

A Letter to Mr. W. Hoste in reply to his "HOUSEHOLD BAPTISM:

Is it from Heaven or of Men?"

DEAR MR. HOSTE,

Thank you for your letter of the 16th September, in which you acknowledge the error of placing certain words (contained in a footnote on p. 7 of your "Household Baptism") in inverted commas, as though you were quoting from me. You now admit that you were giving merely your own impression, and that the words indicated should not have been in the form of a quotation. They do not at all represent anything that I have said; and, consequently, your comment which follows loses all its point.

In order to give this correction publicity I am printing straightaway this reply to your pamphlet. That pamphlet definitely challenges, not only our views on Baptism, but our whole position, and as you therein refer to me, I am sending this reply on my own account, though I believe I shall be expressing the general views of all with whom I am more particularly associated. I regret that you have seen fit to issue such a challenge, for our differences as to Baptism are not vital, such as truths we hold in common, and I, personally, should not have chosen to enter the lists on such a subject; but you leave me no choice, and the responsibility is yours. For to remain silent, after the words you have written, would lead people to suppose either that we hold error, or are ashamed of what we do hold.

It seems to those of us you attack that your paper is a very serious challenge. It derives its seriousness, however, not from the weight of its arguments, but because it is a definite onslaught upon those who at some cost to themselves, and through a certain amount of obloquy have sought to restore a fellowship which had been lost. We wished frankly to acknowledge you,

and those with you, as Brethren in Christ, and we fondly imagined that, having overcome difficulties on our side, and feeling, as we did, that we could not make people to-day responsible for actions of seventy years ago, there would be no difficulties on your side. We have been gradually, and very regretfully, undeceived. Doors have been closed instead of opened, and in some directions there has been open and avowed opposition.

We had hoped for something quite different. We had thought that Christ, in all the greatness of His Person and efficacy of His work, was sufficient to unite us, and to enable us to walk together as brethren, and that the great truths of Christianity, which we all hold in common, were of sufficient reality to bind us together ; but it appears that certain differences about Water Baptism are to over-ride all this, and are to be made a reason for reckoning our ministry and fellowship of no account.*

It is evident from your paper, to which this is a reply, that what I have just stated is true. You regard particular views of Baptism of such importance that an individual is actually disqualified, in your opinion, from carrying out his responsibility to his Lord, as a servant, if he conscientiously believes that he has found something more in Scripture about Baptism than *you* have discovered. That this is the ground you take is clear from the following quotation from another, repeated by you with approval, "One who is a public advocate and teacher of Household Baptism, who comes as a teacher wishing to instruct others, excludes himself."†

Let me say, before passing to the discussion of the main question, that we have not pressed the subject of baptism upon any. Only once in the course of five years has the subject been directly touched upon in *The Faith and the Flock*, and then only in answer to a definite question. Nothing pleases you. If we keep silent, we are charged with withholding from others what we believe to be important truth. If we speak, we are immediately

* For the two must go together, to offer us the last without the first is simply a covert insult.

†How or why he excludes himself if others do not exclude him, it is impossible to determine.

informed that such views disqualify us from being recognised as helpers of the Flock. Does not your remark on p. 7, "Some folks are very hard to please," recoil upon yourself?

The Meaning of Baptism.

The writer has long felt that the continued conflict as to who are the proper subjects of Baptism has excluded from view what is after all a more important point, viz.: the significance of Baptism itself. In the din and dust created by the controversy over Infant Baptism, people have failed to see that even the champions on either side may after all be very deficient in what is surely a primary requisite, *i.e.*, a knowledge of what Scripture teaches upon Baptism. It may be that half our difficulties and disagreements about *who* should be baptised would disappear did we understand the first elementary truths concerning Baptism itself. The clamour of several centuries gathers round who is to be *the subject*, and what is the *mode*, while the *meaning* of the rite has become obscured, in our anxiety about the *method*. But the rite surely ought to stand first.

But how is it Baptism itself—*i.e.*, as to its meaning and spiritual intention—is nearly always placed in the background? We believe the answer is twofold. First, the noise of controversy has attracted attention exclusively to the candidates, until we have come to believe that the subject begins and ends with them. Secondly—and perhaps as a consequence of the other—nearly everyone jumps to the conclusion that he or she knows all about it. The consequence is, the majority of Christians, including those known as Baptists, know less about *Baptism* than probably any other subject in the Bible.

Are you, my friend, to whom this letter is specially addressed, willing to accompany me (and will any others join us?) in a brief, but unbiassed and careful, study of the principal passages where the subject is presented? Can we—is it too much to ask?—lay aside preconceived notions, and specially blot from our minds all thought for the time being of its *application*, whether to infants or believers only, and just come with open minds to the Scripture itself to learn what it really has

to say to us? If we think we already know all about the subject it cannot do us any harm; and if we don't know, the good it will do us will be immense.

It has often been said that the *first* mention of any subject in Scripture generally carries with it some special intimation as to its meaning. Let us then turn to Luke iii., where we get the first mention of Baptism historically, though not, of course, as to the order of the books.

It may be well, perhaps, to say a word as to the origin and history of Baptism. These are involved in a good deal of obscurity. The word is not once used in the O.T. But "religious meanings" were early attached to washings with water, both by heathens and Jews; they were among the ordinances of the Jewish law; and it is not necessary to go beyond that law to find the origin of the custom of washing or baptizing proselytes upon their admission into the Jewish system.

Its first mention in the Scriptures, as you are aware, is in connection with John the Baptist; and the very way it is mentioned, without any introduction or explanation, seems conclusive that the rite in some form or other was already recognised and understood.

It is necessary to remind you of this because a too restricted view is often adopted by those who hold the Baptist* theory. They seem to care for little beyond asserting that Baptism is immersion, and that believers only are to be immersed. It is clear, however, not only that the verb means "to dip" but also has a wider meaning, viz., "to wash." And this fact has a most important bearing upon the meaning and significance of the rite. Merely to give two instances: "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins" (Acts xxii. 16), and "Except they wash" (*baptizo*) (Mark vii. 4).

If we are to understand Baptism as set forth in Luke iii. we must carefully note John's attitude and also his words. He addresses those who come to him as a "generation of vipers." Yet he does not on this account refuse to baptize them, but he is very careful to tell them the responsibility that attaches to baptism and

* The term Baptist here, and throughout, is not used of any sect, but as indicating those who maintain believers' baptism only.

that nothing less than fruits meet for repentance will suffice. This produced certain questions from three different classes—the people, the publicans and the soldiers. And both the questions and the answers bear upon practical conduct. John answered their questions and then proceeded to baptize them. Two statements seem to indicate that he baptized them all: He says, after having baptized them, “I indeed baptize you with water,” and it is recorded “when *all* the people were baptized.”

