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Gas. H. Alexander.

ART. I.—*Sketches of Residence and Travels in Brazil, embracing historical and geographical notices of the Empire and its several provinces.* By Daniel P. Kidder. In two volumes—with illustrations. Philadelphia: Sorin & Ball. London: Wiley & Putnam. 1845. 2 vols. post 8vo.

WHILE we show great avidity for information concerning regions in the old world, we are often ignorant of countries in our own hemisphere. How few of our readers could, on examination, give any intelligent view of the great empire of Brazil! We can answer for ourselves, that the work now on our table has communicated as much that is new and awakening, as any similar volumes we ever opened. Hitherto our sources have been few and imperfect: this is the first work exclusively on Brazil, which has proceeded from the American press. Even the English volumes on the subject are not recent; nor is there any one, the writer of which personally visited more than two or three of the eighteen provinces. Southey's quartos are very much confined to great libraries, and seldom perused; and the continuation by Armitage is still less known.

The very works to which we should naturally turn for information are full of errors. Mr. Kidder has shown this in regard to two of these; and we follow his strictures. In McCulloch's Universal Gazetteer, the blunders are such

in many a private mind it has often done, *i. e.*, seal and settle controversy.

Our only choice is, whether to use it unwittingly and with but half effect, for even in canvassing one verse, we must use it—or to give it such depth and prominence, that we may mould whole arguments upon it.

Wm. Dodge.

ART. IV.—*The General Assembly.*

THE General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church met in the city of Cincinnati, Ohio, May 15th, 1845, and was opened with a sermon, by the Rev. Dr. Junkin, moderator of the last Assembly, from John viii. 33—"The truth shall make you free." The Rev. John M. Krebs, of New York, was elected moderator; the Rev. M. B. Hope, of Philadelphia, temporary clerk; and Dr. Krebs having resigned his office as permanent clerk, the Rev. Robert Davidson, of New Brunswick, was elected in his place.

The house proceeded to appoint a place for the next meeting of the Assembly. Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Charleston and Alleghany city were nominated. The roll was called, and Philadelphia received 122 votes, Alleghany 33, Charleston 20, Cincinnati 1. The next place of meeting, therefore, will be at Philadelphia, in the tenth Presbyterian church.

The several boards of the church made their annual reports, the first being

The Report of the Board of Education.

This is the twenty-fifth year of the existence of the board. In 1831, one of the members said, the society was dead, and the Philadelphia brethren might bury it; but since then they have raised \$400,000, and educated 1500 students. The number of candidates during the past year has been 11; of these there have been in their Theological course, 137; in their Collegiate course, 162; Academical course, 68, under the immediate care of Presbyteries, and the stages of their studies unknown, 13; teaching to procure funds, 13. Of these 4 have died during the year; 1 has been dropped for not reporting; 3 have withdrawn on account of ill health; 11 have gone into other means of support,

and 54 have finished their studies and gone into the field of labour. Thirteen have been discontinued from the funds—not because they were destitute of piety or talents—but simply because they fell short of an elevated standard of education. The report contained an able argument in favour of the beneficiary system of education, and an answer to the various objections urged against it, in which it was stated that of the 250 ministers in the church without charge, only nine had been educated on this plan.

In reference to this report, the Assembly adopted a series of resolutions, commending “the fidelity with which its arduous, delicate and peculiarly embarrassing duties” had been performed; urging peculiar caution on presbyteries in the selection of beneficiaries, and upon teachers fidelity in reporting on their progress in knowledge; protesting against allowing a candidate under the care of the Board to slight his pledge, by entering the ministry, without a thorough course of preparatory study, or without devoting three years to a theological course; and commending the institution to the increasing confidence of the churches.

It must be admitted, that this Board has peculiar difficulties with which to contend. When the subject of Domestic or Foreign Missions is presented, it commends itself at once to the judgment and conscience, but when a call is made to assist young men in gaining an education, the question is started, is it best to assist them? would it not be better to let them struggle on by themselves? And if the conclusion is arrived at, that assistance should be given, still there are a great many objections presented as to the way in which it is done, or as to the judgment exercised in the selection or guidance of the candidates. The agents of this Board, therefore, have a perpetual conflict to maintain; and when they are successful in one place, they have to renew the struggle in another. It is highly desirable that the church generally, would calmly consider this whole subject, and come to a settled conviction as to what ought to be done, and not leave the brethren who have to bear this burden, under the necessity of continually arguing the matter anew. Is then the object of the Board a good one? Is it desirable that young men who need it, should be assisted in preparing for the work of the ministry? One of the most common objections to the affirmative, is, that it is derogatory and injurious to the character of young men to receive such assistance. Is it derogatory to a man to re-

ceive a salary? On what ground is a salary paid, but the scriptural and obviously righteous principle, that a man who devotes his time and labour to the service of any body, should be sustained by that body? If these young men devote themselves to the service of the church, they come within the operation of that principle. A pastor is supported while he is studying, and for his studying, as much as when he is preaching. A missionary is as much entitled to support during the year or two which he must devote to acquiring the language of the heathen, as when he is able to instruct them. And so the man who devotes himself to the service of the church, which is commonly a very self-denying service, is as much entitled to a support, if he needs it, when preparing for the ministry, as when engaged in the active discharge of its duties. The church in all ages has recognised the justice of this principle. What are religious foundations in the universities, the colleges, and the various educational establishments in all Christian countries, but so many provisions for the gratuitous or cheap education. Every enlightened civil government acts on the same principle. If the state needs men for any special service, she does not hesitate to prepare them for it, whenever the necessity exists. It is hard to see why a youth educated at the Polytechnic school at Paris, the military academy at Berlin, or at our own West Point, should be regarded as a high-minded man, and a candidate for the ministry, if educated by the church, should be stigmatised as a charity student. And if he is unjustly so stigmatised, it will do him good, if he bear the reproach with humility and meekness. It is, however, unjust, and there would be nothing either derogatory or injurious in thus educating men at the expense of the church, if the matter were viewed in a proper light.

Another objection, however, is that there is no necessity for such a Board; we have ministers enough; the supply is more than equal to the demand. We have no doubt that this is the most formidable objection with which the friends of the Board have to contend. It must be conceded that in some parts of the country there does seem to be a superabundance of ministers. If a vacancy occurs in a desirable position, there is often a crowd of candidates for the post. This, however, is true only of a few parts of the country. And it is unavoidable, that some men from their age, some from the state of their health, others, it may be for the want of zeal, are prevented from going to the more difficult

fields, and thus produce an undue accumulation at particular points. This, however, does not prove there is no need of more ministers. Look at the single fact, that our population doubles itself every twenty-five years. Take into consideration, that this population is so scattered, that instead of one minister being sufficient for every two thousand people, he cannot, in many places, adequately serve as many hundred. There are at the present time at least five hundred vacant congregations in our church; and the Board of Missions have stated that there are from five hundred to one thousand places where congregations could be advantageously organized, if we only had the men. There are but four Presbyterian ministers in Texas, where one man now is worth as much as ten may be a few years hence. There are whole districts of our country containing forty or fifty thousand people, with scarcely a single settled religious instructor among them.

If, then, it is right that young men who need aid should be assisted in preparing for the ministry, and if there is a demand for more labourers, we may be certain that if our church does not educate her own young men, other churches will do it for us. We shall lose them. They will go where other and juster views of this matter prevail. We do not doubt that the most effectual method that could be taken by any denomination of Christians, in this country, to cut the nerves of their own strength, would be to resolve to do nothing in this business, but let their young men shift for themselves.

Admitting the propriety and even the necessity of having such a Board, is the course pursued by our Board a wise one, does it educate the right kind of men? In answer to this question it may be admitted that mistakes may and must occur; that it is impossible to see into the hearts of men, or always to form a just estimate of their abilities. But let it be considered, first, that all due care, as far as general arrangements are concerned, are taken to secure a wise selection of candidates. The executive officers of the Board, cannot be personally acquainted with every part of the church and all the young men in it. The selection and recommendation rest, where they ought to do, with the presbyteries within whose bounds the young men live. They have the best opportunities of judging of their fitness, and on them must rest the responsibility of the choice. Then again, look at the result. The Board, we are told, have

aided nearly fifteen hundred young men, and of these, the secretary informs us, he can find "only nine who are not labouring faithfully in the field; and of these nine some are in all human probability disabled." Again, of all the presbyterian ministers "who are labouring in frontier and destitute regions and among the heathen, two-thirds have been" educated by the Board. Has then the money of the church been hitherto thrown away? Has not the Board been wonderfully guided in selecting the right kind of men, men who are enduring more hardness in the service of Christ, than any other class of men in the church?

It is further objected that the Board are educating "a class ministry," introducing into the sacred office a set of men deficient in cultivation and good manners. To this it may be remarked, first, that in this country refinement depends very little upon birth, but mainly on education and subsequent intercourse with society. If you take a young man and give him a liberal education and place him among educated men, he becomes in every respect their equal. And, secondly, the objection is not founded in fact. Since the institution of the Theological Seminary in this place, about one half of its students have received aid from the church, we are persuaded that the moiety thus aided have, as to piety, as to talents, scholarship, and manners, been quite equal to those who have needed no assistance. In a multitude of cases they have been the sons of clergymen, or of widows, or of educated men in restricted circumstances. And even when taken from the uneducated classes of society, the refining influence of piety, knowledge and social intercourse, has in most instances, placed them on a par with their fellows. The records of the Board will show that the least useful class of our ministers, has not been that which has passed through their hands. We therefore fully believe that both the object of the Board, and the manner in which they have discharged their duties, are worthy of the approbation and support of the church.

Board of Foreign Missions.

The Assembly met on the evening of May 19th, for the purpose of celebrating the Anniversary of the Board of Foreign Missions. Walter Lowrie, Esq. the Corresponding Secretary, read extracts from the Annual Report, of which the following is a brief abstract:

Receipts, \$82,672 84. Expenditures, \$81,469 71.

Publications.—The Missionary Chronicle, in newspaper and pamphlet form; The Foreign Missionary; Annual Report of 1844; The Duty of Christians in relation to the Conversion of the World, &c.

New Missionaries.—To China, five clergymen were sent during the year; to Western Africa, one; to the Indian tribes, two; to Texas, one.

