire,
 and the symbol of the gift of tongues, which was
 bestowed upon the disciples.

Having produced sufficient plain and posi-
 tive proof that sprinkling is the scriptural mode
 of administering baptism, I shall now pay some
 attention to the evidence which may be gather-
 ed from the circumstances of the places in which
 we have an account of baptism being administer-
 ed. And here I remark, that had I no other
 source of information, I would be at a loss how

to administer the ordinance ; but with the positive proof which the scripture affords, the circumstances of the place are evidently in favour of sprinkling.

It appears from your letters, that Mr. Jackson reasoned chiefly from this topic. It may be of use here to make some general remarks for the sake of such as are not in the habit of tracing investigations of this kind.

First, I remark, that from places in which either mode might be practised without any serious inconvenience, no evidence can be obtained.

Secondly, When the circumstance of the place is such, that the one mode might be practised with ease, and the other would be attended with serious difficulty, if the historian give no hint of the difficulty or how it was removed, there is reason to conclude that the mode which caused no difficulty was followed.

Thirdly, The conclusion should be drawn from an examination of all the places of which we have an account.

You address Mr. Jackson (p. 30.) in the following words, "Your next argument in favour of sprinkling is drawn from the passage of the Israelites through the Red sea. Paul says, 1. Cor. x. 1, 2. *Moreover, brethren, I would not have you ignorant how that our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea.*" This passage immerses you in a difficulty from which it is not easy for you to extricate yourself, you, however, make a bold effort, and cut the knot which you cannot loose, by informing your readers, that "The Apostle did not mean that they were literally baptized, but they passed through something

"that was figurative of baptism." If the apostle does not mean that they were baptized, why does he say it? If the principle once be admitted, that the Apostle does not mean what he says, whither will it lead? Here we have decisive proof that to baptize and immerse are not synonymous terms; for the Israelites were baptized, but they were not immersed: the Egyptians were immersed, but they were not baptized.

Next comes the baptism of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost, Acts, ii. 41. concerning which you say, p. 32. "If the candidates were sprinkled, I think the historian would have told us so plainly. If I am rightly informed, there are words suitable to express the actions of pouring and sprinkling, in the Greek language." Your information is correct as far as it goes, it is the truth, but not the whole truth; there are in the Greek language words suitable to express the actions of pouring and sprinkling, and likewise to express dipping and immersing, but the historian uses neither of them. I think, if the candidates were immersed, the historian would have told us so plainly, for he was a Jew, and the three thousand were Jews and proselytes, and would understand the term in its common meaning. You admit that the Jewish purifications were baptisms, now they had an opportunity of seeing lepers purified by sprinkling, every one who touched a dead body was sprinkled, every one who touched a bone of a man was sprinkled, every one who touched a grave was sprinkled, every one who was in a house wherein was one dead, was sprinkled, and every one who came into the house, was sprinkled. Now, the number of persons dying in Jerusalem would be considerable, and every death

would give an occasion for many sprinklings Num. xix. 11,—19. Thus they had frequent opportunities of seeing persons purified or baptized by sprinkling. Now can you produce a single instance of a case which would afford them an opportunity of seeing one person dip or immerse another?

There is one leading error into which you have fallen, or rather into which you are led, viz. taking *bapto* for *baptizo*; you are at great pains to show that *bapto* means to dip. Now it is granted that it frequently does so, therefore your labour is lost; but the point which you have to prove is, that *bapto* and *baptizo* are the same. This however you never attempt, Please when you write next, prove this: but as our readers, in general, understand English better than Greek you may begin by proving that a Villa and a Villain are exactly the same: the same arguments will answer equally well in each case. I have shewed already, that *bapto* adopted into English would be bapt. You reason on the supposition that the historian says they were *bapted*, but he says they were *baptized*. In continuation of the same topic, you say to Mr. Jackson, (p. 33.) “The next obstacle which you find, is want of “water.” In reply to this you observe “that “there were in the temple at Jerusalem the mol- “ten sea, and a number of lavers of brass for the “dipping of the priests. There was also the pool “of Bethesda, and that of Siloam,—the Jews “were in the constant practice of immersing them “selves on religious accounts, and therefore “would have many conveniences in so large a “city as Jerusalem.” Your own account of the matter shews, that the supposition of the three thousand being immersed is attended with very

serious difficulties of which the historian takes no notice. You are under the necessity of shewing your invention, you send some to the temple, some to Bethesda and Siloam, and the rest are scattered through Jerusalem in quest of conveniences. We shall only inquire how it would fare with those who would go to the temple; here new difficulties would occur; they would find that the lavers were for washing the burnt offerings in, and that the sea was for the priests (*nip-testhai*) to wash in. 2. Chro. iv. 5. It has been shewed already that *nip-to* is confined to the washing of the face, hands, and feet, and is never applied to the washing of the body. They would be informed besides, that the law of that house made no provision for dipping persons, and moreover they would be told, that a fellow called Nebuzeradan had come long before them, cut the sea in pieces, and carried the brass to Babylon. Now as the historian does not give the least hint that any difficulty attended their baptism, we have reason to conclude that none occurred.