From these plain facts do we not learn: 1. That the baptism signified a renunciation of their old life and a determination to live an amended one. 2. It was certainly not because they had been living an exemplary life, for John addresses them as a “generation of vipers” Nor are we told that they were sent away to live an amended life and then come and be baptized. The narrative implies that they were baptized there and then, and verse 21 supports this view for they were all baptized *before Christ*. Consequently there could not have been any interval worth speaking about, if any at all.

From what we are told in this third chapter of Luke is it possible to understand what would be in the minds of John and the people with reference to Baptism? As we read of his denunciation, “O generation of vipers”; as we note his words about “amendment of life”; and as we go over the questions that were put to him, does not this, at all events, stand out with unmistakeable clearness: it meant both to baptizer and baptized a renunciation of the *old* standing and the old life, and the entrance upon a new.

Baptism with a view to the future.

But the great and overshadowing question in it all related to the *future*. John’s baptism, we are told, was a “baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins.” And the *one* question staring us again and again in the face and that comes from every class is this: “What shall we do”? All mainly related to the future. That this was so can scarcely be questioned in the light of some other words of John the Baptist and also of what

St. Paul says. In John i. 31 we read, "And I knew Him (Christ) not: but that He *should* be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water." And in Acts xix. 4, "John verily baptized . . . saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after Him, that is, on Christ Jesus." So that here, at all events, we have people baptized who had not as yet lived an amended life, whose sins were not forgiven, and who had not yet believed in Christ.

In reply to this, do you affirm that this was only John's baptism and not Christian baptism? Our answer is, we are only concerned for the moment with Baptism itself. If you think that under Christianity it assumed an altogether new significance and became altogether restricted in its application, then it is for you to produce evidence of such change. What I propose to do is to see whether or not the teaching which follows on the subject in the Scriptures supports the view just given. You will agree, I think, that a general consensus of teaching on any subject goes far to confirm a particular view as being the right one. It is difficult to conceive any Baptist to-day acting as John the Baptist did. Baptists require a testimony of the life *before* they baptize. John baptized there and then in view of an amended life. Baptists say the rite appertains to no one but a believer. John the Baptist is reported as "saying unto the people that they should believe on Him which *should come after him.*"

To Baptists baptism is simply a looking back (something already true of the believer is represented by an outward sign). To John it was a looking forward. Baptists limit the thought of obedience to the act itself. John made it a committal to a life-long obedience.

Now, which of these conceptions is the correct one? Which will be favoured by the general consensus of Scripture? I hope you will consider this a legitimate way of stating the matter and I will endeavour to conduct the enquiry in a fair spirit.

• I would invite you to travel from Luke iii. to Acts xix.—a considerable interval. The question put by St. Paul to these men is surely important. "Unto what then were ye baptized?" Now whether we render

the first word "unto," "into," or "to," matters little as far as the point before us is concerned. For surely whichever word is used it represents something taking place *at* the Baptism, and not the Baptism representing something that had already taken place. Let Baptists ask themselves whether that is quite the form in which they would have put the question. And notice the reply. They virtually said, "We were baptized into John's baptism." Which means, if language means anything, that baptism itself stands for something.

Take the order of the words in Mark xvi. 16 : He that believeth *and is baptized* shall be saved," and does not the order here favour the view we have already given ? Would not a Baptist have written it : " He that believeth and is saved shall be baptized " ? This is not, however, what our Lord said. The order of the words here indicates that Baptism itself is in some way connected with salvation, and does not simply represent that a person is saved. To be saved, *in the sense meant here*, he must not only believe but be baptized. Not because he *is* saved but *to be* saved. The reason why Baptism is omitted in the second clause is easy to understand. Damnation has to do with the future. But Baptism has only to do with the present course of things, and salvation too has a present aspect.

Acts ii. 38. "*Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.*" The revised version has "unto the remission of your sins," and Weymouth translates the word for "unto" as, "with a view to." Have we not here the same thought ? Not Baptism merely retrospective, but in view of something. And this even after Christ's ascension to glory and the coming of the Holy Ghost.

In Acts viii. we find instances of believers being baptized, and this before they had received the Holy Ghost. This does not seem to favour the Baptist view. But further on we come across the instance of the eunuch, and Philip's words "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest." As to this instance, it is well known that the words last quoted are disputed. But even supposing them to be true they would not invalidate the Scriptures already referred to. They lay down no

doctrine as to Baptism. They were a challenge to a heathen man as to his sincerity, a course which every Household Baptist would be prepared to follow.* The point before us at present is not, to whom does Baptism apply, but the meaning and significance of the rite. We all admit the baptism of believers; but our view is not limited to that.

Let us pass to Acts xxii. 16, leaving any intervening passages to be considered when we come to the question of the application of the rite. We have already seen, by an allusion to this very Scripture, that Baptism is a washing. Now why do we wash? Because we *are* clean, or to be made clean? Surely we do not wash as a kind of public demonstration that we were clean before? Baptists have great difficulty with this verse. Some get rid of it by saying, it applied only to Saul of Tarsus because he was such an exceptional sinner. And I asked one respected and intelligent brother to explain "wash away thy sins," and his solution of the problem was, that it was by "calling on the Name of the Lord." But what correspondence is there between "washing" and "calling?" whereas there is a perfect correspondence between washing and water. The calling on the Name of the Lord was evidently an adjunct to the washing. And as to this statement having become obsolete because it applied to one particular case, and one only, I have yet to learn that Scripture anywhere teaches that Divine institutions have a special meaning to particular individuals, or that it anywhere says that Saul needed a special baptism. Is there a word to this effect in the Lord's instruction to Ananias? No. It was evidently ordinary water baptism, and it was a washing away of sins.

But it may be asked, "Were not the Apostle's sins already gone?" Yes, they were gone from before God. This was a washing away from before men and as a demonstration that he renounced his former ways and was entering upon an entirely new life. And notice particularly, it does not say, "Arise and be baptized because your sins are forgiven." This is indeed the Baptist formula, but it is not the one here.

* It is quite legitimate to challenge people. John the Baptist did this.

The meaning of Romans VI.

If we come now to Rom. vi. 3-4, we learn something more. The matter of the believer's relation to sin (not sins merely) is in question. The Apostle declares they have died to sin (ver. 2). How and when? The answer in ver. 3 is: by and at their baptism.