Missions.—In Texas, four clergymen at as many places. Among the Iowa, Creek and Chippewa Indians, five clergymen, two teachers, one farmer; an important manual labour boarding school commenced among the Iowas, supported partly by their own funds; a similar institution commenced among the Creeks; 150 scholars at schools previously formed among these tribes; a church organized among the Creeks; about twenty members in the church among the Chippewas. In Western Africa, two coloured clergymen among the colonists in Liberia; schools at Monrovia and Sinoe, with 130 scholars; church at Monrovia of 35 members; two clergymen (one of them coloured) at two stations among the Kroos, between Monrovia and Cape Palmas; one American and two native teachers; boarding school of 40 scholars at Settra Kroo. In North India, three separate missions, the Lodianna, Allahabad, and Furrukhabad; with six stations; sixteen American clergymen and one native clergyman, ordained by the presbytery of Furrukhabad in November last; one printer, one teacher, one female teacher, one native licentiate preacher, ten native Christian teachers and catechists, besides other native teachers and assistants; four printing presses, from which nearly 8,000,000 pages of the Sacred Scriptures and other religious works were issued in four languages; schools at all the stations, viz: thirteen common schools with 300 scholars; four boarding schools with about 200 pupils, mostly orphans, and all supported by the missions; four high schools, with about 300 scholars; churches at four stations, to which a number of converts were added during the year. In China, three separate missions, with stations for the present at Macao, Amoy, and Ningpo; seven clergymen, two physicians, one printer; printing press at Macao, with metallic types, in successful operation. In Papal Europe, efforts are made to spread the Gospel, by means of a correspondence opened during the year with the Evangelical Societies of France and Geneva, and moneys have been re-

mitted for that purpose. Among the Jews, a mission proposed.

Summary.—Missions in six general fields, viz: Texas, the Indian tribes, Africa, India, China, and Europe; stations, 22; clergymen, or ordained ministers, 37; physicians, 2; printers, 2; teachers, 5; native Christian licentiate, catechists, and teachers, 11; numerous native teachers and assistants; numerous schools; twelve churches; the statistics of European missions not included.

Mr. Lowrie accompanied his report with a statement, that since he had reached Cincinnati, he had received the painful intelligence of the destruction of the printing establishment in Lodianna by fire. The loss is estimated at \$10,000. He had also received another letter containing the gratifying intelligence that one friend of the Board had forwarded to them a letter containing five \$1,000 notes, to re-establish the press in Lodianna.

Addresses were delivered by Mr. Lowrie, Drs. McGill and Edgar, and Mr. Graves.

The Report was committed to a committee, and the Assembly adjourned.

This committee specially recommend that immediate efforts be made to repair the loss experienced by the destructive fire in the missionary premises at Lodianna, and renew the ordinary expressions of confidence in the Board and zeal for the cause.

Report of the Board of Domestic Missions.

The Report was read by Dr. McDowell, the Corresponding Secretary, from which it appears that the whole number of Missionaries in commission during the year has been 346. Of this number 198 were in commission at the commencement of the year, and 148 new appointments have been made. This is an advance upon the number of any previous year. Of the whole number, 203 are located west of the mountains, and 143 east of the mountains including the Northern and Middle States, and the whole of the South. Of the new appointments 89 have been in the West, and 59 in the East and South. The whole number of churches and stations supplied during the year were over 1000. The Missionaries are stationed in 24 states and territories, and the whole amount of labour performed is 280 years. The additions to the churches on certificate were

1300, on examination 2500, total 3800. The receipts into the treasury have been \$50,522 05.

Sabbath schools have been greatly multiplied. Temperance is now on the advance although in the first part of the year it was on the retrograde. A few of the missionaries have been the instruments of interesting revivals. The number of missionaries and the amount of funds collected during the year have been greater than during any preceding year.

The committee to whom this report, together with the report of the committee on church extension, and sundry memorials on the removal of the Board were referred, recommended the adoption of several resolutions. The portion of their report relating to the removal of the Board, is as follows :

“The very great extent of the field of operation of the Board, extending from the New England states to the extreme boundary of civilization in the West, and from the Northern Lakes to Florida, embracing every variety of habits, feelings and interests, and an equal diversity in the nature of the feeble churches and destitutions to be supplied, renders it next to impossible for any body of men located at any given point within the territory, however wise and energetic they may be, to manage to the best advantage in all the cases that arise. The present is also a great crisis in the affairs of the Protestant churches of our land, owing to the rapid increase of Popery and other heresies, many of which are entirely local in their character, and require to be promptly met by suitable men. The Valley of the Mississippi has especially been selected as the great field in which Popery has declared her design to fight the battle for empire in this Republic. With these considerations in view, together with the fact that the churches are by no means awake to the dangers which environ them, and the necessity of not suffering themselves to be outdone by the other Protestant denominations, while the General Assembly deem it altogether inexpedient to change the location of the Board, they adopt the following plan for giving increased activity and efficiency to its operations :

“1. That a Committee be appointed by the Board with similar powers to that already located at Philadelphia, to hold its meetings at Louisville, Kentucky, and to report monthly to the Board.

“2. That a Secretary and General Agent be appointed

by the Board, to labour in connection with the above Western Committee, with a Treasurer and other necessary officers.

“3. That the supervision of the Western and South-Western fields, the boundaries of which are to be designated by the Board, be committed to the above Committee, so far as procuring and locating missionaries and obtaining funds are concerned. But neither the Eastern nor Western Committee shall locate a missionary, for whose support they have not in their respective Treasuries the necessary means, without the consent of the Board.

“4. That the Board at its monthly meetings, shall, upon the reports of these committees, make such transfers of funds as shall be found most expedient for furthering the best interests of the work, and shall assign the particular fields in which the agents shall labour.”

There were three plans suggested to the Assembly. First, to allow the Board and its executive committee to remain as at present in Philadelphia; second, to remove the whole concern to the West; third, to allow the Board and one committee to remain in Philadelphia, and to appoint a co-ordinate committee for the West. As often happens in cases of compromise, the plan which apparently is least eligible and least satisfactory to all parties, the third above mentioned, was adopted. We do not pretend to be competent judges, in this matter, but we think we can see strong reasons for having the centre of operations in the East, and also very plausible ones for having it in the West, but we confess we cannot see how it can well be both East and West, at the same time. In such matters, however, it is best to do what brethren wish to have done; and since it is very plain that the Western brethren were bent on a change, and considered, as Dr. Potts expressed it, the question to be “whether Western men were fit to be managers of an executive committee of one of the Boards of the church,” we do not see how the Assembly could fail to concede the point. They plausibly urged that Western men would have a better knowledge of the field; feel a deeper interest in it; be able to present its claims more forcibly, and to rouse the church more effectually to the work of meeting its demands; that much less was done than the case required, less by far than Romanists were doing, less even than other denominations were effecting; and that Eastern men could not fail to give a rather too willing

ear to the calls for help from Eastern churches. On the other hand, it was contended that it was a principle, sustained by reason and experience, that your head quarters should be near your resources; that so long as the funds for the support of domestic missions came principally from the East, it was expedient and proper that the centre of management should be there; that unity and efficiency required one central body; that the Board was doing more than ever hitherto had been done in this work, and as much as other denominations, if any fair standard of comparison be adopted; that the interests of the West had not been postponed to those of the East; that the Board was the creature of the presbyteries, and must do their bidding; that all the facilities for carrying on its operations were greater eastward than westward of the mountains.

It may be presumed that both parties were influenced by a sincere desire to promote the best interests of the church, and whether the plan adopted be in itself wise or not, all will doubtless endeavor to give it a fair trial.

Board of Publication.

There have been 28 new books published, and 53,000 copies; 18 of these Sabbath school books; 71,500 copies have been printed from stereotype plates. The financial department is in a flourishing condition. The expenses of the year were \$37,527 71. The report asked the attention and the prayers of the church.

In the report of the committee to which this subject was referred, we find the opinion expressed, that the affairs of the Board have been managed with great prudence and fidelity; that the Assembly approve of a rigid adherence to the terms of sale originally adopted, and discountenance the establishment of depositories at the risk of the Board, or on doubtful credit; that it is recommended to employ colporteurs in every part of the country, who will purchase the books of the Board, and dispose of them "for the profits arising from the sales;" and that the preparation and publication of a new digest of the important decisions of the Assembly, is advised.

Slavery Question.

Several memorials on the subject of slavery having been presented to the Assembly, they were referred to Messrs. Rice, Lord, McGill, Lacy, N. N. Hall, Leavitt, and Dunlap.

This committee subsequently made the following report, which was adopted, as follows :

“The memorials may be divided into three classes, viz.

“1. Those which represent the system of Slavery as it exists in these United States, as a great evil, and pray this General Assembly to adopt measures for the amelioration of the condition of the slaves.

“2. Those which ask the Assembly to receive memorials on the subject of slavery, to allow a full discussion of it, and to enjoin upon the members of our church, residing in states whose laws forbid the slaves being taught to read, to seek by all lawful means the repeal of those laws.

“3. Those which represent slavery as a moral evil, a heinous sin in the sight of God, calculated to bring upon the church the curse of God, and calling for the exercise of discipline in the case of those who persist in maintaining or justifying the relation of master to slaves.

“The question which is now unhappily agitating and dividing other branches of the church, and which is pressed upon the attention of the Assembly by the three classes of memorialists just named, is whether the holding of slaves is under all circumstances a heinous sin, calling for the discipline of the church.

“The church of Christ is a spiritual body, whose jurisdiction extends only to the religious faith, and moral conduct of her members. She cannot legislate where Christ has not legislated, nor make terms of membership which he has not made.—The question, therefore, which this Assembly is called upon to decide, is this:—Do the Scriptures teach that the holding of slaves, without regard to circumstances, is a sin, the renunciation of which, should be made a condition of membership in the church of Christ?

“It is impossible to answer this question in the affirmative, without contradicting some of the plainest declarations in the Word of God. That slavery existed in the days of Christ and his Apostles, is an admitted fact. That they did not denounce the relation itself as sinful, as inconsistent with Christianity; that slaveholders were admitted to membership in the churches organized by the Apostles; that whilst they were required to treat their slaves with kindness, and as rational, accountable, immortal beings, and if Christians, as brethren in the Lord, they were not commanded to emancipate them; that slaves were obliged to be “obedient to their masters according to the flesh, with

fear and trembling, with singleness of heart as unto Christ," are facts which meet the eye of every reader of the New Testament. This Assembly cannot, therefore, denounce the holding of slaves as necessarily a heinous and scandalous sin, calculated to bring upon the Church the curse of God, without charging the Apostles of Christ with conniving at such sin, introducing into the church such sinners, and thus bringing upon them the curse of the Almighty.

