

Baptist Church Perpetuity,

OR

THE CONTINUOUS EXISTENCE OF BAPTIST CHURCHES FROM THE APOSTOLIC TO THE PRESENT DAY DEMONSTRATED BY THE BIBLE AND BY HISTORY.

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INTRODUCTION

-BY-

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"Upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail
against It."

-Jesus Christ.

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ST. PATRICK A BAPTIST

PREFACE

Notwithstanding that many of the ablest Biblical expositors and theologians rightly regard the Romish church as the apocalyptic, “Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus,” some church historians and some professors in Theological Seminaries, treat her as the “Christian church,” and the true witnessing church as “heretics” and “heresies.” Surely, it is high time this was reversed.

Baptist churches being regarded as but one among the Reformation sects, no wonder there is so little interest in Baptist history that several of the best publications on Baptist history, by the American Baptist Publication Society, have hardly returned the financial outlay in publishing them. Regarding Baptists but one of modern sects, thinking and conscientious people naturally reject their exclusive claims and practices. Seeing this, Baptist opponents leave “unturned no stone” to teach the people that Baptist churches are in origin “but of yesterday.” In this, Baptist opponents are wiser than Baptists who are content that Baptist Church Perpetuity be presented as a trifle.

Seeing that one man has as much right to originate a church as has another, ambitious and designing men, by originating new sects, are continuously adding to the babel of sectarianism. Thus the answer to Christ's prayer — “that they may all be one. . . , that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” — is hindered and infidelity is perpetuated.

Calling on God to witness his sincerity, the author of this book gladly expresses his Christian affection for every blood-washed soul — whatever may be his or her creed. He begs that this book be taken not as an assault on any dear child of God, but as a Biblical and historical exposition and demonstration of very important practical truth — truth sorely needed for this falsely liberal and sectarian age.

The book has been worded and the proof read by time snatched in revival meetings from needed rest. For any little oversights which possibly may appear in it, let this be the explanation. Nearly all quotations within this volume having been made in person by its author — excepting a very few, and they from reliable sources — the reader can use them with the greatest assurance.

The author thanking the public for the generous reception given his other books, which has encouraged him to send this one out, with profound gratitude to God for the opportunity and the grace to publish this one, signs himself,

A SINNER SAVED BY GRACE,

DALLAS, TEXAS.
May, 1894.

INTRODUCTION TO BAPTIST CHURCH PERPETUITY or HISTORY

The Baptist movement in history has always been back to the New Testament. This people has always refused to follow others away from the teaching and practice of that book. In the New Testament are plainly stated certain great principles which lie as foundation stones in the base of the Church of Christ. These principles are the regeneration of the believer by the Holy Spirit and the word of God, the baptism of the believer in water, the equality of believers in the church, the separation of church and State, and in the church the sole authority of the Bible. But these distinctive principles of Christianity were soon set aside and Jewish or pagan notions were put in their places. The doctrine of regeneration by the Spirit, and the word was the first to be abandoned and in its place was introduced the notion of regeneration by water. To water, a material element, was ascribed the virtue which the New Testament gives to the word as the seed of life. With the attention directed to the performance of a sacrament instead of to hearing and believing the word, it was not long before the churches were filled with members who were Christians by sacrament, who had the form of godliness, who had a name to live, but were dead.

Then it was about 150, A. D. that the first Baptist protest was raised by the Montanists. The Montanists with all their faults, stand in the line of the Apostles. They raised their voices against the increasing formalism and worldliness of the churches and proclaimed an ever present Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers. They were wrong in magnifying fasting and forbidding second marriage, but were right in looking for the Holy Spirit not without in forms, but within in the heart. This is the chief mark of the Baptist movement in history, the demand for evidence of regeneration, for a personal experience of the grace of God, for the witness of the Holy Spirit with the human spirit. In a Baptist church this is an unalterable condition of membership. The intimacy with God observed by Max Goebel in the prayers and hymns of the Anabaptists, and which he contrasts with the formal devotion of others, is traceable to the universal and deep-seated conviction of the Anabaptists, that union with Christ is essential to salvation and that a new life is the only evidence of that union.

The second fundamental principle of the New Testament, to wit, the baptism of believers only, was displaced with the first, for as soon as baptism became a synonym for regeneration and water was supposed to wash away sin, it was natural that dying or sickly, and then all infants should be brought to the priest to have their sins washed away. It is the protest which Baptists have raised against this innovation and revolution in gospel order that has attracted the

attention of the world and occasioned most of the wickedness that have been invented to describe them. The refusal to have their own infants baptized and the denial of the validity of baptism received in infancy, placed them in conflict with the authorities of church and State and made an impression upon multitudes who inquired no further and cared nothing about their doctrine of the secret operation of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer. To this day, most people when they think of Baptists, think of baptism and not of what goes before baptism — the new creation of the soul.