Is it not important, in this case, as in every other, to notice exactly how the truth is stated? It is not said to these believers at Rome: "You died when you believed in Christ and you were baptized as an outward and visible sign of what was already true of you." The Apostle says nothing at all about believing, though, of course, they had believed. But in what sense does faith set forth death with Christ? There is not the slightest analogy. But Baptism has a very strong resemblance to death; and so we find the writer of this epistle grounding his whole argument upon the fact that these believers had been baptized.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized unto Jesus Christ, were baptized unto His death. Therefore we are buried with Him by BAPTISM unto 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."

May I not ask you again which view of Baptism this scripture supports? Is Baptism treated here as if it were applied because everything was already true; is it treated as an act of obedience merely? In one word is Baptism *only* a backward look? It seems to me the teaching here is in perfect harmony with what we have seen it to be all through, viz.: that Baptism is in view of something, and that Baptism instead of standing in relation to faith, something like the obverse to the reverse of a coin or pattern, stands for itself and means something which faith, from the very nature of things, cannot mean. I have quoted the text as "unto" and not "into." But whether the one or the other be the exact force of the original both are alike material to the discussion in hand. For the text does not present Baptism as an outward sign of something already done, but as doing something: "Buried with Him *by Baptism*." So that we are bound (if we are to adhere to Scripture),

it seems to me, to admit that Baptism is its own sign and significance, and not a mere outward sign of what is true already of one who has never been baptized. Yet this last is surely what Baptists largely make it. Thus, if language means anything, one who has not been baptized could not say he had been buried with Christ ; and therefore it cannot be true that Baptism is only the outward sign that he was already buried.

We are told in Scripture that Baptism represents or stands for many things : death, burial, separation from the old life, &c., but I cannot recall one passage which asserts that it is an outward sign of a person's faith*. And therefore, why Baptists should lay such tremendous emphasis upon this very point, as though it was everywhere asserted, I am at a complete loss to understand. I am afraid they try to make Scripture square with their ideas, instead of getting their ideas from Scripture.

Does not Romans vi. bring before us that to which we are baptized ; to Jesus Christ ; to His death ; and in view of newness of life ? And therefore, again, is it not clear that Baptism is prospective, closing the door upon one condition of things, and opening it upon another ?

We are said to be baptized unto Christ's death. Consequently, further down the chapter the Apostle goes on to shew the significance of that death. "*For in that He died, He died unto sin once ; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God.*" And, seeing we have been baptized unto that death, he adds, " **LIKEWISE RECKON YE ALSO YOURSELVES TO BE DEAD INDEED UNTO SIN, BUT ALIVE UNTO GOD THROUGH (OR IN) JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.**"

This reckoning is continuous ; not only on the day of my baptism, but always. As we were baptized *unto* Christ and *unto* His death, so we are to reckon ourselves constantly dead *unto* sin and alive *unto* God. In other words, I am to be true all along to my baptism. In the light of this, what a significant thing baptism becomes.

* I mean, where is there a text of Scripture which presents it in that way ?

But let us pass to 1 Cor. x. 1-2. Is not this a very striking passage? Does it not teach us that the truth of Baptism is found in the Red Sea? Speaking of Israel as a nation, St. Paul says, they "were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." Now what did this mean to them? Is it wrong to say the cloud was for their guidance, and the sea, while it separated them for ever from Egypt, brought them into another scene, and introduced them into a new place altogether? Did not their baptism mean that they professedly accepted the guidance of the cloud and that they had left Egypt for ever? and were not both connected with Moses? They accepted his leadership.

We cannot fail to see at once the remarkable correspondence between this passage and the one we have just been looking at. There it was, baptized unto Christ and unto His death. Here it is, unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea. Surely the sea, in their case, did not represent something that had already happened. Is it not clear that it stood for something in itself? Could they be said to be dead to Egypt until they had crossed it?

I do not dwell longer on this passage as I may have occasion to return to it, and my object at the moment is not to give a full exposition of the subject in all its bearings, but simply to shew the meaning and significance of the rite itself. For it is surely evident that if we do not hold correct views as to this we cannot as to all that correlates with it.

What has Galatians iii. 27 to say to us on the subject? "*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*" Baptism, here, is said to be a putting on of Christ. Again it does not say it is a public confession of faith, or that Baptism is an act of obedience or represents something already true (though of course it may involve all these). But is it not important to observe that the inspired writer affirms with all the clearness conceivable that the act of Baptism itself effects something? And does not this view of it add tremendously to the significance of Baptism? The fact is as astounding as it is true, that, Baptists, with all their glorying in Baptism, have shorn

it of nearly all its meaning! "Baptized unto Christ." "Put on Christ." Here is the grand conception of the rite the Bible presents to us. And surely the Bible knows more about Baptism than any of us. Where have Baptists got their ideas from? Here we go from passage to passage in the Word of God and do not find so much as a reference to their favourite tenets, but on the contrary a repeated insistence upon what they have evidently overlooked, or at least, put in the shade. While they make everything depend upon personal faith, the inspired writers ground certain things upon Baptism. While they would insist upon everything being true before the rite is administered, neither John the Baptist nor Paul confined their view of it within such narrow limits, but John baptized the multitude after telling them what they *ought* to be; and Paul says, "Buried with Him (Christ) *by Baptism.*" "As many as have been baptized unto Christ have put on Christ." If there is only one way of being in Christ and that through believing, in what way could you be *Baptized into* Christ; and by Baptism "put on Christ?" But if there is a recognised outward sphere of profession, then one can understand the terms.

Does not our next passage—Ephesians iv. 4-6—make plain why we are said to be "baptized into Christ?" "*There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.*" This statement, manifestly applies *only* to true believers. A mere professor is not in the one body; he does not possess the Spirit; the calling spoken of is not his.

But ver. 5 is different: "*One Lord, one faith, one baptism.*" A professor can say, "Lord, Lord," and outwardly acknowledge Christ as such.* He can profess to accept the faith; and he can be baptized. These three things belong to an outer circle, compared with the first three. While ver. 6 brings us to a wider circle still. Compare 1 Cor. viii. 6; Eph. iii. 15, and Acts xvii. 28. Baptism, then, as presented here, clearly has to do with profession. And this is easy to understand, for it has to do with earth, not with heaven, and

* Notice, this is different from 1 Cor. xii. 3. The one is saying "Lord, Lord," with the lips (see Matt. vii. 21), the other is a confession by the Holy Ghost that Jesus is *the* Lord.

with the position a man takes publicly before men, not so much with his faith before God. When Saul washed away his sins in Baptism, it was before men, not before God. This latter had been done already.