The only other instance with which I shall trouble you, is, the Phillipian jailor and family, Mr. Jackson, as quoted by you, (p. 34.) says, "It is evident they were never out of the prison walls." You seem to grant this, and attempt to remove the difficulty, by informing your readers from Mr. Judson, "that there is "a tank viz. a cistern of water in the prison "yard in Calcutta." This is an uncommon way of removing the difficulty, it takes for granted, that whatever is in Calcutta is likewise in Philippi, — that whatever is in Calcutta now, was in Philippi in the time of Paul! It was well for Paul and Silas that the jailor, instead of putting

them into the stocks, did not put them into the Black Hole ; for no doubt there was a black hole in Philippi, similar to the famous Black Hole of Calcutta.

These examples are sufficient to show that there are many difficulties attending the supposition, that the apostles baptized by immersion ; such difficulties as have cost the Baptists a great deal of trouble : and there remains much for them yet to do, before they can give a rational account of the manner in which they were surmounted. You may plainly see, that your own account of the matter needs great improvement before it pass with any thinking person.

I shall now take a view of those places which you produce in proof of your opinion. You say, p. 43. " We think it evident, upon the first reading of our translation, that John baptized " in Jordan." In Jordan means the place where, as in the wilderness, in Enon. That John baptized in Jordan is beyond doubt, but where is the proof that he dipped or immersed those whom he baptized. The inspired penmen of the New Testament mention dipping and baptizing and always express them by different terms. Now the point at issue is not where John baptized, but how he baptized, and all that can be learned from the circumstance is, that, if dipping were the mode, the place was convenient for that purpose, and if sprinkling were the mode, it was equally so.

I believe from what the sacred historian says, that both John and those whom he baptized were in Jordan, that is, between the banks of the river ; and I cannot conceive, in his circumstances, how he could baptize them otherwise, for Jordan is a large river, and no person can stand on the bank of a large river and lift water out of it to sprin-

kle upon those who are likewise upon the bank, neither could he conveniently, if at all, stand in the river and sprinkle those who stood on the bank; but when both went down into the river, he could sprinkle them with ease. My reason for believing that John baptized by sprinkling is, that the sacred historians do not give the least hint of John's introducing any innovations in the mode of baptizing. We are agreed that John baptized according to the Jewish manner, but in this we differ, you suppose that the Jewish purifications "were literal immersions." (p. 29.) I have proved that persons were purified or cleansed by sprinkling. You quote a Jewish Rabbi in support of your opinion, I quote the law of Moses in support of mine. The candid reader will judge which of these deserves the greatest degree of credit.

You say, (p. 44.) "As an additional argument, we observe it is said John, iii. 33. That "John was baptizing in Enon, because there "was much water there. We conceive this to be "a proof that baptism is immersion; because "pouring or sprinkling do not require much water." This would have some weight, if there were any difficulty in sprinkling where there is much water, but as sprinkling may be practised where there is little water and where there is much, your argument has no force. We do not produce any instance in our favour, from an opinion that sprinkling was practicable, but from the consideration that immersion, from several circumstances, appears impracticable. When we take a view of all the places in which we have an account of persons baptized it amounts to this, there is one place, viz. Jordan, in which persons might be immersed or sprinkled, there

are two places, Enon and where the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized, concerning which it is uncertain whether they were fit for immersion, they were certainly fit for sprinkling, all other places are against the practice of immersion.

Besides we do not found our opinion on the circumstance of the place alone, but consider it in connection with the express precepts and promises of God, but you have neither precept nor promise for immersion in the whole scriptures.

You propose some questions (p. 43.) saying "But I would ask if John sprinkled what need of his going to Jordan at all?" Here, Sir, I must confess my ignorance. Will you be so good the next time you write, to inform me, if he immersed, why he went to Bethabara beyond Jordan, where he also baptized?

If you are the faithful disciples of John, you should pay attention to him in the wilderness, and in Bethabara beyond Jordan, as well as when he is in Enon or Jordan, but when John is in any place where there is not plenty of water, his disciples, of the present day, seem to neglect him.

You ask again, "Do those who sprinkle go to rivers in order to perform it." I freely grant they do not. Permit me now to ask you a question, Did Christ or any of his Apostles ever go to a river to baptize? While you imitate the partial example of John, we follow the uniform example of Christ and his Apostles, who never went in quest of a river, but baptized in the places where they taught.

LETTER III.