The third fundamental principle of the New Testament, namely the equality of believers in the church, was discarded with the other two, for when regeneration was reduced to the sacrament of baptism, the servant of the church who administered the saving rite, was a servant no longer, but a priest, a magician, a little god. In this way the clergy were exalted above the laity and became a separate class. This official distinction of the ministers did not improve their character. It was not a question of character any longer, but of ordination. Those who were properly ordained had the power to wash away sins whatever their character might be. The office hallowed the man and not the man the office.

The next two protests in church history were raised by the Novatians in the third century and by the Donatists in the fourth, against the false view of the priesthood. The persecutions of Decius and of Diocletian had exposed many hypocrites who were said to have “lapsed.” After peace was restored, the question arose as to the proper treatment of these lapse Christians who sought restoration to church fellowship and office. The majority, led on by Cyprian and Augustine, took a lenient view of their apostasy, but the Novatians and Donatists declared that the rights of apostles were forfeited. Hence they were called “Puritans” and “Anabaptists” because they demanded a pure and loyal record for the ministry, and because they re-baptized those who had been baptized by the disloyal ministers of the Roman Catholic church. Baptists have always insisted not only on a holy ministry and on the equality of ministers, but also on the ministry of all believers. Lay preaching has been favored by Baptists from the beginning. No bishop is allowed to lord it over the pastor, and the pastor is not allowed to lord it over the humblest member. The highest place a minister can occupy, is to be the servant of all.

The fourth fundamental principle of the New Testament, that is to say, the separation of church and State, was necessarily maintained for three centuries, because the Roman State persecuted the church during that period, but when the Emperor Constantine made the offer of an alliance between church and State, the offer was accepted, and the union then formed remained in force everywhere until a Baptist obtained his charter for Rhode Island. Except in the United States, Australia and Ireland, the old order still prevails. Thus the Lord's decree, “Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's” — the most momentous utterance, Von Ranke says, that ever fell from his lips, is disregarded by the rules of church and State. The interesting

historical fact is that a Baptist in Rhode Island was the first to try the application to civil affairs of our Lord's decree, and that Baptists were the first to move to secure the adoption by Congress, before its adoption by the States, of this Baptist principle. It may be called a Baptist principle because before Rhode Island was formed, only Baptist voices were heard in the advocacy of the separation of church and State. Total separation is the logical outcome of the Baptist principles already stated. Beginning with a regenerated soul and the baptism of believers only, and holding firmly to the equality of all believers, there is no place for the State in the church and there is no need of the State by the church. As a Baptist church is founded upon voluntary faith, persecution is prevented from the start. Is it not time that Baptists, the first and foremost friends of liberty, should be cleared of the charge of bigotry?

The last fundamental New Testament principle, namely, the Bible, the sole authority in the church, was discarded soon after the union of church and State under Constantine. Some other authority was needed to justify that union and many other departures from New Testament precept that had already taken place. That authority was found in the church itself and in tradition. "I would not believe the New Testament if the church did not command me to," said Augustine. "I esteem the four general councils," said Pope Gregory, "as highly as I do the four gospels." Throughout the middle ages tradition held full sway. When the Waldensians translated the New Testament into the vernacular, Pope Innocent III compared the Bible to Mt. Sinai, which the people were forbidden to touch. The fourth Lateran council, held in 1215, forbade laymen to read the Bible, and the Bishop of Tarragona, in 1242, forbade even the priests to do so. Baptists have always done their share in translating the Bible into the languages of earth. Carey, Marshman, Ward, Judson and many others have let the light of life shine in heathen lands. Joseph Hughes was the Baptist founder of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Baptists were the leaders in the movement to revise the English Bible, and furnished Conant, Hackett and Kendrick to represent them in the enterprise.

While they hold fast to these fundamental principles of the New Testament, Baptists have a bright future before them. By insisting, on evidence of regeneration in every candidate for baptism, this will prevent the spirit of worldliness, which weakens other churches, from entering the assembly of the saints. By maintaining the equality of believers, the temptation of ambition, so strong in all human organizations, will find nothing in them. By guarding the independence of the church, they will preserve the independence of the State, and by upholding the Bible as the sole authority and as interpreter of its own decrees, they will be safe from the attack of rationalism on the one hand or superstition on the other.

W. W. EVERTS.

HAVRHILL, Mass., May, 1894.