In Colossians ii. 12 you will remember we have some important teaching on Baptism. "*Buried with Him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead.*"

When were we buried, *i.e.* put out of sight? When we believed? The Apostle does not put it in that way; for the simple reason, it seems to me, that there is nothing in faith to represent it; but he immediately introduces Baptism. "*Buried with Him in Baptism.*"

The Consistency of Scripture.

Do we not see what a consistency there is in the entire teaching of Scripture on the subject? Almost every verse we have looked at presents Baptism as an act having its own meaning and as having something in view. It not merely closes the past but introduces to that which is entirely new. For I think you will agree with me that risen with Christ is in full view here.

You may reply, [this verse is all against you, for it distinctly speaks of faith. I know, and have not any wish to escape from it. As I have said before in this letter, I believe in the baptism of believers as much as you or any of your friends do. I fully go with it. I was baptized myself as a believer. But you cannot get away from the fact that the burial with Christ is *in Baptism*, and *moreover*, it is worthy of notice that faith is connected *with resurrection*, and not with the being buried with Him at all. I am thinking of the way in which it is presented in this verse. Neither this passage nor any other we have looked at presents Baptism as a public declaration of a man's faith. I am not saying it may not be so incidentally, but no verse presents Baptism in that way.

Moreover, it is not necessary that everything should be true of a person before he is eligible for an outward

rite ; and the same rite may be performed upon two people under quite different conditions. May I trouble you to turn to Romans iv. 11. Here we are told that Abraham received the sign of circumcision, as a seal of the righteousness *of the faith* which he had yet being uncircumcised." Now had any holding Baptist views been in existence at that early date they would have argued, "Since circumcision was a seal of Abraham's *faith*, that precludes all children of a few days old from being circumcised. There can only be believers' circumcision." Their logic would have seemed irresistible. But they would have been wrong. Isaac was circumcised when only eight days old, too young by far to have the same faith as his father Abraham ! So that in that day there was believers' circumcision and the circumcision of the children of believers ; and why there should not be at this day believers' Baptism and the Baptism of their children I am at a loss to know. The least we can ask of the Baptists is that they will produce the text in which it is prohibited. And until they can produce it, have we not a right to expect that they will be a little more moderate in their wholesale condemnation of their fellow believers ?

That Baptism and circumcision are very closely allied, surely admits of no question. Both are outward rites, and the Apostle brings them into close juxtaposition in the very passage we are considering. Both become the formal recognition of being introduced into outward relationship with God. The outward exists to-day as truly as then. But this I will endeavour to shew later.

Saved by Water.

I will trouble you with only one more passage at this point, but it is a remarkable one. It occurs in St. Peter's first epistle, chap. iii. v. 21 : "*The like figure whereunto even Baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*"

The Apostle has just affirmed that at the time of the flood "eight souls were saved by water." This is a remarkable statement, because naturally we should have expected him to say, "eight souls were saved by the Ark." How then was Noah saved by water ?

The water destroyed the old world, with all its violence and corruption, separated the occupants of the Ark entirely from it, and introduced them, at length, into a new world. Baptism is a figure of precisely the same thing.* It separates me from the world, for it is a figure of death, and in the sense of Col. ii. 20, I no longer live in it, and it is in view of a new world, with which all my hopes and associations are bound up. And what a world it is—a world where Christ is, and where He is supreme: "WHO IS GONE INTO HEAVEN, AND IS ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD; ANGELS AND AUTHORITIES AND POWERS BEING MADE SUBJECT UNTO HIM." (ver. 22).

What a solemn rite is Baptism! For in it I declare that I have done with a doomed world—a world full of corruption through lust: and I am seeking another, where all is in subjection to Christ. It is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, as in Noah's day (and here there is a difference—the world remaining as it is) but the answer of a good conscience toward God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If it be asked, how can a babe have a good conscience? I have already anticipated that objection on page 14. The message to Noah was, "Come thou and *all thy house* into the ark"; and baptism is a like figure.

But I would now ask you a question. How do you and others find room for this view of Baptism which St. Peter presents to us? In what sense do you attach salvation to Baptism? You insist that those only who are already saved should be baptized. And then when you have answered that question I would like you to answer another. Does not 1 Peter iii. 21 harmonise with the other Scriptures we have considered? For it attaches some meaning and significance to Baptism itself. And from the point of view which I have insisted upon again and again, is not this last passage quite easy to understand, and perfectly simple?

Taking now a glance backward at the passages that have come before us, what have we learned? We have seen that John the Baptist did not send his hearers

* It saves by bringing us into a new place.

away telling them to come when they had given sufficient proof of amendment of life, but he baptized them in view of that. We have seen again and again that certain things are predicated of those who have been baptized. They have washed away their sins; they have put on Christ; they have been buried; and all this is said to have been done by the act of Baptism. More than once, salvation is connected with the rite, (Mark xvi. 16, and I Pet. iii. 21). In Acts ii. 38, Baptism is said to be "for (or unto) the remission of sins," not because their sins were forgiven.

Who that carefully and impartially considers these facts can help arriving at the following conclusions:—

1. Baptism is in view of something and not merely because of something already true: John baptized in view of an amended life, and of Christ's coming.

2. Certain things are not properly true of us until we are baptized: "Buried with Him *by Baptism.*"

3. Baptism has a place and purpose of *its own*. "Baptism doth also now save us." It was Baptism at the Red Sea separated Israel from Egypt and introduced them to all the privileges connected with their wilderness journey.

4. It is with a view of what shall be true, not necessarily what is true. John did not send the multitude away, he told them what they ought to do and baptized them: Disciple all nations, baptizing them, and teaching them to observe all things: "We also should walk in newness of life."

In the light of the above I would now briefly consider certain statements in your letter.

In the introduction you affirm Baptism to be "an ordinance only to be administered to those who confess their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." Where have we seen this laid down as a condition in any of the foregoing passages? Not so much as once. What is contained in your statment, and which forms the whole groundwork upon which your theory of Baptism rests, is never once stated in Scripture!! It never says anywhere that Baptism is only to be administered to those who confess

their faith. And on your principle John the Baptist could not have baptized anyone.