REVEREND SIR,

In my first letter, I shewed you my reasons for acknowledging infants members of the visible church ; in the second, my reasons for administring baptism by sprinkling. This letter will contain detached remarks, some of them referring to the mode, and some to the subjects of baptism. You say, (p. 46.) " Another proof that baptism is immersion, we derive from the intention of baptism; which is to represent a death, burial, and resurrection. 'This we conceive, is already taught in Rom. vi. 3, 4. and Col. ii. 12. *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Buried with him by baptism, wherein also, ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God.*" You add, (p. 47.) "Immersion is the only translation of the word baptism that could at all suit these passages. Let us see how the word washing, which you (Mr. Jackson,) contend is the meaning of baptism,

“ would answer It would then read, So many
 “ of us as were washed into Jesus Christ were
 “ washed into his death. Therefore we are bu-
 “ ried with him by washing into death. But
 “ let us substitute immersion for baptism ; and
 “ you will see a great beauty in the passage. It
 “ would then read, So many as were immersed
 “ into Jesus Christ, were immersed into his death.
 “ To be immersed in any thing is perfectly in-
 “ telligible, but we can barely conceive how a
 “ person could be poured, washed, or sprinkled
 “ into any thing or person.” You are so intent
 on the mode of administring baptism, that you
 pay no attention to its principal use, viz. admis-
 sion into fellowship. Your assertion that the in-
 tention of baptism is to represent a death, bur-
 ial, and resurrection, needs proof, and the texts
 which you have quoted afford none. Could a
 convert be admitted into fellowship with Christ,
 or his body the church, by any representation of
 his death, burial, and resurrection? By bap-
 tism converts are admitted.

When you say a death burial and resurrection,
 I suppose you mean the death burial and resur-
 rection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now immer-
 sion affords no representation of these. The
 wildest imagination cannot trace any resemblance
 between dying on a cross, and immersion in a
 river or pool of water ; and it would require a
 mind deeply tinctured with prejudice, to disco-
 ver the resemblance between laying a body in a
 dry sepulchre, and immersing a person in wa-
 ter, (pray Sir, in what was the body of Christ
 immersed, when it was laid in the sepulchre?)
 and there is nothing in immersion, to represent
 a resurrection. Perhaps you will say, lifting
 the person out of the water represents it. To

this I answer, lifting out of the water is not immersion, but the very reverse: you may say that day is night, with as much propriety as that lifting out of the water is immersion. You suppose that you have the command of Christ for immersing your converts; but where is the command for lifting them out of the water? You should therefore omit this part of your present practice, till you find a command for it, and so it will be immersion into death. You may possibly say, the second quoted text says, ye are risen with him. Yes, Sir, *risen* with him by the faith of the operation of God; but that is very different from *raised* by the hand of the baptizer. You shew Mr. Jackson the impropriety of rendering baptized into Jesus Christ, washed into Jesus Christ, but as you maintain (p. 38.) that "immersion is indeed the only way of washing" wherein lies the difference? You say "immersion is the only translation of the word baptism, that could at all suit these passages." The word baptism needs no translation, for it has been shewed already, that it is one of the oldest terms in our language, and the substitution of immersion would pervert the text.

Do you, Sir, act agreeably to your own view of the text under consideration? You say "we are buried with him by immersion into death:" Do you immerse your converts *into death*.

You think "there is great beauty" in these words, "so many of us as were immersed into Jesus Christ, were immersed into his death." I must acknowledge, that I cannot see the beauty of the idea, and would have reckoned it too ridiculous to be admitted by any sensible person, had I not met with it in your letters. You say to be immersed into any thing is perfectly intel-

ligible. In some cases it is, in others it is not: to be immersed in water is, but for one person to be immersed into another is scarcely, and for a person to be immersed into the death of another is perfectly unintelligible. You would always translate *baptizo*, immerse, and according to your version 1. Cor. x. 2. would read, *And were all immersed (eis) into Moses*. It is the same preposition (*eis* into) in both texts. What idea can you form of upwards of six hundred thousand men all immersed into Moses.

It may be of more service to shew the meaning of those texts. It may be remarked that *buried—with* is, in the original, expressed by one compound word. Similar compounds occur in other epistles, as: Gal. ii. 20. *crucified—with*, Eph. ii. 5, 6. *quickened—with*, *raised—with*, *made—sit—with*.

The preposition (*syn*, with) in all these examples implies concomitancy, but in none of them likeness or resemblance; and the doctrine taught in those texts is, that christians have fellowship with Christ in his death, burial, resurrection, life, and exaltation. Now the Apostle's meaning may be clearly seen, he is dissuading from living in sin, and reasons in this manner, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were by baptism admitted into fellowship with Christ, were by that baptism, admitted into fellowship in his death. Therefore we are, by means of this fellowship into which we are admitted by baptism, buried with him into the death of the body of sin. v. 6."