"In so saying, however, the Assembly are not to be understood, as denying that there is evil connected with slavery. Much less do they approve those defective and oppressive laws by which, in some of the states, it is regulated. Nor would they by any means countenance the traffic of slaves for the sake of gain; the separation of husbands and wives, parents and children, for the sake of "filthy lucre," or for the convenience of the master, or cruel treatment of slaves in any respect. Every Christian and philanthropist certainly should seek by all peaceable and lawful means the repeal of unjust and oppressive laws, and the amendment of such as are defective, so as to protect the slaves from cruel treatment by wicked men and secure to them the right to receive religious instruction.

"Nor is the Assembly to be understood as countenancing the idea that masters may regard their servants as *mere property*, not as human beings, rational, accountable, immortal. The scriptures prescribe not only the duties of servants, but of masters also, warning the latter to discharge those duties, "knowing that their master is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him."

"The Assembly intend simply to say, that since Christ and his inspired Apostles did not make the holding of slaves a bar of communion, we, as a court of Christ, have no authority to do so; since they did not attempt to remove it from the church by legislation, we have no authority to legislate on the subject. We feel constrained further to say that however desirable it may be to ameliorate the condition of the slaves in the Southern and Western States, or to remove slavery from our country, these objects we are fully persuaded, can never be secured by ecclesiastical legislation. Much less can they be attained by those indiscriminate denunciations against the slaveholders, without regard to their character or circumstances, which have, to so great an extent, characterized the movements of

modern abolitionists, which, so far from removing the evils complained of, tend only to perpetuate and aggravate them.

“The Apostles of Christ sought to ameliorate the condition of slaves, not by denouncing and excommunicating their masters, but by teaching both masters and slaves the glorious doctrines of the gospel, and enjoining upon such the discharge of their relative duties. Thus only can the church of Christ, as such, now improve the condition of the slaves in our country.

“As to the extent of the evils involved in slavery, and the best methods of removing them, various opinions prevail, and neither the scriptures nor our constitution authorize this body to present any particular course to be pursued by the churches under our care. The assembly cannot but rejoice, however, to learn that the ministers and churches in the slave holding states, are awakening to a deeper sense of their obligation, to extend to the slave population generally, the means of grace, and that many slaveholders not professedly religious, favour this object. We earnestly exhort them to abound more and more in this good work. We would exhort every believing master to remember that his master is also in heaven, and in view of all the circumstances in which he is placed, to act in the spirit of the golden rule, ‘Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you even the same to them.’

“In view of the above stated principles and facts,

“Resolved, First, That the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States was originally organized, and has since continued the bond of union in the church upon the conceded principle that the existence of domestic slavery, under the circumstances in which it is found in the southern portion of the country, is no bar to Christian communion.

“Second, That the petitions that ask the Assembly to make the holding of slaves a matter of discipline, do virtually require this judicatory to dissolve itself, and abandon the organization under which, by the Divine blessing, it has so long prospered. The tendency is evidently to separate the northern from the southern portion of the church; a result which every good citizen must deplore, as tending to the dissolution of the union of our beloved country, and which every enlightened Christian will oppose as bringing about a ruinous and unnecessary schism between brethren who maintain a common faith.”

The yeas and nays being called on the adoption of this report, the vote stood, affirmative 164, negative 12, non-liquet 3, excused 1. Mr. Robinson and six other members presented their dissent from this decision in the following words: "The undersigned ask leave to dissent from the action on the report on slavery, because they think it does in some important parts contravene former action on this subject, particularly the testimony of the Assembly in 1818."

Such a harmonious decision of a question, so difficult so delicate and so exciting, is matter for sincere thankfulness to God. Our Church we trust is thus saved from the excitement which has rent asunder other denominations, and which threatens to weaken, if not to destroy, the bonds of our national union. We have long entertained the opinion that there is no serious difference of opinion on this subject, between the great majority of good men at the north and south. The danger was that they would not understand each other, that the one party would be extreme in their denunciations of evils all admitted, and the other so sensitive as to allow nothing to be said on the subject. Providence has kindly ordered it so that the fears of his people have been disappointed, and instead of weeping over a ruptured church, we are called upon to rejoice over its more cordial union.

The Marriage Question.

The vexed question concerning the lawfulness of marriage between parties nearly related by affinity, was again brought before the Assembly and discussed at great length. The question came up on the report of a committee appointed two years ago, whose report was printed in the appendix of the minutes of the Assembly of last year. Mr. Goldsmith moved the indefinite postponement of the report, with a view to send down an overture to the presbyteries for the alteration of the book. This motion was opposed by Dr. N. Rice and Dr. Junkin, and advocated by the mover and Mr. Lacey. The motion prevailed; whereupon Mr. Goldsmith moved, "That the Assembly send down to the presbyteries the following question, viz. Shall the last sentence of the 4th section of the 24th chapter of the Confession of Faith, the words, 'The man may not marry any of his wife's kindred, nearer in blood than he may of his own,' &c., be stricken out? And that

they be required to answer it at the next Assembly." This motion gave rise to a long debate, interrupted by various motions for indefinite postponement, and substitutes. The question however was urged to a decision, and the vote stood, Ayes 79, Nays 98. So the motion was lost. In the course of the discussion, Dr. N. Rice moved to postpone Mr. Goldsmith's resolution, with a view of introducing the following: "Resolved, That it is not expedient to overture the Presbyteries on this subject. Resolved, That it be, and it hereby is solemnly enjoined upon all our ministers henceforth to abstain entirely from solemnizing or encouraging such marriages, as are declared in our Confession of Faith to be forbidden in the word of God; and that it be, and hereby is, enjoined upon all our sessions and presbyteries to apply the discipline of the church to all members of our church who may hereafter contract such marriages, and that they refuse to receive into the church any person so related." This motion was lost by a vote of 84 to 80. A committee consisting of Messrs. Edgar, Lord, McMaster, and Leavitt, was subsequently appointed to bring in a minute expressing the views of the Assembly on this subject. This committee made a report in substance the same as the resolutions proposed by Dr. N. Rice, "leaving all former cases of violations of this law to be disposed of by the lower judicatories as their wisdom and prudence may direct," but enjoining the observance and enforcing the rule in future. This report was ultimately disposed of by being indefinitely postponed.

The subject was also brought up judicially by a complaint of Mr. McQueen, against the Presbytery of Fayetteville for having refused to restore him to the functions of the ministry, from which he had been for some years suspended, for having married the sister of his deceased wife. After the parties had been heard, Dr. Hamilton offered the following resolution, viz. "Resolved, That the prayer of the memorialist be granted so far as that this General Assembly recommend to the Presbytery of Fayetteville to reconsider their action in the case of Archibald McQueen, and if in their judgment it should appear conducive to the peace of the church, and to the promotion of religion in the region around them, to restore Mr. McQueen to the communion of the church, and to the exercise of the functions of the gospel ministry, on the ground that in his case, the ends of discipline are attained by the operation of the sen-

tence under which McQueen has been lying for a period of three years." This resolution was adopted, ayes 96, noes 62.

It is obvious that there are three different opinions prevailing in our church in reference to these marriages. First, there are many who consider them as unlawful, but not invalid; who regard them as violations of a general rule laid down in scripture for the preservation of domestic purity and peace; but though, thus censurable, not necessarily invalid. Just as a Christian's marrying a Pagan is unlawful, inasmuch as it is a violation of the general rule laid down in scripture, for the preservation of domestic religion, yet such a marriage is not invalid. To this class must belong all who voted for the resolution proposed by Dr. N. Rice, or for that proposed by the committee, or for the restoration of Mr. McQueen. On no other ground could such votes be given. All those resolutions imply that the parties thus married, though they did wrong in marrying, are not living in sin. Dr. Rice would hardly have ventured to propose, or eighty members of the Assembly to sustain a resolution, that all drunkards now in the church should be let alone in their intemperance, but that sessions and presbyteries must be careful not to admit any more. All the above resolutions, therefore, are virtual declarations that the marriages in question, though unlawful are still valid.

A second class take the ground that they are both unlawful and invalid, and of course that persons living in such connexion, cannot properly be either admitted to the church, or retained in it. A third class, and one which appears to be rapidly increasing, hold that the marriages in question are neither unlawful nor invalid. It is certainly a matter of regret, that such diversity of opinion exists; but it must be remembered that it is a difference of judgment, as to what the law of God allows or forbids, and therefore is one in which one class cannot be called to concede to the others. The only question is, what in such circumstances ought to be done? Shall we submit to the anomalous state in which the church has so long continued? or shall we divide? We believe there is not in the world so large a body of ministers, who more thoroughly adhere to their standard of faith than the clergy of our church; yet on this point, it is plain they differ among themselves, and from the Confession of Faith. For more than a hundred years this differ-

ence has existed ; and the several sessions and presbyteries have been allowed to act on their own views on this subject, and the church has during all this period, exhibited the irregularity of men being disciplined in one place, and left uncensured in another, though they have done the same thing. The Assembly (as formerly the old Synod,) has almost always acted upon the principle of neither restoring a man condemned by his session or presbytery for such a marriage, nor coercing the lower courts to make it a matter of discipline. This state of things must be allowed to continue, or we must divide. If the Assembly either forces a lower court to restore, or to sentence a man, contrary to its own judgment, for such a marriage, in other words, if this matter is made a term of communion, then the church must divide. We do not believe that either party would be willing to push the matter to such an issue.

Romish Baptism.

The question as to the validity of baptism as administered by a Roman Catholic priest was brought before the Assembly, by an overture from the presbytery of Ohio, which gave rise to a long and interesting debate. Drs. Junkin and N. Rice, Professor Thornwell, Dr. McGill, and others advocated the negative of the question, Dr. Lord, Mr. Aitken, and a few others the affirmative. In favour of returning a negative answer to the question, the votes were 169, against 8, non liquet 6. We feel almost overwhelmed by such a vote. Any decision of the General Assembly is entitled to great respect, but a decision sustained by such a majority, almost imposes silence on all dissentients. And yet we believe it will take the church by surprise. Men will be disposed to ask what new light has been discovered? What stern necessity has induced the Assembly to pronounce Calvin, Luther, and all the men of that generation, as well as thousands who with no other than Romish baptism have since been received into the Protestant churches, to have lived and died unbaptized? The suddenness with which this decision has been made will add not a little to the surprise and regret with which it will be received. The judgment has come before the argument. We do not doubt that the brethren who urged the course adopted by the Assembly, have examined the subject, but we are very sure the church has not. We question whether one in twenty of our ministers have ever

given it more than a passing consideration. Yet as the Assembly professes to speak in the name of the whole church, it would seem proper that no decision so important and so deeply affecting the character of the whole body in the eyes of Christendom, should be pronounced, until means had been taken to ascertain the views of the church generally. The Assembly has indeed the right to resolve all questions of casuistry, regularly presented, and to give advice to the lower courts when requested. We do not question the right. We only venture to question the wisdom of giving an answer suddenly, in opposition to all previous practice, and to the principles of every other protestant church. The fact that the answer is new, creates a reason for being slow to pronounce it. Had a judicial case been presented involving such a question, the Assembly would have been bound to give judgment according to its conscience. But we conceive the cases to be rare, in which it can be right to take up a question *in thesi*, and to enunciate a dictum at variance with all previously adopted principles and usage. We are very sure the United States court would be very slow to enunciate, without necessity, a principle of law in opposition to all precedent in that and all similar courts.