On the second page of the introduction you state, "There is no case in the New Testament of an infant being baptized. . . . The whole drift of Scripture teaches and favours believers' Baptism." I have already somewhat anticipated this argument, and shown that what, in the nature of things, we should look for is a prohibition. It is, I believe, true that there is no actual mention of an infant being baptized. This may mean that the thing was so in the ordinary and understood course of things that it was taken for granted. When you say, "The whole drift of Scripture teaches and favours believers' Baptism," it is easy to prove that it is entirely the other way. I would here quote from another :—

"But of one thing we may be sure : had the acceptance of Christianity involved anything so startling to the Jewish or the Gentile mind as a distinction between the religious standing of the father of a family and his children, the historian would have recorded it, or the Apostles would have found themselves called to explain and defend it. For such a distinction would have been in direct contradiction to the most deeply rooted conviction of Jew and of Gentile alike. From the time of Abraham onwards the Jew had felt it a solemn religious obligation to claim for his sons from their earliest infancy the same covenant relation with God as he himself stood in. There was sufficient parallelism between Baptism and circumcision (cf. Col. ii. 11) for the Jewish-Christian father to expect the Baptism of his children to follow his own as a matter of course. And among Gentile converts a somewhat different but equally authoritative principle, that of *patria potestas* would have the same result. In a home organised on this principle, which prevailed throughout the Roman Empire, it would be a thing inconceivable that the children could be severed from the father in their religious rites and duties, in the standing conferred by Baptism.

Thus it is because to the mind of Jew and Gentile alike, the Baptism of infants and children yet unable to supply the condition for themselves was so natural that St. Luke records so simply that when Lydia believed, she was baptized "with her household ;" when the Philippian jailer believed he was baptized and all those belonging to him. If there were children in these households, these children were baptized on the ground of the faith of their parents."

How you can assert that, "the whole drift of Scripture teaches and favours believers' baptism," I am at a loss to understand*. Have you forgotten the word to Noah,

* Your meaning, of course, is to the exclusion of all other. That believers needed to be baptized, is admitted.

“Come thou and *all thy house* into the ark,” with not a word said, either in the O.T. or the New, as to the faith of his sons? Do you fail to remember Abraham, and how he circumcised Isaac, and even Ishmael? And as if this were not enough, in Exodus xii. at the Passover it was to be “a lamb for an *house!*” And immediately Christianity reaches Europe we find distinct reference to the household again. Surely in the light of these facts any unprejudiced person would be inclined to believe that just the opposite is true to what you state, and that the whole drift of the Old Testament, at least, is in favour of Household Baptism, and that if this principle had not been incorporated into Christianity, from the very nature of the case, we should have assuredly heard of it; and thus the silence of the New Testament* becomes the strongest testimony to the truth of Household Baptism. The fact that the household was connected with the head of the house was ingrained upon the Jewish mind. “Thou and thy house,” runs like a thread all through their history as God’s people, and this becomes the strongest presumptive evidence in favour of Household Baptism. If this principle has been abrogated, shew us where. You seem to argue as if Christianity stood in complete isolation from all that preceded it. And you therefore claim that without a special command to baptize Christian Households, it ought not to be done. The truth is just the other way. Christianity has its roots deep in the past. Baptism itself is a proof of it, for it existed before Christianity and was incorporated into it. Paul in his epistle to the Galatians traces the gospel back to Abraham. The Messiah revealed in the New Testament was promised in the Old. The Gospel was proclaimed to the Jew first. And therefore it is perfectly lawful as well as reasonable to maintain that divine principles which operated in the old dispensation, obtain equally in the new. Where it is otherwise, *the fact is plainly asserted.* Now the principle as to associating children with the parent is nowhere set aside. If it is, it is easy for you to quote the text of Scripture which says so. Until you can do so, I would ask, what right have you to denounce us for maintaining a divine institution?

* *i.e.* the absence of any prohibition.

The children of believers.

It may be well here, while on the subject, to conclude the argument for the Baptism of the children of believers.

1. I suppose you will admit that *all* children who die before the age of responsibility, however young, go to heaven. If so, it follows that they are saved in virtue of Christ's death, quite apart from their own faith. I am thinking of children who have not reached the age of responsibility. Now if the death of Christ can thus apply to children, apart from faith, is there any conceivable reason why Baptism should not? Is the water more sacred than the blood? Is the outward rite to be withheld while the efficacy of the death is not?

You may argue that infants may be baptized and after all grow up to be wicked men. You seem to think this of itself sufficient to discredit our doctrine. If so, then it would equally discredit the truth as to Christ's death applying to such? An individual that would have been saved as an infant, may grow up and be lost. Does this throw any discredit upon the death of Christ? Of course not? Then why should it throw any discredit upon Baptism because a baptized infant grows up to be untrue to it? The fault to be found is not with the Baptism but with the individual.

It is often said that christendom, with all its worldliness and formality, is the result of Infant Baptism. Nothing could be more wide of the mark. It is because children have not been taught to live in accordance with their Baptism, and their parents were not true to their own, that we see around us all the evils we do. The real truth is we should have been saved from such evils had Baptism been understood and acted upon.

2. If circumcision applied to children of eight days old even, why should not Baptism? Is there anything in the nature of Baptism to prevent it? To say that the latter is done in the Name of the Trinity is no argument, for the other was done equally in the Name, and with the sanction, of God. That there is a very close analogy between circumcision and Baptism is proved by Col. ii. 11. I speak of the spiritual significance of each. Both introduce into *outward* relationship

with God and into a sphere of outward privilege. Circumcision was *unto* something and so is Baptism. To conclude that circumcision might apply to children, but Baptism not, is simply to do violence to the whole bearing of Scripture, and to break up its continuity.

3. I have just said that Baptism introduces into outward relationship with God and into a sphere of outward privilege. Some assert there is no such outward place, but I will deal with that under a separate head. I merely wish now to prove from Scripture that, if there be such a place, Baptism is the rite by which we are admitted. I ask you to look with me again at 1 Cor. x. 1-2. Here we find Baptism distinctly linked with the Old Testament. The passage of the Red Sea is said to be the baptizing of all Israel unto Moses. *Yet this included children.* How then can you say there is no Scripture for the Baptism of infants? So truly did the Red Sea set forth this ordinance that the Word of God unhesitatingly describes it as Baptism. And as you yourself very correctly remark, in your note to p. 7 "There are no 'different views' of Baptism in the Scriptures." If that is so then here we have the truth as to Baptism itself and to whom it applies. One often hears the argument how can you baptize children—infants—when you don't know how they are going to turn out? If people knew what Baptism is they would never advance such a reason. Did everybody know how these children were going to turn out? As a matter of fact, many of them turned out very badly. But that was not because of their Baptism, but because they forgot it. The fact remains that they were baptized, and it is no less a person than St. Paul, the special minister of the Church, who tells us so; and this long after Christianity was established.