In your view of the text there is no attention paid to these words, *unto death*, yet death is what the Apostle insists on in the context: v. 2: *we are dead*, v. 6. *our old man is crucified*, v. 8.

if we be dead with Christ, v. 11. reckon ye also yourselves to be dead.

Fellowship with Christ in his death, is a powerful motive to mortification, and the means by which, through the operation of the Spirit, it is effected. All that you would substitute for this is, How shall we live in sin, for immersion is like a burial. You may see force in such an argument, I cannot.

The title page of your letters would induce one to believe, that your notions are chiefly, if not altogether, supported by scripture, but a perusal of them shews, that you rest your cause on human authority; and much of even that will fail you when examined.

The number of authors which you quote is respectable, and any person who peruses your letters, must allow you the honour of being a person of very extensive reading. To examine them all would be attended with much trouble, and but little advantage; as the question should not be decided by the opinion of men, but by the word of God; and to disregard them altogether, would be allowing your letters a degree of authority to which they have no just claim.

Your authorities may be reduced to three classes, of one of those you give only the name, without giving their words. This was very prudent. One specimen of this kind occurs p. 30. speaking of the divers washings mentioned Heb. ix. 10. you say, "Grotius, Whitby, and M^r Knight, all eminent critics, and all pedobaptists are of opinion that these words should be translated divers immersions." On consulting those authors I find Grotius saying, "These washings are called various, because there was one mode of cleansing the priests, another for the Levites,

"and another for the Israelites."

Whitby paraphrases the verse thus, "(As 'being conversant') only in meats and drinks, (to be abstained from by these worshippers,) and divers washings, (to be used by the priests officiating, Exo. xxix. 4. by the Levites, Num. viii. 7. and by the people defiled, Lev. xv. 8. before they might enter into the temple.)" Now Sir, can any person read those texts, and believe that Grotius or Whitby believed or said that they were immersions? Dr. M'Knight renders it immersions, so that of the authorities which you produced, two are against you, and one in your favour.

You produce the words of a second class. You (p. 21.) quote the following words from Curcellaus, "The baptism of infants in the two first centuries after Christ was altogether unknown; but in the third and fourth was allowed by some few. In the fifth and following ages it was generally received.—In the former ages no trace of it appears." You said, (pp. 19, 20.) "From these it appears that there is no proof of infant baptism till about the close of the second, and beginning of the third centuries, and then Tertullian appears opposing it." What, Sir, Tertullian about the close of the second century, opposing infant baptism, a thing altogether unknown!!!

Again, speaking of the African council of 66. bishops, you say, (p. 20.) "This council is indeed a proof that infant baptism *prevailed* at that time, A. D. 253. in Africa." Did it *prevail* and yet but allowed by *some few*?

You say (p. 21.) "In A. D. 418. the Meletian council at the instigation of Austin decreed the necessity of infant baptism." Now

if "infant baptism prevailed in Africa A. D. 253." What need was there for the instigation of Austin, to have it decreed A. D. 413. At that time "it was generally received."

This is no very consistent evidence, taking it as found in your letters, and a little cross examination of the witnesses would contradict the assertions which you wish to establish.

You say, that Tertullian opposed infant baptism, but you do not give a fair statement of his sentiments, he believed, and taught that all sins committed before baptism were completely washed away by that ordinance, and he was a Montanist, a sect who never restored to their communion, those who fell into any gross sin, such as fornication, and therefore, he strongly urges the propriety of delaying baptism, and begins with infants, and then adds, "For no less reason the baptism of unmarried persons, such as never were married and widows, should be delayed, until they are married or confirmed in continence." His own words are, "Non minori de causa innupti quoque procrastinandi &c." Here we find, that Tertullian puts the baptism of infants, on the same terms with that of all unmarried persons; for if he reckoned the one lawful and the other not, he would not say "non minori de causa" for no less cause, should the unmarried be delayed.

You introduce Austin, but say nothing of his testimony in this case. He asserts both the right of infants, and the universal practice of the church saying of infant baptism, "This the church has always possessed; has always maintained." The cause of this declaration deserves attention, Felagius denied the doctrine of original sin, Austin wrote against him, and, among other things,

urged him with this question, Why are infants baptized for the remission of sin, if they have no sin? Pelagius could not deny the fact, yea he asserts, "That he never heard of any who denied the right of infants to baptism," and to avoid the force of Austin's argument, maintained "that baptism was not to infants a seal of the remission of sin, but of admission into the kingdom of heaven, which is open only to the pure in heart."

I appeal to every candid person, whether Austin and Pelagius, or those who lived a thousand years after them, had the better means of knowing the practice of the primitive church.