We shall very briefly and respectfully state the reasons, which constrain us to dissent from the decision that Romish baptism is invalid. We could do this, to our own satisfaction at least, by simply asking, What is baptism? "It is a sacrament, wherein the washing of water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our engrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagements to be the Lord's." There are three essential points included in this definition.

1st. Baptism is a washing with water. Hence a washing with sand, wine, oil, or milk is not baptism. Instances are recorded in which men baptized in the desert with sand, have been rebaptized; and great surprise was expressed at Beza's declaration; *Ego quovis alio liquore non minus rite, quam aqua baptizarem*, Epist. II. ad Tillium. Water, however, by common consent is essential to the ordinance, because it is commanded, and because it belongs to the significancy of the rite.

2d. But not every washing with water is the Christian ordinance of baptism, it must be a washing in the name of

the Trinity. Hence washing with water by an anti-trinitarian, is not baptism. When the controversy first arose in the church about the baptism of heretics, there were two extreme opinions. Cyprian, and those African bishops who were under his influence, took the ground that the baptism of all those who separated from the outward communion of the Catholic church, whether for heresy or schism, was null and void. In this view the bishops of Asia Minor generally coincided; a fact easily accounted for as all the heretics with whom they were in conflict denied the very essentials of the gospel. Stephen, bishop of Rome, went to the opposite extreme, admitting the baptism of all kinds of heretics to be valid. Both parties soon settled down upon middle ground. In the council of Arles, A. D. 314, when nearly two hundred bishops were present, it was determined; "If any one return from his heresy to the church, let the Catholic priest question him about the creed; and if they perceive that he was baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, only the imposition of hands shall be given him, that he may receive the Holy Ghost. But if upon examination, he answers not the Trinity, (that is, that he was not baptized in the name of the Trinity,) let him be rebaptized." To the same effect was the decision of the great council of Nice, which directed that the Novatians should be received without baptism, but required a repetition of the rite in the case of the disciples of Paul of Samosata. There was subsequently a dispute whether baptism by those Arians who retained the orthodox formula was valid or not. "The more general and prevailing interpretation of the Nicene canon was, that the baptism of all heretics and schismatics, who did not reject the Catholic form of baptizing in the name of the Trinity, was to be received, however they might be heterodox in their faith and opinions. This was certainly the sense of the council of Laodicea, of the second general council of Constantinople, and the second council of Arles and Trullo; as also of St. Austin, St. Jerome, Gennadius, Ursinus Afer, Siricius, Leo, Innocentius, the author under the name of Justin Martyr, and the generality of the ancients."*

Protestants have not gone to this length, as they require a professed faith in the doctrine of the Trinity, in order

* See Bingham's *Scholastic History of Lay baptism*. c. I. in his *Origines Ecclesticæ*, and Neander's *History*, vol. I. pp. 565—577, German edition.

to the validity of baptism, because it is from its nature an act of worship of the Triune God. With one accord, however, they have acquiesced in the judgment of the ancient church, that the baptism of heretics is not void on account of heresy, provided they retain the doctrine of the Trinity, and baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit. This is the doctrine of the Lutheran church, see Gerhard's *Loci Communes*, vol. 9. L. 21. c. 4., where he sustains the practice of his church, by quoting the words of Anselm: "Baptisma a quocunque datum fuerit, sive a bono sive a malo, sive a Catholico, sive ab haeretico juxta morem ecclesiae in nomine Patris, Filii et Spiritus sancti, tantundem valet."

The same doctrine as to baptism by heretics was held by the French and Geneva churches. See Turrittin, vol. iii. p. 442. "Some heretics," he says, "corrupt the very substance of baptism, as the ancient Arians, modern Socinians, rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity; others, retaining the essentials of the ordinance and the true doctrine of the Trinity, err as to other doctrines, as formerly the Novatians and Donatists, and now the Papists and Arminians. The baptisms of the former class are to be rejected; those of the latter are retained, although they err as to many doctrines, and their baptisms, in circumstantialia, are polluted by various ceremonies." See also Pictet, *La Theologie Chretienne*, Lib. xv. c. 13. The church of Holland adopted the same view; see Morus, *Commentarius Perpetuus*, &c., vol. v. p. 448. *Docetur esse distinguendam haeresin; a. abditam et professione externa expressam; b. retinentem essentialia baptismi, et evertentem eadem: adeo ut Baptismus administratur in nomen Dei Triunius veri agniti; vel fiat luto, quo perit analogia inter signum et rem signatam; aut non fiat in nomine Dei Triunius, sed in coetu antitrinitario. In posteriori casu baptismus repetendus censetur, non in priori.* No one questions this being the doctrine of the church of England, since her practice on the subject has been uniform, and sustained by the highest judicial decisions. It is, therefore; the doctrine of the universal church, that baptism administered in the name of the Trinity, by one professing faith in that doctrine, is not void on account of heresy. Such is the doctrine of our standards which declares baptism to be a washing with water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The ground of this universally received view of the subject is obvious. The validity of

baptism depends upon the appointment of God, and not upon the character or faith of the administrator; and therefore, any baptism which is administered according to His appointment, the church has felt constrained to admit to be baptism.

3. There is, however, a third particular included in this definition of baptism; it must be with the design "to signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagements to be the Lord's." There are two things included in this statement; participation of the benefits of the covenant, and the avowal of our purpose to be the Lord's. No washing with water, even if in the name of the Trinity, is Christian baptism, unless administered with the ostensible design of signifying, sealing and applying the benefits of the covenant of grace. This is what the ancient church meant by "intention" as essential to this ordinance; and which the papists have characteristically perverted. By intention, they mean the secret purpose of the priest; against which view of the doctrine, all Protestants protested, as one of the devices of the man of sin, to make the people dependent on the priesthood. The ancient and true doctrine is that intention refers to the ostensible and professed design of the administration. No washing with water, in the name of the Trinity, therefore, is baptism, if done in sport, or mockery, or with the professed design of healing the sick, or raising the dead. It must be with the professed, ostensible intention of complying with the command of Christ, and of doing what he requires to be done, by those who accept the covenant of grace. From this it follows, that no baptism administered by a Jew, a pagan, a child, or an idiot, can be valid, because in all such cases, the requisite design must be absent. A Jew cannot, being such, join in an act of Christian worship, for he would thereby cease to be a Jew. As baptism includes the invocation of the Trinity, as a religious act, no man who does not profess to believe in the Trinity, can profess to join in such act.

The doctrine of our standards, therefore, is the precise doctrine of the ancient church, viz., that there are three things essential to baptism; the matter, form, and intention. The matter, is the washing with water; the form, washing in the name of the Trinity; the intention, not the popish notion of the secret purpose of the priest, but the professed, ostensible design of the act. When these three things are

found, there, according to our standards, and the common doctrine of the church, is baptism.

Such being the formal and authoritative definition of the rite, in order to determine in any given case, whether any [particular baptism is valid, all we have to do is, to ask whether it has these essential characteristics. Is it a washing with water? Is it administered in the name of the Trinity? Is the professed design of the rite to signify, seal and apply the benefits of the new covenant? If so, then, by our standards, it is baptism. To determine the question before us, we must, therefore, ascertain whether,

1st. Romish baptism is a washing with water? The Romish catechism defines baptism to be "The sacrament of regeneration by water with the word." In answer to the question, What is the matter of baptism? the Romish theologians answer; *Est omnis et sola aqua naturalis, seu elementaris, "any and only natural water."* One of their favourite *dicta* is the saying of Augustine: *Quid est Baptismus? Lavacrum aquae in verbo: tolle aquam, non est baptismus; tolle verbum, non est baptismus.* Water, therefore is, according to the Romish church, essential to baptism, and as far as "the matter" is concerned, nothing else is. The water may be marine, or rain, or river, or from a spring, or mineral; it may be clear or turbid, warm or cold, but it must be water. Baptism with mud, wine, milk, oil, saliva, tears, &c., the Romish theologians pronounce invalid.* Their doctrine on this point is identical with our own.

We were therefore greatly surprised to see that it was stated on the floor of the Assembly that Romanists did not baptize with water, but with water mixed with oil. Suppose this to be true, water with oil thrown on it is still water. How many things are mixed with the wine we use at the Lord's supper? Is wine adulterated with water no longer wine? Did not our Saviour call the paschal cup wine, though mixed with water? This objection is trivial. So long as the element used is water, and so long as the significancy of the rite is made to consist in washing with water, the matter of the ordinance is retained. But,

* In answer to the question, what kind of water may be used in Baptism, "R. Talis est aqua marina, pluvialis, fontana, fluvialis, mineralis; sive turbida sit sive clara, frigida vel calida; sive benedicta sive non. . . . E contra invalidus est Baptismus collatus in luto, vino, pingui cerevisia, laete, oleo, saliva, sudore, lacrymis," &c.—Den's Theology; tom. v. p. 158.

as far as we know, the objection is unfounded in fact. There are various ceremonies which precede, attend and follow the rite as administered in the Romish church; among which is Chrism; or anointing with oil, but these ceremonies are not represented as entering into the nature of the ordinance, or making any part of it.* They are treated of and explained separately. First, Baptism is declared to be a washing with water; and then the ceremonies accompanying this washing are stated and explained. In treating of the "matter of baptism," not one word is said of oil or anything else, but water *vera et naturalis* is declared to be necessary and sufficient. As far therefore as the first point is concerned, Romish baptism, is baptism. It is a washing with water.