In this last fact we have a proof then that Christianity has not altered Baptism. Writing in the full blaze of Christianity this servant of God, more enlightened perhaps than any other, can go right back to the Exodus and say, "That is Baptism." For as you say, there are no different views of Baptism; and that being so, on your own shewing, I have done perfectly right in baptizing my children.

To clench the whole matter and leave us no loophole for escape, the Apostle adds, "Now these things were our examples." Much use the Baptists have made of the example!! While not content with that, they condemn those who do not treat Scripture as if it were a dead letter.

You will object, perhaps, "but does it not say, they did all eat the same spiritual meat—children and all; and therefore, to be consistent, you ought to allow infants to partake of the Lord's Supper." But does the Apostle call the spiritual meat the Lord's Supper? I do not see it. It is true, further on he refers to the Table and the Supper, but he carefully abstains from bringing in either term here. But I do see that he calls the Red Sea Baptism. But the manna is not a type, in any sense, of the other ordinance.

How much we learn then from this Scripture. We learn (1) that Christianity cannot be cut adrift from the past; (2) That Baptism is the same always, the same now as at the Red Sea; and therefore (3) if children were baptized at the Red Sea they can be baptized to-day, for the Apostle does not intimate any change, either in the rite or its application*; (4) If the Apostle can go back to an incident in Israel's history, and call it Baptism, and this Baptism undoubtedly included children, then it is beyond controversy that at some period in the history of God's people children have been baptized quite apart from their own faith. (For surely no one will try to make a point of the fact that we do not appear to have the exact ages of all the children). If it was right then, why is it so awfully wrong now? Do you reply that we have to do now with Christianity? My answer is (1) Was not St. Paul a Christian when he penned this passage? and was he not writing to Christians? and (2) you yourself say "there are no different views of Baptism in the Scriptures."

The case of Lydia and the Jailer.

But let us come to two passages of Scripture having a direct bearing upon the subject of Household Baptism,

* You refer to this on p. 13, which I have dealt with subsequently. Where does the Apostle say, the children were baptized as types of spiritual babes? Not a word about it.

and upon which the above incident may throw some light. I refer to Acts xvi., and the cases of Lydia and the Jailer. Is it not a little remarkable that on the very threshold of Europe, when the Gospel is about to enter, you should have two cases almost at one and the same moment of households being baptized? Especially when, as we have seen already, the Romans were accustomed to associate their children with the privileges they themselves enjoyed. Bearing in mind the teaching of 1 Cor. x. all seems as clear as daylight. It tells us that Lydia was baptized and her household. Just what we should expect from Old Testament analogy. And it was so well understood that children were associated with their parents, that it would have been accounted strange for anyone to have drawn special attention to the fact that the household contained young children. The whole point is "her household" was baptized, whether there were young children or not.

So that, here we have "household" distinctly connected with Baptism. I have seen it argued that the Baptism of Households is in the Bible, but Household Baptism is not. Which is like saying that the Baptism of believers is in the Bible, but Believers' Baptism is not. For you cannot find the expression "Believers' Baptism." If Households were baptized then there was certainly Household Baptism. But it does not mention children, you say. It does not mention anything. What the Bible teaches everywhere is that the "Household" is always identified with the head of the house.

Let me ask you, before passing from this point, if believers *only* ought to be baptized, how do you account for the *repeated* use of "Household" in connection with Baptism? If this rite is *only* administered on the ground of what is *individual*, the use at all of the term "Household" is not only entirely superfluous, but altogether mystifying. It would have been so easy and natural to have said a certain number of people believed and were baptized, if Believers' Baptism was all that was known and recognised. On the other hand, does not the reiteration of "Household" reveal what was in people's minds at that time? The way people

have of expressing themselves will sometimes tell us what is in their minds as definitely as could the most clearly worded formula.

But I fancy I hear you saying, "Wait until you come to the case of the Philippian jailer, and there you will find that St. Paul preached the word to every member of the Household, and it tells us they all believed before they were baptized." Well, let us come to it, and what *do* we find? In the Greek, at all events, and I suppose that is to guide us, nothing of the kind. The Authorised Version does not in this instance faithfully represent the original. No other translation to which I have referred (and I will quote three), supports it.

Ver. 32 says: "And they spake unto him the Word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house."

The Revised reads: "And they spake the Word of the Lord unto him, *with* all that were in his house."

Weymouth renders it: "As well as to all who were in his house."

J.N.D.: "*With* all that were in his house," supporting the Revised.

From this it evidently means that the whole household was present when the word was preached. The difference of translation is not unimportant, because the A.V. would almost make it appear as if St. Paul might have spoken to the household separately, or even to each individual apart. But preached unto him, *with* all that were in his house, would ordinarily mean when they were all together.

But the next alteration is more to the point.

Ver. 34 A.V. reads: ". . . and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

Revised: ". . . and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God."

Weymouth: ". . . and was filled with gladness, with his whole household, *his* faith resting on God."

J.N.D.: ". . . and rejoiced with all his house, having believed in God."

Now here, no less than three recognised translations (and the Englishman's Greek N.T. supports them) agree in separating "faith" from the household and

connecting it with the head of the house. Weymouth actually inserting the pronoun "his," which the others of course imply. So that it was a genuine case of Household Baptism after all. For it is the faith of the head of the house that is alone spoken of.

In the light of these three translations (and is anyone prepared to dispute their accuracy?) the case stands thus:

St. Paul begins with the announcement "Thou shalt be saved, *and thy house.*" Could he tell (even though an Apostle) that there would be personal faith on the part of everyone in the house before ever he had preached to them? Did he know of whom the household was composed? For as yet he had never entered it. Then the Apostle spake unto *him* the word of the Lord in the presence of his household, and being convinced of the man's faith, baptized him and his household. "And was baptized, *he and all his.*" What an expressive term: "HE AND ALL HIS." Here we have our warrant for Household Baptism. "He and all his" represents with a conciseness which leaves nothing to be desired, the divine and gracious principle that runs all through God's dealings with His people. In the light of this interpretation, the words "and thy house," become quite easy of explanation. If Believers' Baptism only is true they are, to say the least, very unintelligible.

Had you understood that Baptism is prospective—in view of something—you would not have written paragraph 7 of your introduction. How can all such teaching as "unity," "holiness," the "Christian position," and "the answer of a good conscience towards God," be thrown away "if others than believers are eligible for baptism?" when children are baptized in view of all that. You yourself admit, at the opening of this same paragraph, that "the apostles base much important teaching to the saints on the fact that they had been baptized." If an infant of Christian parents is baptized, does it not follow that all that important teaching is for him? If important teaching is based upon baptism—as you assert, and correctly—then how can you apply it until a person *is* baptized. A baptized child is precisely the one to whom the teaching does apply; and thus the two parts of your paragraph do not agree.