Except Tertullian and Austin, your authorities are moderns, such as lived since the reformation, and it would be an easy matter, from among them, to produce a number on each side of the question. I shall only trouble you, at the time, with one, F. Spanhem, in his History, speaking of the rite of baptism during the second century, says, "Infants were held fit subjects for baptism. Iren. lib. ii. Cap. 39. Baptism was administered in any place during all this century, as in fountains, rivers, beds, prisons, private houses, It was frequently performed by *immersio nudi corporis* in aquam, seu viri essent, seu feminae, seu *infantes*."

Of the third class of your authorities, you do not give even the names; yet you expect that your readers will believe their report. Those might, in justice, be dismissed without ceremony; but as the truth or falsehood of the information is of importance, I shall examine it.

You say, p. 40. "Now it is admitted that the whole Greek nation say that it (baptism) means immersion" Pray, Sir, by whom is

this admitted? By you it may, by me it is not : and what follows will show which of us has the better reason for his opinion.

Again you say, p. 42. "As a further proof of the meaning of the word, we appeal to translators. Those men who translated the New Testament into other languages, ought to be good judges of Greek. The New Testament has been translated into the language of the Syrians, Armenians, Persians, Romans, &c. Now linguists tell us, that in all these languages the word baptizo is translated by one which means to immerse."

I suspect, Sir, when you consulted your linguists, you made a considerable mistake, and instead of baptizo took bapto. If one were to consult a Dictionary for the meaning of the term bushel, and stop at the term bush, do you think his information would be correct.

As you have appealed to translators, to translators let us go, but I must distinguish these words, and that the reader may judge for himself, I present him with a specimen of each.

Baptizo I baptize. *Bapto* I dip.

Modern Greek.

Mark, i. 4. John (*e-baptizen*) *did baptize* in the wilderness.

Luke, xvi. 24. Send Lazarus (*na boutese*) *that he may dip* the tip of his finger in water.

Roman Vulgate.

Fuit Johannes in deserto *baptizans*.

Mitte Lazarum ut *intingat* extremum sui digiti in aquam.

Beza's Version.

Baptizabat Joannes in deserto.

Mitte Lazarum, ut *intingat* extremum digitum suum in aquam.

Castellio's Version.

Baptizabat Joannes
in solitudine.

Mitte Lazarum, qui
summo digito suo in a-
qua *intincto*, mihi lin-
guam refrigeret.

French, De Sacy's Version.

Ainsi Jean etait dans
le desert, *Baptizant*.

Envoyez moi Lazare,
afin qu'il *trempe* le bout
son doigt dans l'eau.

English Version.

John did *Baptize* in
the wilderness.

Send Lazarus, that he
may dip the tip of his
finger in water.

By taking a view of these texts, you may see that all these translators distinguish baptizo I baptize from bapto I dip, adopting the former for a reason already assigned, and translating the latter by dip, or a word of the same meaning. The confounding of these words, is an imposition so gross, that I do not recollect the like, except in the American Baptist Magazine, where the same frequently occurs.

I have different times remarked, that these words should be distinguished, and this may be a proper place to shew my reasons.

1. The terms are different in the original, as has been shewed.

2. No inspired writer uses the term bapto when speaking of the ordinance under consideration.

3. All translations, to which I have access, distinguish them, as may be seen by the specimen given above; to which more may be added.

4. The meaning of the terms is different, to baptize includes the idea of purification or cleansing, but in cases of dipping the subject may either be cleansed or polluted, as the instances which you produce sufficiently illustrate.

Attention to this alone will enable any person, who can read the bible with understanding, to judge in this case, though he have no acquaintance with Greek. This is so evident, that it forced itself upon you, when writing your letters, and you acknowledge it, notwithstanding the implicit faith which you place in your guides.

You say (p. 38.) "It (baptism) represents to the repenting believer the remission or washing away of his sins," and confirm it with two texts in which baptize occurs. This is agreeable to the sentiments of christians in general. But (p. 32.) you say "We see also from this text, that to baptize does not mean to wash or cleanse, for the priest did not wash or cleanse his finger in the blood, but dipped it." It has been shewed already, that the word baptize does not occur in the verse referred to, and the plain fact is, the priest did not baptize his finger, but dipped it. Again you say (p. 38.) "Now baptism to be rightly administered, must represent these things. The two principal are, a washing, and a death &c." Again you say (p. 41.) after quoting some texts in which *bapto*, I dip, occurs, and you say justly, "No one can pretend that it means to wash or cleanse in these instances. The finger of Lazarus was not to be dipped for the sake of cleansing; neither was the sop to be dipped for cleansing." This is perfectly correct for the finger of Lazarus was not to be baptized, but dipped; and the sop was not to be baptized, but dipped. When you cite texts in which the term baptize occurs, you find "a washing one of the principal things" implied, but when you cite texts where the word dip occurs, your own judgment shews you, that there is no cleansing implied. I am surprised

that the plain contradiction into which this led you did not convince you, that you were led astray.