2. Is it then correct as to the form? Is it administered in the name of the Trinity? The form prescribed by the council of Trent, is in these words, "Ego te baptizo in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti." The form therefore is identical with our own. It is not in words, merely, that this form is scriptural, the avowed sense in which they are used is correct. There is not a Church on earth which teaches the doctrine of the Trinity more accurately, thoroughly or minutely, according to the orthodoxy of the Lutheran and Reformed churches, than the church of Rome. The personal and official relations of the adorable Trinity, are also preserved. The Father is represented as the author of the new covenant, the Son as redeemer, the Spirit as sanctifier. There is no such thing as baptism in the name of the Trinity in any church, if Romish baptism is not.

3. Then as to the third essential part of the ordinance, the design, in this also their baptism agrees with that of Protestants. According to our standards the design of the Sacrament is to signify, seal and apply to believers the benefits of the new covenant. This is the precise doctrine of the Romanists, so far as this. 1. They say it is essential to a sacrament that it should be a sensible sign of spiritual blessings. 2. That it should be instituted by Christ. 3. That it should have a promise of grace.† Hence the sacraments

* The preceding ceremonies are, exorcismus, signum crucis, salis gustus, et linitio salivæ; Concomitantes, abrenunciatio, unctio baptizandi oleo catechumenorum, catechismus, et inquisitio voluntatis suscipiendi Baptismum; Subsequentes, unctio baptizati per chrisma, vestis candidæ donatio, et cerei ardentis traditio. Dens. Vol. V. p. 205.

† Cardinal Tonnerre, Institutiones Theologicae Vol. III. p. 276.

signify, seal, and apply the benefits of redemption. According to both parties, by baptism we are formally constituted members of the visible church, and partakers of its benefits. The great difference relates not to the design of the ordinance, but to the mode and certainty with which that design is accomplished, and the conditions attached to it. In other words, the difference relates to the efficacy, and not to the design of the ordinance. The design on either side is stated to be to initiate into the visible church and secure its blessings. But how and to what extent, and under what conditions these blessings are secured by baptism, there is a great difference of opinion. As to the efficacy of the sacraments there are these three general views. First, That of the Zuinglians who make them mere naked signs. Secondly, that of those who teach that they certainly convey to all infants the blessings signified, and to adults if rightly disposed; and Third, the middle doctrine maintained by our church, and the Reformed generally. Speaking of baptism, our Confession of Faith says: "By the right use of this ordinance the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited (i. e. conveyed) and conferred by the Holy Ghost, to such as (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the council of God's own will, and in his own appointed time." According to our doctrine then, baptism does not uniformly convey the benefits which it signifies, and secondly its efficacy is not limited to the time of its administration.* With regard to adults, the difference between us and Romanists is much less. According to our standards the sacraments are made effectual as means of grace to believers, or "to worthy receivers;" and Romanists say, that in adults

* In the old Scots Confession it is said, "And thus we utterlie damne the vanities of they that affirm Sacramentes to be nothing ellis bot naked and baire signes. No, wee assuredlie beleevc, that be Baptisme we ar ingrafted into Christ Jesus, to be made partakers of his justice, be quhilk our sinnes ar covered and remitted." In the Book of Common order, "approved by that famous man John Calvin, and received and used by the Reformed Kirk of Scotland," this idea is expressed with some limitation. "The venomous dregs" of sin, it is said, remain in the flesh, "yet by the merites of his death (they) are not imputed to us, because the justice of Jesus Christ is made ours by Baptisme; not that we think any such virtuc or power to be included in the visible water, or outward action, for many have been baptized, and yet were never inwardly purged; but our Saviour Christ, who commanded baptism to be administered, will, by the power of the Holie Spirit, effectuallie worke in the hearts of his elect, in time convenient, all that is meant and signified by the same."

to the profitable use of baptism, there are requisite, the influence of divine grace, the act of faith, of hope, of love, and of penitence or contrition.*

The error of the Romanists concerning the absolute necessity and uniform efficacy (in the case of infants) of baptism, is very great, but it cannot invalidate the nature of the ordinance. It is out of all reason to say that the rite is valid, if it is supposed to be effectual to some and at an indefinite time, and invalid, if supposed to be always effectual when there is no opposition. Besides, if baptism is null and void when administered by those who hold the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, what shall we say to the baptism in the church of England, in the strict Lutheran churches, and in all the churches of the East? On this plan, we shall have to unchurch almost the whole Christian world; and Presbyterians, instead of being the most catholic of churches, and admitting the being of a church, wherever we see the fruits of the Spirit, would become one of the narrowest and most bigoted of sects. Indeed we cannot but regard this sudden denunciation of Romish baptism, as a momentary outbreak of the spirit of Popery; a disposition to contract the limits of the church, and to make that essential to its being and sacraments, which God has never declared to be necessary.

We have now shown that Romish baptism fulfills all the conditions of valid baptism, as given in our standards. It is a washing with water in the name of the Trinity, with the ostensible and professed design of making the recipient a member of the visible church, and a partaker of its benefits. On what grounds then is it declared to be null and void? The grounds are two. First, it is not administered by ordained ministers of Christ; second, the church of Rome is not a true church, and therefore its ordinances are not Christian sacraments. The former of these arguments stands thus: No baptism is valid unless administered by a duly ordained minister of Christ. Romish priests are not such ministers. Therefore Romish baptism is invalid.

It may be proper, before considering his argument, to ascertain the precise point to be proved, or what is meant by the words valid and invalid in this connexion. They

* *Quaenam (dispositio) requiritur ad fructuosam hujus Sacramenti susceptionem? R. Illam late describit Conc. Trid. sess. 6. c. 6. ut videre est: Summatim dicimus ex eo requiri motum divinae gratiae, actum fidei, spei et amoris ac poenitentiae seu contritionis. Dens. Vol. V p. 187.*

seem often to be used in the sense of regular and irregular. Christ has appointed a certain class of men to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments. For any one not belonging to this class, to perform either service, is irregular, and in that sense invalid. Valid, however, properly means available, (able to effect). A thing is valid when it avails to its appropriate end. Thus a deed is valid, which avails to convey a title to property; a marriage is valid, which avails to constitute the conjugal relation. Sometimes the validity of a thing depends upon its regularity; as a deed if not regular, if not made according to law, does not avail for the end for which it was made. Very often, however, the validity of a thing does not depend upon the rules made to regulate the mode of doing it. Many marriages are valid, which violate the rules of decorum, order, and even civil society. When Romish baptism is pronounced invalid, it is not declared simply irregular, in the sense in which lay-preaching is unauthorized; but it is said not to avail to the end for which baptism was instituted; it does not avail to make the recipient a professing Christian. Though a sincere believer should be baptized by a Romanist, such baptism would not signify or seal to him the benefits of the new covenant, nor express his purpose to obey Christ. Such is the declaration. The first argument in support of this position is founded on the assumption that no baptism is valid, in the sense just explained, unless administered by a duly ordained minister of Christ. We do not mean to contest this proposition, and must not be understood as denying it, but we say its truth ought to have been proved and not taken for granted. Our standards do not affirm it. They say indeed that "neither sacrament may be dispensed by any, but by a minister of the word lawfully ordained." *Con. of Faith*, c. 27, § 4. But they say the same thing of preaching. *Larger Cat.* ques. 158. Both are irregular; but irregular and invalid are very different things. Again, this proposition is not contained in the definition of baptism. That ordinance is declared to be a washing with water, in the name of the Trinity, to signify our ingrafting into Christ. To say, It is a washing with water, *by a minister duly ordained*, in the name, &c. is to give a new definition, essentially different from the old one. The insertion of this clause may be authorized, but the authority ought to be given. Again, the principle in question, cannot be inferred from the nature and design of baptism.

Baptism was instituted to constitute or declare the recipient a disciple of Christ, and to signify and seal to him the benefits of the new covenant. It does not necessarily follow from this statement, that it does not avail to this end, unless administered by an ordained man. If ordination did, as Puseyites say, convey grace and impart supernatural power, it would be more apparent, why baptism by unconsecrated hands should fail to have any efficacy. Puseyites, therefore, are very consistently anabaptists, both here and in England. Again, the principle assumed is contrary to the belief and practice of the great body of the people of God in all ages. The common doctrine of the church has been, that baptism and teaching belong properly to ministers of the word; in cases of necessity, however, baptism by unordained persons, was regarded as not only valid, but proper; in all other cases, as irregular and censurable, but still as baptism and not to be repeated. At the time of the Reformation this doctrine was retained by the whole Lutheran church, and by the church of England. Calvin, Beza, the French church, and the church of Holland rejected it, and so we presume did the church of Scotland. Though, therefore, the Reformed or Calvinistic churches have generally maintained the position assumed by the Assembly, as to the invalidity of lay-baptism, yet, as it is not asserted in our book, and has been denied by so great a majority of Christians, it ought not to be made the ground of an argument, without some exhibition of the grounds on which it rests. This is a subject to which we presume less attention has been paid in our church, than it merits. We repeat the remark, that we are not to be understood as denying that baptism must be administered by an ordained man, in order to its validity; we are willing to concede that point in the argument, the conclusion however utterly fails, unless the minor proposition above stated can be proved. Admitting that baptism must be administered by ordained ministers of Christ, it must be proved that Romish priests are not such ministers, before it can be shown that their baptisms are invalid.

Let us inquire then what is an ordained minister, and then see whether the Romish priests come within the definition.

According to the common doctrine of Protestants, an ordained minister is a man appointed to perform the sacred functions of teaching and administering the sacraments in

any community professing Christianity. There is a right and a wrong way of doing this; there is a way agreeable to scriptural precedent, and there are many ways which have no such sanction. Still whether it be done by a prelate, a presbytery, by the people, or by the magistrate with the consent of the people, if a man is recognised by a Christian community as a minister, he is to be regarded as having due authority to act as such. It does not follow from this that we are bound to receive him into ministerial communion, or to allow him to act as a minister in our churches. That depends upon his having the qualifications which we deem requisite for the sacred office. Should a prelate or presbytery ordain an ignorant or heretical man, we should be under no obligation to receive him to the sacred office among ourselves. And if the people should elect a man to that office, we are not bound to receive him on the ground of that election, since we believe that ordination by the presbytery ought to be required. Since, however, Christ has not made the ministry essential to the church, much less any particular method of inducting men into that office, we have no right to say that a body of Christians are no church, and have no valid sacraments, because they differ from us as to the mode of ordaining ministers. It is one of the Popish principles which have slid into the minds of some Protestants, and which was openly avowed upon the floor of the Assembly, that the ministry is essential to the church. Such a sentiment is directly opposed to our standards, and to the word of God. According to the scriptures, a church is a congregation of believers, or of those who profess to be believers; according to the hierarchical system, it is "a congregation of believers *subject to lawful pastors.*" An intrusive element, which is the germ of the whole hierarchical system, is thus introduced into the idea of the church, which changes and vitiates the whole thing. Bellarmine has the credit of being the first writer who thus corrupted the definition of the church. The being of a church does not depend upon the ministry, nor the being of the ministry on the rite of ordination. Any man is a minister in the sense of the proposition under consideration, who is recognised as such by a Christian community.