That Baptism is with reference to the future has been shewn from passage after passage. But take another. In John i. 31, John the Baptist says of our Lord, "I knew Him not, but that He should be made manifest to Israel, *therefore am I* come baptizing with water." In other words, "I baptize with water in view of Christ's coming." Could anything be more clear as to the intent of Baptism? On what possible ground, then, can there be any valid objection to children being baptized in view of becoming Christians and walking in newness of life? You will say that Baptism itself cannot effect this. No. Nor could John's Baptism make people believe on Christ. Nevertheless he baptized all who came to him, in view of that. And as you yourself admit there are not different views of Baptism in Scripture, surely a child of Christian parents, with all its life before it, is just the one who should be baptized, and then trained accordingly. To say that a child must be trained first, and then, when everything is *supposed* to be true of it, baptized, is to put the cart before the horse.

It is quite true that *some* who had been baptized with John's Baptism were afterwards re-baptized in the Name of the Lord, but this does not touch the question of the significance of *Baptism* itself. There was evidently a personal reason for Paul's action, for, as far as we know, the Apostles and others who had submitted to the Baptism of John were never baptized a second time.

Infant and Household Baptism—some differences.

On p. 6 you say, "While those who have at some cost renounced infant Baptism and all its works, are invited to open their arms to receive this Household Baptism theory, which is infant Baptism and something worse thrown in." This sentence is thoroughly misleading, to say the least of it.* In the first place, it seems to suggest that those who hold the views of Baptism you strongly condemn are occupied with little else than propagating them. Nothing could be more untrue.

*Let it be said, that, Household Baptism and Infant Baptism are not convertible terms. The former is the baptism of infants belonging to Christian households only, and of no others.

During the five years I have had access to some of the Meetings with which you are connected I have never once spoken upon the subject of *Infant Baptism* in public (though I have spoken upon Baptism); and never, as far as I remember, in private, except when questioned as to it. And I believe it to be generally true that in the case of others, it has only been in self-defence that the matter has been broached. Just as now I should not be writing this letter except for your attack.

Then, in the second place, you affirm that Household Baptism "is Infant Baptism and something worse thrown in." What the "worse thrown in" may be, you do not tell us. In every way your statement is calculated to mislead, for it gives the impression that Household Baptism not only includes all that is commonly associated with Infant Baptism, but has some mysterious additional element of poison; so horrible that you do not even attempt to name it. All such suggestions are devoid of truth.

Household Baptism is far removed from the teaching of the Church of England Prayer Book as to the Baptism of infants. Though even in the Prayer Book there are *certain* things said of Baptism which are perfectly in keeping with God's Word. But we do *not* believe that through Baptism a child is "regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's Church." Baptism is never said, in the Scriptures, to confer anything inward and spiritual. But it does introduce a child *outwardly* to inestimable benefits, and it is an initiatory rite admitting to external privileges of which it should avail itself on coming to years. Baptism does not indicate a change of *state* but a change of *place*.

Between Baptismal Regeneration and Household Baptism there is nothing in common. The fact is, the truth as to Baptism lies between the Ritualistic standpoint and the Baptist. The former makes the rite carry more than it will bear; the latter makes it carry scarcely anything. It becomes a mere adumbration. The one makes it mean too much, the other too little. In Scripture it initiates a person into a place where Divine privileges are enjoyed; as at the Red Sea (1 Cor. x.). It becomes a burial, in view of newness of life (Rom. vi.);

it washes away sins (Acts xxii.) ; it saves (Mark xvi. and 1 Pet. iii.). When a parent therefore baptizes his child he brings it into an outward place of privilege, and does it in view of that child's future, and trains it in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It may be asked cannot this be done without baptizing it? Have not hundreds of parents endeavoured to bring up their children under the Lord's authority without exercising the rite? That is quite possible, but nevertheless the divine institution remains. No doubt there are those who seek to remember the Lord without partaking of bread and wine ; nevertheless the Lord's Supper is the appointed way. The same thing is true of Baptism. God ordained that everybody, children as well as grown up people, should be separated from Egypt by Baptism at the Red Sea that He might dwell among them (for the Tabernacle was in the wilderness).

On p. 7 you complain that our view of Baptism introduces an intermediary class "which is not quite the world and not quite the Church." But have you read the Scriptures for so long and never discovered that this class existed in our Lord's Day, and in the Apostles' ? The disciples we read of in John vi. who went back and walked no more with Jesus belonged to this class. Simon Magus, for the time being, belonged to it. The very term "disciple" distinguishes this class. For a disciple is not *necessarily* a believer. The primary meaning is simply "learner." And a person can take the place of a learner and never come to be a genuine believer at all. And in this connection it is of all importance to notice that in Matt. xxviii. 19-20, there is not a word about believing, though, of course, it was all done with that in view. But the instructions are, "Go ye therefore and make disciples of (*literally disciple*) all nations, baptizing them teaching them." This is the *divine order*. Our Lord here puts Baptism on a different footing altogether to what Baptists do. They read it as if the Lord had said, "Go and make genuine believers of all nations and then baptize them." But the whole drift and wording of the commission is against such an interpretation. Our Lord uses the word *disciple* (learner) not *believer* ; then

He says baptize ; and then teach. A learner needs a teacher, and a teacher needs learners ; and moreover "faith cometh by teaching" (Rom. x. 17 means "teaching" as well as hearing—the Greek word including both ideas). Evidently faith was not necessarily present when Baptism took place, so that these verses do *not* teach *believers'* Baptism, but *disciples'* Baptism.

With all this weight of Scripture evidence for the view of Baptism which you attack we can afford to regard with some measure of equanimity such assertions as, Household Baptism "removes the ancient landmarks" ; "denies God's characteristic grace to the world," and "obliterates the line of demarcation so clearly laid down in the Word between light and darkness." Had you understood how Scripture presents Baptism, and what our real views on the subject are, you could never have committed such unfounded statements to paper. They are as meaningless as they are extravagant.

An outward sphere of privilege.

I come now to page 11 where you state, "But we have done with all 'folds' and circles of privilege. The only circle that the sinner needs to be in, where the grace of God may reach him, is the circle he was born in—a circle 7,000 miles wide." (?)