This, Sir, is not the only contradiction into which you have been led. I shall shew you one or two, for instance you say, (p. 4.) "That the Jews had divers immersions, or baptisms enjoined on them by the law of Moses, in cases of ceremonial uncleanness is evident, but it does not appear from scripture, nor from any authentic history, that the Jews ever practised any such thing as the immersing of one person in water by another, as a religious rite, till the coming of John the Baptist." And you say (p. 5.) "It will follow that the baptism of John, was the only baptism in use, previous to our Lord's giving commandment to his disciples to baptize." Now, if the law of Moses enjoined divers baptisms, those were in use before the coming of John the Baptist. Again, if there was no such thing as one person immersing another in water, among the Jews, the divers baptisms mentioned Heb. ix. 10. were not, as far as persons were the subjects, immersions as you assert (p. 30.)

Again you say to Mr. Jackson, (p. 17.) "Here I would observe, your first and last arguments are drawn from sources which we place no great confidence in, viz. human authority." Now Sir, your letters are crammed with human authority. You say again in the same page, "What must the plain unlettered christian do? Must he learn Hebrew, and consult the Jewish Rabbins, before he can obtain satisfaction respecting a gospel ordinance?" Yet if this same person consult your letters; he is referred (p. 33.) to a Jewish Rabbi, and on

his authority alone rests the necessity of complete immersion.

When you say, (p. 56.) "In what I have written, I am not sensible that I have been under any undue bias in favour of the principles and practices which I have advocated," I believe, that you express the honest sentiments of your heart; but a person may be under the influence of an undue bias without being sensible of it, and I am persuaded that this is your case: wrong information and strong prejudice have led you far from the truth respecting the subject under consideration.

You (p. 43.) adopt the following words from Dr. Campbell, "The true partizan, of whatever denomination, always inclines to correct the diction of the Spirit by that of the party." Of this you afford sufficient proof; for giving an account of Mr. Merrill's turning Baptist, you say (p. 33.) "The result was, that the Baptist minister was invited to bury a number of them with their Lord in baptism." Does the Spirit ever call baptizing people burying them? or would any person, except a Baptist, use such a manner of expression?

The Spirit of inspiration says, Lev. xiv. 7. *And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy, seven times, and shall pronounce him clean.* This you would correct, and say, (p. 38.) "sprinkling and pouring are very imperfect figures of washing." Can you deliberately read Ezek. xxxvi. 25. *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean,* and then say, Lord "sprinkling is a very imperfect figure of washing; immersion is indeed the only way of washing."

When you asserted, that "immersion is in-

"deed the only way of washing," did you consider what you said? Do you immerse your face every time you wash it? Is not immersion an inconvenient way of washing a house? Besides, how do you keep clear of infant baptism? Do your people never wash their infants? If they do, you say "that immersion is the only way," and that "immersion alone is baptism."

If you can impartially review your own principles, you will find them involved in inconsistencies. There are two positive ordinances in the church, called sacraments. Now when Baptists treat of admission to them, they shift their ground, and change their principles. They hold when treating of admission to baptism, that none can have a right to a positive ordinance without an express precept or example in the New Testament: yet they admit females to the Lord's supper, though there is neither express precept nor example for it. How can you reconcile your practice in this instance?

To come closer still, when Baptists are discussing the right of admission to baptism, they deny the very principles to which they have recourse to prove the mode: for, when ascertaining the proper subjects of baptism, all inferences are rejected, and nothing but express proof from the New Testament will satisfy them, but treating of the mode, the least shadow of an inference will, on this side, pass for full demonstration. Any person who has read the bible with care knows that there is no express command for one to immerse another in the scriptures. But John did ~~not~~ baptize in Jordan, hence you infer, that he dipped. It has already been shewed, that John might either immerse or sprinkle in Jordan, for the words *in Jordan* in-

form us where, but not how, John baptized, as may be seen by comparing these phrases, John did baptize in Jordan, John did baptize in the wilderness. Besides, there are several considerations, which tend to shew, that John actually sprinkled, for that there were divers baptisms under the Old Testament is beyond controversy,—that there were express precepts, and examples beyond number for one person sprinkling another, has been fully proved,—you grant that “The Jews never practised any such thing as the “immersing of one person in water by another,” there is not the most distant hint given, that John introduced any innovation in the mode of baptism, and the whole of his ministry was under the Old Testament dispensation; for that dispensation ended at the death of Christ. Now, when these considerations are kept in view, can any person believe that John immersed?