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Turretine.
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Knight.
Poole.
Bourasse.
Floyer.
Crosby.
Spellman.
Linwood.
Catting.
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Conant.
Mason.
Wilson.
Neal.
Uhlbom.
Frank.
Wetzel.
Bayle.
Motley.
Daubigne.
Fessenden.
Michelet.
Gerard.
Brandt.
Palfry.
Bancroft.
May.
Moreland.
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* In this list I have not given full names, except where perhaps necessary to distinguish from others who have the same names.

CHAPTER 1 WHAT IS CHURCH PERPETUITY ?

As the New Testament church is defined in Chapter II, of this book, I refer the reader to that instead of here defining it.

Webster defines perpetuity: “The state or quality of being perpetual...Continued existence or duration.”

The late and lamented scholar, J. R. Graves, LL. D., wrote: “Wherever there are three or more baptized members of a regular Baptist church or churches covenanted together to hold and teach, and are governed by the New Testament,” etc., “there is a Church of Christ, even though there was not a presbytery of ministers in a thousand miles of them to organize them into a church. There is not the slightest need of a council of presbyters to organize a Baptist church.”

And the scholarly S. H. Ford, LL. D., says: “Succession among Baptists is not a linked chain of churches or ministers, uninterrupted and traceable at this distant day... The true and defensible doctrine is, that baptized believers have existed in every age since John baptized in Jordan, and have met as a baptized congregation in covenant and fellowship where an opportunity permitted.” To this explanation of Church Succession by Drs. Graves and Ford, all believers in Baptist “Church Succession” fully agree.

As the term “Succession,” from its being used by Romanists, may mislead the uninformed into the belief that Baptists believe the Apostles have been succeeded by apostles and hierarchal bishops —bishops who have received the Spirit from the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, and, then, episcopal grace, the phrase “Church Perpetuity” is preferable to the phrase “Church Succession.” The apostolic office terminated with the death of the last of the Apostles. It was intended only for the closing of the New Testament canon and the organization of the first churches. The New Testament, and other church history, certainly teach there were no other bishops in apostolic churches than pastors of one congregation — the diocese and the diocesan bishop having been born in the third century.

Every Baptist church being, in organization, a church complete in itself, and, in no way organically connected with any other church, such a thing as one church succeeding another, as the second link of a chain is added to and succeeds the first, or, as one Romish or Episcopal church succeeds another, is utterly foreign to and incompatible with Baptist church polity. Therefore, the talk about every link “jingling in the succession chain from the banks of the Jordan to the present,” is ignorance or dust-throwing.

The only senses in which one Baptist church can succeed another are that the church leads men and women to Christ, then through its missionaries or ministers baptizes them, after which the baptized organize themselves into a Baptist church; or, in lettering off some of its members to organize a new church; or, in case the old church has fallen to pieces, for its members to reorganize themselves into a church.

All that Baptists mean by church “Succession,” or Church Perpetuity, is: There has never been a day since the organization of the first New Testament church in which there was no genuine church of the New Testament existing on earth.

CHAPTER 2 CHURCH PERPETUITY A FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH OF THE BIBLE

1. Inasmuch as many deny the Bible teaches that the Church of Christ should never totally apostatize, I will here prove that it teaches its preservation until the Second Coming of Christ. Let us first settle what is the church.

The M. E. Discipline defines the church: "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance in all things that are of necessity requisite to the same."¹ Substituting ordinances for "sacraments" and adding Scriptural Church Government, this definition is good.

Dr. Hiscox: "A Christian Church is a congregation, of baptized believers in Christ, worshipping together, associated in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; practicing its precepts; observing its ordinances; recognizing and receiving Christ as their Supreme lawgiver and ruler; and taking His Word as their sufficient and exclusive rule of faith and practice in all matters of religion."² This expresses what the Methodist Discipline seems to mean, but with much more clearness. With equal clearness J. M. Pendleton, D.D.,³ E. Adkins, D.D.,⁴ H....

1 Art. 13.

2 Baptist Church Directory, p. 13.

3 Pendleton's Church Manual p. 7.

4 Adkins' The Church; its Polity and Fellowship, p. 18.

...Harvey, D.D.,¹ Henry M. Dexter, D.D.,² W. W. Gardner, D.D.,³ William Crowell, D.D.,⁴ say the same thing. The New Hampshire Confession says: "We believe that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word,"⁵ etc.

Ekklesia — the word for church occurs 114 times in the New Testament. In all but three it is rendered church. It refers to the Christian Church once typically, (Acts 7:38) the remaining 110 occurrences antotypically. In 99 instances, by counting, I find it denotes local organizations; in 12, by synecdoche, it means all the local organizations. It is used by synecdoche in Matt. 16:18; Eph.3:10, 21; 5:23, 24, 25, 27, 29, 32; Heb. 12:23, and, possibly, one or two other occurrences.