"Done with circles of privilege!!" Is it really possible that any intelligent Christian can hold such a view? And yet, though I could hardly believe my ears, I have heard the same statement from a public platform, before to-day. Has God, then, really established nothing upon the earth? Are His children houseless and homeless ; worse off than the man we read of in Luke x., for he was brought to an inn? Is there not a shelter for us on all this 7,000 (?) miles wide of earth? Why, then indeed, we are worse off than the Jews, for they had a visible dwelling place of God. We, according to you, have nothing. Somewhere in the New Testament it says that believers are "builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." Must that not be a place of privilege?

In Rom. xi. it speaks of an olive tree and of the Gentiles having been grafted into it. Has that no reference to us? Is not the whole treatment of this subject to show that there is to-day an outward place of privilege? Is not a tree something to be seen? The Apostle speaks of being "grafted in," and also of being "cut off." Does not all this necessarily imply an outward sphere of profession and also of privilege? Who are "cut off," and from what are they "cut off"? This cannot refer to genuine believers, cut off from Christ or deprived of their eternal salvation. The fact is, this passage has no meaning from your point of view; yet the Apostle is addressing Gentiles and using what he says as a warning to those who had professed Christianity. But if there is an outward place of privilege, and the entry to it is by the rite of Baptism, then the meaning of the passage becomes clear at once. From such privileges *mere* professors may be "cut off."

St. Paul says, "take heed lest he also spare not thee." Such words can have no meaning, if there are *only* the truly saved and the lost, as you teach. But if there is a place to-day where the Holy Ghost dwells and God's goodness is manifest and people are in this and yet not truly affected by it—professors without being possessors—then we can understand such terms as "cut off" and also such passages as Heb. vi. 4-8, which have profession in view.

I come now to your statement on p. 13, that "Israel were (figuratively) a redeemed people and their little ones correspond not to literal infants in the flesh, but to newborn babes in the family of God." Pardon my saying, that this is the most extraordinary use of Scripture it has ever been my lot to meet. If Israel are to be taken figuratively in this way then they all represented "newborn babes in the family of God," for they had everyone of them been sheltered by blood only a few days. So that if you make such an application of their history you must include fathers as well as children, for all were sheltered at the same time (and, moreover, all sheltered by households. Why this?). The whole of

your reasoning is brought to the ground, for in the matter of redemption the children were as old as their parents. You have therefore not the slightest warrant for making the children represent "new born babes of the family of God." If we treat Scripture in this fanciful way we could arrive at almost any conclusions. Nothing you can say can alter the fact that actual children were baptized at the Red Sea.

Having stated the truth as to Baptism from the Scriptures, and also answered the points raised in your pamphlet, the following conclusions seem to have been reached :—

1. THE BAPTIST VIEW ALTOGETHER TOO LIMITED.

(a) This view is almost entirely confined to that which is *supposed* already to have taken place. This is shown to be defective in two ways. First, it deprives Baptism of its real significance, for nothing is made to depend upon it. Second, it confines the act to a representation of something already true, or to one of obedience. The future is almost entirely lost sight of ; yet in Scripture, as we have seen, the future is the prominent idea.

(b) The Baptist position forces those who adhere to it to divorce the New Testament from the Old ; isolates Christianity from all that went before ; refuses the teaching of some of the types ; and would have us think of one of the greatest privileges the Jews possessed as being entirely abrogated ; and this without one word in the New Testament to that effect.

(c) We have looked in vain for any text in the Bible to tell us that Baptism is to be administered to none but believers only. If you can produce such a text, it will settle the matter.

(d) Moreover the Baptists can find no room in their theory for quite a number of most important statements in the Bible bearing upon Baptism. Eight persons were saved by water at the Flood ; and the faith of only *one* out of the eight is ever mentioned.

Baptism is a "like figure," we are told, and saves us. Yet Baptists rob this of all its meaning by first of all excluding all thought of children being associated with their parents, as was the case with Noah and his family; and then by affirming, not that Baptism saves, but that it only represents that a person is already saved. It is impossible, in the very nature of things, for a Baptist to give an intelligent interpretation of 1 Pet. iii. 21. Nor can he explain satisfactorily Acts xxii. 16 and 1 Cor. x. 1-2. Whenever they are confronted with these Scriptures instead of explaining them, they attempt to explain them away.

2. AS TO HOUSEHOLD BAPTISM.

While the Baptist theory finds no place for much of the teaching on Baptism recorded in the Word of God, the truth of Household Baptism harmonises and embraces it all. It emphasises the prospective aspect of Baptism, for a child is therein committed to Christ and His death: with a view to his whole future. It maintains the Divine principle concerning parents and children—"He and all his"; so that instead of there being an utter want of continuity between God's past and present dealings, as is the case with the Baptist theory, they are seen as one harmonious whole. For we have shewn that the truth as to the "Household" is bound up with the very warp and woof of revelation; and the counterpart of Noah and his family; "a lamb for an house"; Abraham and his Household, is found in Lydia "and her household"; and the Jailer "and all his."

While, in addition to these concrete instances, the very phraseology of the New Testament proves that the theory of the "Household" is incorporated into Christianity. The very mention of Households being baptized; of the Apostle Peter connecting Baptism with Noah and *his family* (eight persons); and the terms of the commission at the close of Matthew's Gospel, prove this.

In conclusion, do these views of Baptism lower our thoughts of the rite or raise them? They are enhanced

a hundredfold. How much more real and solemn Baptism would become if it were regarded from the proper point of view, viz., an act carrying with it its own meaning, and in view of the future. *By that act* an identification with Christ and His death ; a renunciation of the world, sin and the flesh ; and a walking henceforth in newness of life. And, instead of looking upon Baptism as *one* act of obedience, regarding it as a most solemn committal to a life-long course of obedience.

It will be seen therefore that my views of Baptism give it a scope and meaning which yours do not ; and they are, I believe, far more Scriptural than yours. Can this disqualify anyone for ministering the Word, as you suggest ? Surely the ban you would place upon us is as unreasonable as it is unwarranted. You seem to me to be in the position of having only half-a-loaf. Now while half-a-loaf may be better than no bread, I have yet to learn that half-a-loaf is better than a whole one.

The whole position can be put in a nutshell ; (1) There is not a single text of Scripture which states that none but believers only are to be baptized ; (2) There is not a single text which prohibits children being associated with their Christian parents by Baptism ; (3) Had this principle of association, which runs all through the Old Testament, been set aside there must, in the very nature of things, have been some reference to it, for such an alteration involved nothing short of a revolution ; the overturning of all the prevailing ideas and customs both in the Jewish and Gentile world ; whereas not so much as a single sentence is penned upon the subject.

Is Household Baptism, after all, very wide of the mark ?

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

RUSSELL ELLIOTT.

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