You not only draw inferences from very weak premises, but from such as, I suppose, you do not believe yourself; for you say (p. 42.) “The “word baptism (baptize) was rendered by Tertullian, the oldest of the Latin fathers, tingere, “the term used for dyeing, which was immersion.” In this, as in other instances, you give your readers a very partial account of the meaning of the term. The English of tingere is in Ains. Dict. given thus, 1. to dye, 2. to sprinkle, 3. to wash, 4. to paint. Tertullian alluding to 1. Cor. i. 14. says of Paul, Tinxit Crispum et Gaium, &c. Now, Sir, how would you translate Tertullian’s words? would you say He dyed Crispus and Gaius? Do you really believe that Paul dyed Crispus and Gaius? If he did not dye them, from what do you infer that he immersed them? The words however may be ren-

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dered he sprinkled Crispus and Gaius, but they cannot be rendered he dipped Crispus and Gaius. (Some readers may have a better idea of its meaning, by being informed, that *tingere* is adopted into the English language, and expressed *tinge*.)

Your manner of reasoning against the admission of infants into the church under the New Testament dispensation, is as strong against their admission under the former dispensation.

In order to see this, it is necessary to remark, that the church has been under three distinct dispensations, the first from the creation of man to the giving of the law at mount Sinai, called the Patriarchal dispensation, the second from the giving of the law to the death of Christ, called by different names, but in scripture frequently the Old Covenant or Testament. Heb. viii. 8, 9, 10, 13. The New Testament dispensation commenced from the resurrection of Christ, and in a fuller degree, from the day of Pentecost, and is to continue to the end of time.

To illustrate my assertion let us suppose a sect among the Jews, towards the end of the Old Testament dispensation who denied the right of circumcising infants. You would allow they were wrong, but how could you refute them, in consistency with your principles. They could urge every argument against infant circumcision, which you use against infant baptism. You say we are under a new covenant, and insist on proof of the readmission of infants. They might likewise use the same argument, and say, infants were, during the Patriarchal dispensation, admitted to the seal of the covenant, but God brought our fathers under a new and distinct covenant at Mount Sinai, and gave them a law

by Moses, settling every punctilio of our religion, to this law we must attend, and it contains no precept for circumcising infants. They might say, prove to us that Moses or any of the prophets ever circumcised an infant, or taught that an infant should be circumcised, and then we will grant their right. What would you say to this?

You would exclude infants from the seal of the covenant, because they are not capable of professing their faith, but this would exclude them equally under every dispensation. If you suppose faith less necessary under the former dispensations, please read Heb. xi. with attention.

Again you reckon the silence of the historians of the first two centuries on the subject of infant baptism, a decisive argument against it. Now, those Jews might say, we have the history of the church from the giving of the law by Moses, to the time in which the canon of scripture was closed by Malachi, and, during all that period, not a single instance of circumcising an infant. Do you suppose that the silence of the sacred historians during all that period, is a proof against infant circumcision during the Mosaic dispensation? And if you do not, what weight can you attach to the silence of the historians of the New Testament?

I would remark farther, that you take a strange view of the New Covenant, and, without any reason which I can see, suppose it different from all other covenants recorded in scripture, and that, in a point in which they all agree, viz. including infants. Several covenants are mentioned in my first letter, and the benefits conferred in each extended to infants, as well as to a-

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dults; the covenant made with Noah secured infants, as much as adults, from being destroyed by a flood, the covenants made with Abraham extended to his infant seed, and so of all others. I did not include the covenant of works or of grace among those then specified, and only mention them now, so far as to say, that they include infants; for if infants were not included in the covenant of works, how came any of them to die? and if not included in the covenant of grace how can any be saved? Now as infants are included in all other covenants recorded in scripture, I would ask, what reason can be assigned for excluding them from the new covenant? I know not what you can say to this, unless, perhaps, that infants are not expressly mentioned in it. Should you say this, I would ask you, In what covenant are they *expressly* mentioned, except that *everlasting* covenant by which their right is secured? and if the EVERLASTING covenant of God be not sufficient to secure the continuation of that right, Pray what is?

I have hitherto been speaking of your principles as a baptist, permit me now to address a few words to yourself. The zeal which you shew, for what you conceive to be truth, commands my respect, and I shall mention some things, which, I think, have led you into error. First you have depended too much upon information unworthy of credit. A perusal of these letters will shew you, that much of your information will not stand the test of strict inquiry. Again, you have exercised your own judgment too little. I would advise you to review the subject, take a view of the texts brought forward in defence of immersion, and consider if there be any thing like baptism included in them. Your

own judgment shewed you once and again, that there is not ; yet you preferred the judgment of others to your own, and so were led astray.