Says E. J. Fish, D.D.: "All investigation concurs with 'unequivocal uses of the term in pronouncing the actual church to be a local society and never anything but a local society.'⁶ "The real Church of Christ is a local body, of a definite, doctrinal constitution such as is indispensable to the unity of the Spirit."⁷ Alluding to its application to all professors, of all creeds, scattered everywhere, as an "invisible," "universal church," Dr. Fish well says: "Not a single case can be adduced where the loose and extended use of the collective can be..."

1 The Church, p. 26.

2 Congregationalism, p. 1.

3 Missiles of Truth, pp. 189,190.

4 Church Members' Manual, p. 35.

5 Art. 13.

6 Ecclesiology, p. 114.

7 Idem, p. 116.

...adopted without a forced and unnatural interpretation. The New Testament is utterly innocent of the inward conflict of those theories which adopt both the invisible, or universal, as it is now more commonly called, and the local ideas.”¹

H. M. Dexter, a Congregationalist, was forced to say: “The weight of New Testament authority, then, seems clearly to decide that the ordinary and natural meaning of *ekklesia*, rendered church, is that of a local body of believers.”²

Says Ralph Wardlaw, D.D., a Congregationalist: “Unauthorized uses of the word church. Under this head, I have first to notice the designations, of which the use is so common, but so vague — of the church visible and the church mystical, or invisible. Were these designations to be found in the New Testament, we should feel ourselves under obligation to examine and ascertain the sense in which the inspired writers use them. This, however, not being the case, we are under no such obligation.”³

A. Campbell: “The communities collected and set in order by the Apostles were called the congregation of Christ, and all these taken together are sometimes called the kingdom of God.”⁴

Moses E. Lard, of the difference between the kingdom and the church: “My brethren make none.”⁶ On the same page: “God has not one thing on this earth called his kingdom and another called his church.” That church refers to a local body, any one can see by such as Matt. 18:17; Acts, 8:1; 9:31; 11:26,32; 13:1; 14:23,...

1 Idem, p. 102.

2 Congregationalism, p. 33.

3 Wardlaw's Cong. Indep., p. 54.

4 Christian System, p. 172.

5 What Baptism is For, No. 3, p. 5.

...27, 15:3, 4, 22, 41; 16:5; 18:22; Rom. 16:1, 5; 1 Cor. 1:2; 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 2 Cor. 8:1, 18, 19, 23, 24; 11:8, 28; 12:13; Gal. 1:2, 22; Rev. 1:4; 2:1, 7, 8, 11, 12, 17, 18, 23, 29; 3:1, 6, 7, 13, 14, 22; 22:16. A careful comparison of these references will prove that the church is a local body, administering the ordinances, discipline, etc., known as church when but one in any locality, and churches when several of them are spoken of. Kingdom, in the New Testament, means the aggregate of the churches, just as any kingdom means the aggregate of its provinces — or countries of which it is composed. A kingdom includes the unorganized part of its geographical territory. In the New Testament, likewise, the term kingdom may include regenerate persons who have been misled so as to have never united with any of the churches or organized parts of the kingdom, such an instance is Rev. 18:4, where Christians are exhorted to come out of the Romish church. But, in no instance, either politically or ecclesiastically, can the application of the term kingdom to the organized localities, or parts, exclude the organized as necessary to the kingdom.

W. M. F. Warren, D.D., President of Boston University, Methodist: “Christian Church is the kingdom of God, viewed in its objective or institutional form.”¹ “In an earlier period this kingdom was identified with the church... The

Protestants regarded it...as the Christian institution of salvation.”²

Barnes: The kingdom means “the state of things which the Messiah was to set up his spiritual reign began in the church on earth, and completed in heaven.”³

* Except that there is no general organization of the churches but each church is in organization, independent of every other church, save as Christ is King over them all.