The soundness of this principle appears, 1. From the consideration already referred to, that we have no authority in this matter to go beyond the scriptures. If Christ or his

apostles had said that no man should be recognised as a minister, nor his official acts accounted valid, unless ordained in a specified manner, we should be bound by such rule. But the scriptures contain no such rule, and we have no right to make it. All that the Bible does, is to make known the fact, that ministers were examined and authenticated as teachers by other teachers, but that it must be so, they nowhere assert.

2. This doctrine flows from what is one of the distinguishing principles of the evangelical, as opposed to the hierarchical system, viz.: that all church power belongs originally to the church as such. The original commission, the promises and prerogatives were given, not to the church officers as their peculium, but to the people; and they may exercise those prerogatives not regularly, not orderly, or wisely, it may be, but still validly under any form they see fit. They ought, indeed, to follow scriptural examples, as to the mode of making ministers, but still as the power to make them was involved in the original commission granted to the church, we cannot deny it.

3. To reject the principle in question is to involve ourselves in all the difficulties, absurdities and assumptions of the doctrine of apostolical succession. Every church would have to prove that its ministry had been regularly ordained in a specific manner from the apostles to the present time. This, from the nature of the case, can no more be done, than a man can prove that all his ancestors were regularly married from the time of Adam. It may be assumed, but it cannot by possibility be proved. And since there is in scripture no promise of any such unbroken succession of ordinations, to assume it, is gratuitous; and to make such assumption the basis of ecclesiastical claims, or of religious hopes, is absurd and ruinous.

4. We all act upon this principle. What Presbyterian feels called upon to trace up historically to the apostles, the ecclesiastical genealogy of every minister whose act he is called upon to recognise? Or who ever thinks of inquiring whether every candidate for the admission to the Lord's supper, if from among the Methodists or Baptists, was baptized by a man ordained in a particular way? It is always considered enough if the applicant was baptized by one having public authority in the body whence he came, to administer the sacraments.

5. All Protestant churches have recognised the same

principle. The language of the twenty-third Article of the Church of England may be taken as expressing the general sense of the age of the Reformation on this subject. That article says: "Those ought to be judged lawfully called and sent, who are chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them, in the congregation, to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard." This asserts the necessity of a call, without prescribing any particular mode as essential to its validity. Accordingly, the validity of the orders which many of the reformers received in the Romish church, was universally admitted; while at the same time, no objection was made to the vocation of those who had received nothing more than election by the people. It was held, indeed, that under ordinary circumstances, no one should assume the sacred office to himself, and that besides election by the people, there should, in a regular state of the church, be an examination and imposition of hands by the presbytery. But it was denied that these things were essential.

Do, then, the Romish priests come within this wide definition of ordained ministers? Are they appointed by public authority to teach the Christian religion, and to administer its ordinances? The question is not whether they are good men, or whether they do not assume sacerdotal and other powers to which they have no claim? or whether they are correct in doctrine? but simply, whether in a body professing to hold saving doctrine, they are appointed and recognised as presbyters? If so, then they are ministers within the sense of the received Protestant definition of the term.* The only ground on which this can be denied is, that they do not in any sense profess the Christian religion any more than Jews or Pagans, and therefore this argument, though presented first and separately in the minute adopted by Assembly, really resolves itself in the second presented in that document, viz.: That the Church of Rome is in no sense a Christian church. Without anticipating that point, however, we maintain that as the Romish priests are appointed and recognised as presbyters in a community

* This is the ground on which the Reformed churches defended the validity of the orders received from the Church of Rome. "Talis autem est," says Turretin, "episcoporum et presbyterorum vocatio in ecclesia Romana, quae quoad institutionem Dei bona fuit, sed quoad abusum hominum mala facta est. Unde rescissio errorum et corruptelarum ab hominibus invecetarum, non potuit esse vocationis abrogatio, sed correctio et restitutio.—Vol. iii. p. 265.

professing to believe the scriptures, the early creeds, and the decisions of the first four general councils, they are ordained ministers in the sense above stated; and consequently baptism administered by them is valid. It has accordingly been received as valid by all Protestant churches from the Reformation to the present day.

Calvin, in his Institutes, Lib. iv. c. 15 and 16, after saying that baptism does not owe its value to the character of the administrator, adds: "By this consideration, the error of the Donatists is effectually refuted, who made the force and value of the sacrament commensurate with the worth of the minister. Such are our modern Katabaptists, who strenuously deny that we were properly baptized, because we received the rite from impious idolators in the papacy; and they are therefore ferocious for re-baptism. We shall, however, be sufficiently guarded against their nonsense, if we remember we were baptized not in the name of any man, but in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and therefore baptism is not of man, but of God, no matter by whom it was administered."

The first canon of the chapter on baptism, in the book of discipline of the French church, declares, "Baptism administered by an unordained person is wholly void and null;" yet the twenty-eighth article of their Confession of Faith declares Romish baptism to be valid. In the national synod of 1563, John Calvin presented, in the name of the pastors and professors at Geneva, a letter in reply to reasons pronounced by them "very feeble and impertinent," in behalf of lay-baptism, one of which was derived from the assumption that Romish priests were not true ministers, and yet their baptisms are valid. To this the reply made was: "Popish baptism is grounded upon the institution of Christ; because the priests as perverse as they are, and utterly corrupt, are *yet the ordinary ministers of that church* in which they so tyrannically demean themselves."* To this view the French church steadily adhered long after the council of Trent, whose decisions were assumed by some of the members of the Assembly, to have wrought such a change in the character of Romanism. The illustration used by Calvin, derived from the fact that those circumcised by apostate priests under the old dispensation, were never recircumcised, or treated as not having received

* Quick's Synodicon, vol. i. p. 48.

that rite by the inspired prophets, we find repeated by all subsequent writers.

The church of Holland agreed with the French church in regarding the Romish priests as authorized to administer baptism.* Such, too, has been the constant doctrine of the Lutheran church,† and of the church of England. Indeed, we know of no church that has ever taken different ground. The Assembly, therefore, has taken a position on this subject in opposition to the principles of the whole Protestant world. A fact which of itself creates a presumption almost overwhelming against their doctrine.

The second great argument in favour of the decision of the Assembly, which indeed includes and supercedes the one just considered, is: The church of Rome is not a true church of Christ, and therefore its sacraments are not Christian ordinances. This is a very plausible argument, and has the advantage of being short and syllogistic. To its influence we doubt not is principally to be referred the decision in question. To us however it appears to be only another of the innumerable instances of fallacy and false reasoning founded upon the ambiguity of the word church. We know of no subject in theology on which it is more difficult to attain and preserve distinctness of thought, and precision of language than this. The word church has meanings so allied and yet so different, so well authorized and yet so indefinite, that it is almost impossible to avoid using the term in one sense in the premises of an argument, and another in the conclusion. Almost every treatise on the church, which it has been our lot to read, has been more or less a saying and unsaying, affirming and denying the same things of the same subject. This is the fault not so much of the writers, as of the vagueness of the terms. You

* Morus, Tom. v. p. 449. Hinc passim judicant Nostrī rebaptizandos esse qui ad nos transeunt antè in coetu Soeinianorum antitrinitario baptizati. . . De baptizatis in ecclesia Romana hodierna mitius judicium Nostrī ferre solent, ob retentam illie eum elemento visibili aquae baptismatis, fidem Trinitatis et administrationem baptismi in Dei triunitus nomen. He quotes the acts of the Synod of Dort, which forbid Romish baptism to be repeated where "the form and substance" of the rite have been retained. Doubts, it seems, were entertained as to baptisms performed by vagrant priests, as a question relating to that point was presented to the French Synod of 1581, who replied: "Since authority to baptize belongs to them according to the order of the Romish church, baptism administered by them is not to be repeated; but baptism by monks to whom no such authority belongs, is void."

† Gerhard, vol. x. p. 93.

may, with equal truth, affirm or deny that a given body is a church; you may say that the church is a congregation of saints, and yet composed in great part of sinners; that it is infallible as to matters of faith, and yet may fatally apostatize; that all its members shall be saved, and yet that many of them will be lost. The whole system of Popery and Puseyism owes its logical power to an adroit management of this word. To the church are promised in the scriptures, the continued presence of Christ and influence of his Spirit, by which it is certainly guided into the knowledge of saving truth, preserved from fatal errors, and effectually prepared for heaven. But, according to our standards, the church consists of the professors of the true religion; therefore, to professors of true religion is promised this continued presence of Christ and the saving guidance of his Spirit. This argument is just as good as that used by the Assembly; and yet, unless it is false, the whole doctrinal system of Romanism is true. It is obvious therefore that extreme caution is necessary in constructing any argument, the validity of which depends on the idea attached to the word church.