Permit me, Sir, to mention some principles which should be kept in view in the investigation of religious truths in general, and bear upon this subject in particular. The first is, that God is one; and always the same in nature and purpose: hence it follows, that the plan of redemption from its commencement to its consummation is one, revealed by degrees, as God in his infinite wisdom saw meet. 'This is quite inconsistent with the notion of God's erecting a church, and after a while letting it become extinct, and beginning another. The New Testament dispensation is the accomplishment of the promises made to the church under the former dispensations; Paul taught none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come. Acts, xxvi. 22. Hence it follows, that comparing the promises under the former dispensations with their accomplishment, is the best means of ascertaining the meaning of several passages of scripture. There is one thing which renders this course difficult to the inattentive reader, the Old Testament scriptures were written in Hebrew, and the New in Greek; hence the terms are, in several instances, different. These texts Acts, vii. 45. Heb. iv. 8. appear to many readers obscure; but when they understand that Jesus in those texts means Joshua, the passages are clear. In like manner a person reading the Old Testament, never meets with the term baptism, and hence rashly concludes, that there was no such thing: but this mistake may be rectified by reading the epistle to the Hebrews: Paul mentions baptisms under

the former dispensation once and again. One of the texts, in which it occurs, has been considered already, the other Heb. vi. 2. where Paul mentions the doctrine of baptism; refers to the Old Testament purifications, for under the present dispensation there is but one baptism. Eph. iv. 5.

It is necessary here, to keep in view the difference between the Old Testament scriptures, and the Old Testament dispensation, the former of these ended with Malachi, the latter, with the death of Christ.

You, Sir, seem to me, not to have adverted to these principles, and from the manner in which you mention John's baptism (p. 4.) consider him, as introducing a religious rite entirely new into the church, and that his hearers had nothing but his profession to induce them to believe, "That his baptism was from heaven." Now if you compare Mal. iii. 1, 2, 3. and iv. 5. with John i. 19, to 25. you will see, that John's baptism was the accomplishment of Malachi's prophecy, that the Jews expected it, and did not consider the rite a novelty, but only inquired what right he had to perform it; as is plain from the question proposed to John, *Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?* Whence it is plain that they expected that Christ and the messenger sent before him would baptize, the matter will appear plain, if the same term which is used in the prophecy, be likewise used in the accomplishment, and the word purify substituted for baptize. John i. 25. will then read thus, *Why purifiest thou then, if thou be not the Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?*

There is still one passage in your letters, on

which I would make some remarks, You say p. 50. "Luther in his translation of Mat. iii. 1. says In those days came John the dipper. Why was John termed the baptist or dipper? Because he baptized or dipped his disciples. This accounts in a satisfactory way for our being called baptists."

Now, Sir, I must remark here, that Luther did not use the term dipper; for he did not translate the Bible into English, but into German. The term dipper therefore, is but the translation of a translation. Why then should we leave the original and go to a translation, which we must again translate: or must the mere English scholar renounce the present version, learn German in order to understand the meaning of the term baptist, as applied to John, and all this to be led into a mistake; for baptist is not derived from the word which means to dip, but from the one which means to baptize. Were there any necessity for changing the term, according to the language in which the New Testament was originally written, it would be baptizer. *Baptistes* is formed from *baptizo* in the way in which *basanistes* is formed from *basanizo*; and according to the language of the Old Testament scriptures, it might be rendered purifier.

John the Baptist was an eminent servant of God, but there are two very great improprieties in your conduct respecting him: all the true disciples of the Baptist became the disciples of Christ, is it not then a backward motion, for the disciples of Christ, to call themselves the disciples of the Baptist?

Again you make the baptism of John the origin of your baptism, and are at some pains (p. 46.) to shew that "John's baptism was christian

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“baptism.” Now, Sir, when, do you suppose, did the Jewish or Old Testament dispensation end? I know of but one opinion on this subject, viz. that it ended, when Christ said it is finished, bowed his head, and gave up the Ghost, and the vail of the temple was rent from top to bottom. John’s baptism was therefore a Jewish purification or baptism, one of those mentioned Heb. vi. 2. ix. 10.

Again, christian baptism was instituted by Christ, after he arose from the dead: on this likewise, there is but one opinion. The best Baptist writers grant, that Mat. xxviii. 19. contains the institution of christian baptism. What then is the propriety of insisting on examples of an ordinance before its institution? Besides, John’s baptism was not administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, as christian baptism is: and this is the principal difference between those baptisms in point of form.

Finally, John’s baptism did not answer the ends of christian baptism, it did not “draw a line of distinction between God’s professing people and the world,” for the whole Jewish nation were God’s professing people, till they finally rejected and crucified their king, for, during our Lord’s ministry, salvation was of the Jews, John, iv. 22. John’s baptism was not an ordinance for admitting converts into the church, for, like all the baptisms of the Old Testament dispensation, it was administered to such as were already in the church, and to them only.

You are sensible, that we are discussing this subject under a very high degree of responsibility. Upon the closest investigation of the subject, I must consider your letters, as having a

tendency to exclude from the church an ordinance of divine institution, and to substitute in its place, a rite founded upon human superstition. I have considered every thing which you have advanced in support of your opinion and practice, and shewed you the reasons of mine. If you consider these letters, examine their contents, and make the result known through the same channel, all due attention shall be paid it, if life and health be continued to

Your Humble Servant,

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