The question whether the church of Rome is a true church? cannot be intelligently answered without previously fixing the meaning of the term. The word *ἐκκλησία* in its application to Christians, is in the New Testament, a collective term for *κλητοί*. The called are the church. Any number of "the called" collectively considered are a church. The church as such, is not an organization; any more than the human race as such is a society. Men must organize and live in society; but their organizing does not make them men, nor members of the human race. In like manner the church, or the called, as such, are not an organized body, though it is their duty to organize. But organization does not make them a church, but being members of the church, i. e. *κλητοί*, they associate for certain prescribed purposes. It seems to us that a large portion of the false reasoning connected with this whole subject, arises from the erroneous assumption that organization enters into the very idea of the church. An organized body may be a church, but it is not their organization that makes them so; because any number of the called, or the whole body of them is a church, or the church, in the scriptural sense of the term. When Christ is said to love, Paul to have persecuted, or we to labour for the church, the word does not

designate an organized body. It is merely a collective term for the people of God. Since "the called" are, according to the uniform usage of the epistles of the New Testament, the effectually called, or true believers, it follows that the church is a collective term for true believers. We therefore find that whatever is affirmed of believers is affirmed of the church, and whatever is promised to believers is promised to the church. If the Christians of Rome, Corinth, or Ephesus are addressed as the church in those cities, they are at the same time addressed as believers, as saints, as those who are in Christ, as led by the Spirit, and as heirs of eternal life. As however no man can look upon the heart, we do not know who is a true believer; and therefore we cannot tell who is a member of the church or body of Christ. We are therefore bound to do as the sacred writers did, that is, to regard and treat every man as a believer who makes a credible profession of faith in Christ; and of course we are bound to regard and treat any body of such men as a church. If a man makes no profession of faith, we cannot regard him as a believer; nor can we so regard him if he makes any profession inconsistent with the existence of saving faith. And consequently if a body of men make no profession of faith, they cannot be a church; nor can they be so regarded, if they make a profession which is incompatible with saving faith in Christ. Every man therefore who has true faith is a member of Christ's body, which is the church; and every man who professes such faith is a visible or professed member of his church; and any number of such men collectively considered is a branch of the church. If therefore we deny to any man the character of a Christian, on account of the profession which he makes, we must be prepared to show, that such faith is incompatible with salvation. For if professing such doctrines, (or professing nothing more than certain doctrines) he may be saved, he may be a true believer and of a course a member of the church. And in like manner, if we deny to any body of men the character of a church, on account of its creed, we thereby assert that no man holding that creed can be saved. To determine therefore whether a man or a church is to be denied the Christian character, we must ascertain, what is the minimum of truth that can save the soul. For to deny that a man is a Christian on account of his ignorance or errors, and yet admit he may be saved, is to contradict ourselves. And to say that a body of such

men is no church, is no less a contradiction. It is therefore evident that the question, What is a true church? resolves itself into this: How little truth may avail to salvation? This is a question we are hardly competent to answer, and there is no need of answering it. We can tell what is a pure church; and with that standard we can compare our own and all others, and regulate our intercourse with them accordingly. The course however commonly pursued is to give a definition of a pure church, and then to declare that any community not embraced in that definition, to be no church. Thus it is said, a church is a congregation of believers in which the pure word of God is preached; the pure word of God is not preached in Rome, therefore Rome is not a church. By the same argument the whole world may be unchurch, save our own particular sect, no matter how narrow that sect may be. This method of reasoning is just as unreasonable as it would be to say, a Christian is one who believes the doctrines and obeys the precepts of Christ, therefore no man who is erroneous in doctrine or practice can be a Christian; which would be to go beyond even Perfectionists, for they do not make a perfect faith essential to the character of a Christian. We cannot take a definition of a perfect Christian as the rule of decision whether any particular man is to be treated as a brother; nor can we take the definition of a pure church, as the criterion of the being of a church. Any man who professes truth enough to save his soul, is not to be denounced as no Christian, simply for his faith's sake. And any body of men that professes truth enough to save men, cannot on the ground of heresy be denied the character of a church.

The correctness of this exposition of what is necessary to the being of a church, is plain, 1. From the express declarations of scripture. The Bible teaches that whosoever is a true worshipper of Christ, no matter how ignorant or how erroneous he may be, is a true Christian. "Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Son of God, is born of God." Such is the explicit declaration of the Bible. Whoever, therefore, professes to be a worshipper of Christ, i. e., to love, reverence and serve him as God, does thereby profess to be a Christian; and any body consisting of those who profess to worship Christ, is a body of professed Christians, that is, a church. Paul, in his epistle to the Corinthians, addresses himself to the church of God in that city, i. e., to those "who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Any body of men, therefore, that retains the doctrine of the incarnation, or that Jesus is the Son of God, that sets him forth as the object of religious worship and confidence, retains the vital principle of Christianity. Nothing can prevent the saving power of that truth, when it is really embraced. 2. Again, according to our standards, there is no salvation out of the visible church. It is a common saying of Protestant theologians, "No man has God for his father, who has not the church for his mother." This is only saying, with the scriptures, that there is no salvation out of Christ. But if these premises are correct, the conclusion necessarily follows, that any religious body in communion with which men may be saved, is a part of the visible church; otherwise men are saved out of that church. The visible church, therefore, according to our standards, consists of all those who profess saving truth. 3. This point is so plain, that it was repeatedly conceded on the floor of the Assembly. The question, whether the Romish Church is a true church, was admitted to turn on the previous question: Does she retain truth enough to save the soul? One of the speakers did, indeed, say that although there were true believers in the church of Rome, they were not members of the visible church; which is a contradiction in terms, since the visible church consists of *all* who profess the true religion, or saving doctrine. The mere fact of their having faith and avowing it in their conversation and deportment, makes them members of the visible church, in the true, scriptural, and Presbyterian, though not in the Puseyite, sense of the term.

If these principles are correct, we have only to apply them to the case in hand, and ask, does the church of Rome retain truth enough to save the soul? We do not understand how it is possible for any Christian man to answer this question in the negative. They retain the doctrine of the Incarnation, which we know from the infallible word of God, is a life-giving doctrine. They retain the whole doctrine of the Trinity. They teach the doctrine of atonement far more fully and accurately than multitudes of professedly orthodox Protestants. They hold a much higher doctrine as to the necessity of divine influence, than prevails among many whom we recognise as Christians. They believe in the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and in eternal life and judgment. These doctrines are in their creeds, and however they may be perverted

and overlaid, still as general propositions they are affirmed. And it must be remembered, that it is truth presented in general propositions, and not with subtle distinctions, that saves the soul. Protestants, says Bossuet, cannot deny that we admit the fundamentals of religion. "If they will have them to consist in believing that we must adore one only God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and that we must put our trust in God alone through his Son, who became man, was crucified, and rose again for us, they know in their conscience, that we profess this doctrine; and if they add those other doctrines which are contained in the apostles' creed, they do not doubt that we receive them all without exception." Having quoted an admission to this effect, from Daille, he adds: "But though M. Daille had not granted thus much, the thing is manifest in itself; and all the world knows that we profess all those doctrines which Protestants call fundamental."*

* An Exposition of the Doctrines of the Catholic Church, by the Right Rev. J. B. Bossuet, London, 1685, p. 2. On Justification, Bossuet says: "We believe, in the first place, that our sins are freely forgiven us by the divine mercy, for Christ's sake. These are the express words of the council of Trent. . . . Seeing the scriptures explain the remission of sins, by sometimes telling us that God covers them, and sometimes that he takes them away and blots them out by the grace of his Holy Spirit, which makes us new creatures; we believe that to form a perfect idea of the justification of a sinner, we must join together both of these expressions. For which reason we believe our sins not only to be covered, but also entirely washed away by the blood of Jesus Christ, and by the grace of regeneration; which is so far from obsecuring or lessening that idea which we ought to have of the merit of his blood, on the contrary it heightens and augments it. So that the righteousness of Christ is not only imputed but actually communicated to the faithful, by the operation of his Holy Spirit, insomuch that they are not only reputed, but rendered just by his grace." p. 12. It is easy to see here the unhappy blending of justification and sanctification together; but it is a far better statement of the truth, than is to be found in multitudes of Arminian writers; and unspeakably better than that, which for a hundred years, was preached from the great majority of the pulpits in the church of England.

Romanists teach that Christ is the meritorious ground of our justification. Thus the council of Trent, sess. vi. c. 7., says: *Meritoria (causa) est dilectissimus Dei unigenitus, qui cum essemus inimici, per nimiam caritatem, qua dilexit nos, sua sanctissima passione in ligno crucis, nobis justificationem meruit.* And in c. 8., the council say: "Christum sanctissima sua passione in ligno crucis nobis justificationem meruisse, et pro nobis Deo Patri satisfecisse, et neminem posse esse justum, nisi cui merita passionis Domini nostri Jesu Christi communicantur." In like manner, Bellarmine, de Justificatione, ii. c. 2, says, "We are justified on account of the merits of Christ;" and in c. 7, he says, "If Protestants only mean that the merits of Christ are imputed to us, because they are given to us by God, so that we can present them to the Father for our sins, since Christ undertook to make satisfaction for us, and to reconcile us to God the Father, they are right." Which is precisely what we do mean.

It is further evident that the church of Rome retains truth enough to save the soul, from the fact that true believers, who have no other means of instruction than those therein afforded, are to be found in that communion. Wherever the fruits of the Spirit are, there is the Spirit; and wherever the Spirit is, there is still the church. It is one of the worst features of Puseyism, that it takes such a view of the church, as to force its advocates to deny those to be Christians who exhibit the Spirit of Christ. Instead, therefore, of loving them as brethren, they cast out their names as evil; which is not only a great sin, but a great detriment to their own souls. We shall not less sin against God and our own best interests, if we reject as reprobates any of the real followers of Christ, no matter in what external communion they may be found. We rejoice, therefore, that the Assembly freely admits, in their minute, that there are true believers in the church of Rome. Indeed, we are not sure that truth would not demand the admission that there were more of evangelical doctrine and of true religion in that church, than were to be found in the church of England, or in some of the Protestant churches of the continent of Europe, notwithstanding their orthodox creeds, during their long declension in the last century. We have heretofore had the misfortune to be held up as the friends of drunkenness, and the advocates of slavery, because we could not believe that alcohol is sin, and every slave-holder a thief; and we fear that even good men may now regard us as the apologists of Popery, because we cannot think that a community who believe that Jesus is the Son of God, who worship the Trinity, who hold that we are justified by the merits of Christ, and are sanctified by his Holy Spirit, are to be placed in the same category with Pagans and Mohammedans. And we are constrained to say, that as the cause of temperance and the interests of the slave, suffer greatly from the extravagance of their advocates, so we fear the cause of Protestantism suffers materially from the indiscriminating denunciations heaped upon the church of Rome, and from transferring the abhorrence due to her corruptions, to her whole complicated system of truth and error.

The view presented above of the church of Rome is sustained by the authority of the Reformers, and of all Protestant churches. We have already remarked, that the question whether the church of Rome is a true church, may be affirmed or denied, according to the sense attached to the

terms. Accordingly, it is both affirmed and denied, by the parties referred to. They used the strongest terms of denunciation of the whole papal system; its perversion of the truth, its false doctrines, its corruption in worship and morals; its tyranny and persecuting spirit. They declared that church to be antichristian and apostate, the mystical Babylon, from which the people of God are commanded to withdraw. All this is said not only by the Reformers, but by churches and theologians down to the present day. At the same time, and in the same breath, they said that viewed in a different light, the church of Rome is still a church, just as the apostate Israelites were still the covenant people of God. If the Israelites were denominated from the character of their rulers, or of the mass of the people, from their authoritative declarations and acts, they were apostates and idolaters. If denominated from the relation which they still sustained to God, from the truth which they continued to profess, or from the real saints who were to be found among them, they were still the church, and were so addressed by the prophets, and their circumcision regarded as the seal of God's covenant. Thus Calvin says: "If the church be considered as the body whose judgment we are bound to revere, to whose authority we must defer, whose instructions we must receive, to whose discipline we must submit, whose communion we must religiously and in all things cultivate, we cannot concede the papacy to be the church, as though the obligation to obedience still continued. Yet we willingly concede to it what the prophets conceded to the Jews and Israelites. . . . Since then we are not willing to concede the title church unconditionally to the papists, we do not thereby deny that there are churches among them, but only contend for the true and legitimate constitution of the church, with which communion is required in sacraments and doctrine." Lib. iv. c. 2. §§ 10-12. To the same effect Turretin denies that the modern church of Rome can, without qualification, be called a true church of Christ; but to explain his position he says: "The church of Rome may be viewed under a twofold aspect, as Christian in reference to the profession of Christianity, and of the evangelical truths which it retains; and as it is Papal, in reference to its subjection to the Pope, and to its corruptions, as well in manners as in doctrine, which it has mixed up with those truths and built upon them, contrary to the word of God. In the former

aspect, we do not deny that there is some truth in that church; but in the latter, under which she is contemplated when we deny her to be a true church, we deny that she is Christian and apostolical, but affirm her to be antichristian and apostate. In this view, *impropiè et secundum quid*, we admit the church of Rome to be a Christian Church in three respects. 1. In respect to the people of God, the elect, still remaining in it, who are commanded to come out. 2. In respect to the external form, in which we discover some of the elements of a church, in respect as well to the word of God and its preaching, which though corrupted, still remain, and as to the administration of the sacraments, especially baptism, which, as to the substance, still remains entire. 3. As to Christian and evangelical doctrines, as concerning the Trinity, Christ as mediator, his incarnation, death and resurrection, and others by which she is distinguished from pagans and infidels.”—vol. iii. p. 135.

We admit that it is a very unfortunate method of speaking, to say a body is a church *secundum quid*, and *secundum quid* is not a church. Still this is an inconvenience we have to submit to on almost all subjects, and in the present instance, it expresses a great truth. It must be remembered that these were holy men, who trembled at the word of God. Christ had commanded his disciples to hear the church, to remain in her communion and to submit to her discipline. To admit, therefore, without qualification, that the church of Rome was a true church, seemed to include an admission of an obligation to receive her doctrines and to submit to her authority. This they could not do. They therefore denied that the church of Rome was a church in any such sense as to require communion and obedience. They thereby intended to deny that the supremacy of the Pope, the hierarchy, transubstantiation, the sacrifice of the mass, worshipping of saints, and the other numerous corruptions of popery, belong to the church of God; that they are Christian or apostolical, and as such to be received and submitted to. While they admitted that the reception of the scriptures as the word of God, the profession of saving doctrines, the sacraments, the presence of the elect, are characteristics of the church, and consequently that any body of which these things can be affirmed, cannot consistently with the truth of God, be simply and without qualification, declared to be no more a church than a company of pagans. The necessity of making these distinc-

tions, of affirming and denying the same proposition, shows the impropriety of the question. Instead of asking, What is a church? we should ask, What is a pure church? All the definitions given in our books, tell us what a pure church is. And when Protestants deny the church of Rome to be a church, they deny that she comes within their definition of a pure church, though they admit her to be a corrupt and apostate church. The whole foundation, therefore, of the argument of the Assembly, seems to us to be false. It assumes that the church of Rome is in no sense a church; which is to assume that she does not admit the scriptures to be the word of God, that she does not profess that Jesus is the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, that she does not profess saving truths, and that she does not bring forth children unto God; all which assumptions are notoriously and confessedly false, and therefore the conclusion which is derived from these assumptions, must be unsound.

Long as this article has become, there is one other view of this subject we must be permitted to present. It matters not whether the papacy as an organization is a church or no, as far as the present question is concerned. The contrary assumption is founded upon the idea that baptism is an act of a church; or that the administrator so acts in the name of the organized society to which he belongs, that those whom he baptizes thereby become members of that society. It was hence argued that the recipients of Romish baptism, are made Romanists, and are baptized into a profession of all the heresies of popery. This appears to [us an entirely wrong view of the subject, and to be founded on the Puseyite doctrine of the church as a corporation, or organized body, into which men are admitted by the ordinance of baptism. It is however the admitted doctrine of Protestants, that the church Catholic is not an organized society. It is also admitted among Protestants that baptism does not initiate the recipient into any particular church, but into the church catholic. The eunuch when baptized by the road side, Paul when baptized in his chamber, the jailor at Phillippi, and the thousands of scattered believers baptized by the apostles were not made members of any particular church, or organized body by their baptism. After they were baptized, and thus introduced into the church catholic, they associated or organized themselves into particular churches. So at the present day,

no man is made an Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Methodist by his baptism, but after baptism, he joins what particular denomination he sees fit. No man therefore is made a papist by being baptized by a papist. It follows from this that the validity of baptism does not depend upon the character of the particular denomination to which the administrator belongs; because he does not act in the name of that denomination, but as a member of the church catholic. And every man who professes saving truth is a member of that church. It matters not therefore whether the Quakers as a society come within the definition of a church; individual Quakers, if they have the faith of God's elect and profess it, are members of his church. And so too it matters not whether the papacy comes within the definition of a church; individual papists, if they profess that Jesus is the Son of God, are within the pale of the church catholic, and, if they have public authority, may baptize in the name of Christ.

Baptism therefore, not being an ordinance of any particular church, but of the church catholic, and every man who professes saving truth being a member of that church, Romish baptism if administered by a man professing such truth, is Christian baptism. It is baptism administered by a member of the visible church, having public authority in that church, which is all that can be said of baptism administered by the Archbishop of Canterbury, or by the moderator of our Assembly.

We maintain therefore Romish baptism to be valid; that is, that it avails to make the recipient a member of the church catholic, because it is a washing with water, in the name of the Trinity, with the design to signify, seal and apply the benefits of the covenant of grace. It is administered by ordained ministers; for a Romish priest is a man publicly called to the office of a presbyter. It is administered by a member of the visible church; for every man who confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, is a member of that church. It is only by adopting the hierarchical or Puseyite doctrine of the church, and of orders, that the opposite conclusion can be sustained. We must restrict the church to miserably narrow limits, within which the truth and Spirit of God refuse to be confined; and we must claim an authority and virtue for specific forms of ordination, which the scriptures no where sanction. We are therefore, constrained to regard the decision of the Assembly as in

direct conflict with our standards, and with the word of God; and as incompatible with Protestant principles, as well as with the practice of the whole Protestant world. We have no scruple in saying this. For in protesting against the decision of 169 members of the Assembly, we can hide ourselves in the crowd of 169 millions of faithful men, who since the Reformation, have maintained the opposite, and more catholic doctrine.*

If the church of Rome is antichrist, a synagogue of Satan, how can its ordinances be Christian sacraments? This we doubt not is the difficulty which weighs most with those who reject Romish baptisms as invalid. We would ask such persons, whether they admit that a Roman Catholic can be a child of God? If he can, how can a man be a member of the synagogue of Satan and of the body of Christ at the same time? Is there no inconsistency here? If not, then there is no inconsistency in declaring that the Romish system, so far as it is distinguished from that of evangelical churches, is antichristian, and yet that those who are groaning under that system are in the visible church. The terms antichrist, synagogue of Satan, &c., refer not to the mass of the people, nor to the presbyters of that communion, nor the word of God, nor the saving truths which they profess, but to the Popish hierarchy and

* We have heard it repeatedly objected that this whole discussion attributes too much importance to baptism. What is the harm, it is asked, of declaring a particular kind of baptism to be invalid? or of repeating the ordinance? We have also heard brethren say, they left the matter to the decision of the applicant for admission to our communion. If he wished to be rebaptized, they rebaptized him; if he was satisfied with the baptism received in the church of Rome, they did not insist on a repetition of the ordinance. We have no superstitious feeling on this subject, but we object to such repetition.

1. Because it involves a declaration of what is not true. It declares that to be no baptism which has all the essential characteristics of that sacrament. It declares that the recipient had never before avowed himself a Christian, when the fact is not so.
2. Because we have neither scriptural authority nor example for the repetition of the rite; and such repetition is forbidden by our Confession of Faith, and is contrary to the usage of the whole Christian Church.
3. Because it is contrary to the very nature of the ordinance. *Baptismus est signum initiationis.* It is a declaration that the recipient now for the first time takes upon him the obligations, and claims the privileges of a professing Christian. If a man is installed into a particular office, it is a declaration that he was not before publicly invested with the office. If he presents himself to be married to a particular woman, it is a declaration that she is not already his wife. And if he presents himself for baptism, he declares that he has not been washed with water in the name of the Trinity, in order to his initiation into the visible church.

its corruptions. That hierarchy with its usurpations and errors, is the mystery of iniquity, the man of sin, which in the church catholic, the temple of God, exalts itself above all that is called God or that is worshipped. If Roman Catholics are no part of the visible church, then the Romish hierarchy is not "the man of sin" spoken of by the apostle, for he was to rise and rule in the church. It is, therefore, one thing to denounce the Romish system, and another to say that Romanists are no part of the church catholic. And if they are in the church, their baptism being a washing with water in the name of the Trinity, is Christian baptism; just as the word of God, when read or preached by them, is still his word, and is to be received and obeyed as such.

Wilson - H. G. 1844.

- ART. V.—1. *A new and complete Concordance to the Holy Scriptures on the basis of Cruden, with an Introduction.* By the Rev. David King, LL. D., Minister of Greyfriars church, Glasgow. Glasgow: 1844.
2. *A complete Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance to the Old Testament, comprising also a condensed Hebrew-English Lexicon, with an Introduction and Appendices.* By Dr. Isaac Nordheimer, Prof. of Oriental Languages in the University of New York, assisted by Wm. Wad-den Turner. Part 1st. New York and London: 1842.
3. *The Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance of the Old Testament, being an attempt at a verbal connexion between the Original and the English translation, with Indexes, &c. &c.* 2 vols. London: 1843.

THE chapter and verse division of the scriptures, though it often trammels the sense, and deceives the incautious reader, is a great convenience. One would suppose that such a division had suggested a Concordance of passages, wherein these notations might be availed of for so important an end. But in truth, Cardinal Hugo had first made a Concordance of the Latin Bible, and was driven to these numerical subdivisions, for reference in that work. This was about three centuries before the first attempt toward such a key for the New Testament in English, which Thomas Gybson, the author, (London, 1535) introduces as