1 Essay before the Proph. Conf., held in N. Y., in 1873.

2 Schaff-Herzog Ency., vol. 2, p. 1246.

3 Com. on Matt. 3:2.

Neander, while stating that the kingdom is used in other sense, — which, by the way, can easily be included in the one he mentions — says: “The idea of the Church of Christ is closely connected in the views of Paul with that of the kingdom of God.”¹ “At the time of which we are speaking, the church comprised the whole visible form of the kingdom of God.”²

Andrew Fuller regards the kingdom and the church indissoluble when he says: “If the nature of Christ's kingdom were placed in those things in which the Apostles placed it, the government and discipline of the church would be considered as means not as ends.”³

G. W. Clarke: “This kingdom, reign, or administration of the Messiah is spiritual in its nature (John 18:36; Rom. 14:17) and is exercised over and has its seat in the hearts of believers. — Luke 17:21. It exists on earth (Matt 13: 18, 19, 41, 47) extends to another state of existence (Matt. 13:43, 26, 29; Phil. 2:10, 11) and will be fully consummated in a state of glory (1 Cor. 15:24; Matt. 8:11; 2 Pet. 1:11). It thus embraces the whole mediatorial reign or government of Christ on earth and in heaven, and includes in its subjects all the redeemed, or, as Paul expresses it, (Eph. 3:15) 'the whole family in heaven and earth.' Kingdom of heaven and church are not identical, though inseparately and closely connected. The churches of Christ are the external manifestations-of-this kingdom in the world.”⁴

In an excellent article in Smith's Bible Dictionary.⁵ A. Hovey, D.D., President Newton Theological Seminary, says: “This kingdom, though in its nature piritual, was to...

1 Plant, and Tr. of the Chr. Ch., p. 455.

2 Idem. p. 458.

3 Fuller's Works, vol. 2, p. 639.

4 Com. on Matt. 3:2.

5 Vol. 2, pp. 1541, 1543.

...have, while on earth, the visible arm in Christian Churches, and the simple rites belonging to church life were to be observed by every loyal subject (Matt. 28:18; John 3:5; Acts 2:38; Luke 21:17; I. Cor. 11:24.) It cannot, however, be said that the New Testament makes the spiritual kingdom of Christ exactly co-extensive with the visible church. There are many in the latter who do “not belong to the former, (1 John 2:9,) and some, doubtless, in the former, who do not take their place in the latter.”

Tholuck: “A kingdom of God — that is an organic commonwealth.” “The New Testament kingdom of God, is both from within and from without, in the individual as in the whole community.” “The idea of the kingdom of God ...is an

organized community, which has its principle of life in the will of the personal God.”¹

In the invisible church and kingdom theory are all disorganizers who reject baptism and church organization. Under the pretense of great zeal and spirituality they make the invisible everything and the organization nothing. This is illustrated by the following from *The Watchman*, of Boston:

“But, of late, there has been a marked disposition among certain thinkers to contrast the 'kingdom' with the 'church,' to the disadvantage of the latter. What we need today, they say, is not to strengthen the church, but to extend the kingdom of God; to work for the reorganization of society and the influence of Christian principles and motives in every department of life, and not for the salvation of individual men and women, which is the peculiar work of the church. Some of these writers have gone so far as to imply that the church is the greatest obstacle in the way of the advance of the kingdom of God.”

1 Sermon on the Mount, by Tholuck, pp. 71, 74.

As Luke 17:21 is the main passage for an invisible kingdom, I submit the following from that critical scholar,

Dr. Geo. Varden:

“The weight of critical authority inclines mightily to 'in your midst.' Lexicon Pasoris (1735) so renders. Raphel (*Nota Philologica* 1749) similarly. Rosenmuller (*Scholia*, 1803) seeks to show at some length that, though *entos* may in general mean within, the character of the persons addressed forces the other meaning. Bretschneider (*Lexicon*, 1829) translates, 'The: founder of. the divine kingdom is already in your midst.' Alford (*Critical Greek Testament*) 'The misunderstanding which rendered these words within you, should have been prevented by reflecting that they are addressed to the Pharisees, in whose hearts it certainly was not.' Then, 'among you' is the marginal reading of the authorized version: and it has justly been said that, as a rule, these readings are preferable to the text. Moreover, the latest revision of the A. B. Union reads, 'The kingdom of God is in the midst of you.' Writes Thayer in his *Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* (the latest and by many regarded the best) 'In the midst of you, others within you (id est, in your souls) a meaning which the use of the word permits, but not the context.' And Godet, in his recent *Critical Commentary on Luke*, writes, 'These words are explained by almost all modern interpreters in the sense of in the midst of you.’”

To this I add the words of Dr. Bloomfield, on this passage: “Is among you ... On this interpretation the best commentators are agreed and adduce examples of this use of *evroc* ... The kingdom of God has even commenced among you, i. e., in your own country and among your own people.” So Paulus, Fleck, Bornemann, DeWette, Doddridge, Beza, Raphaelius, et al.

Inasmuch as Acts 19:32, where *ecclesia* is rendered “assembly,” is presumed to prove it means, also, a “mob,” I submit the following conclusive critical refutation, from the late and lamented J. R. Graves, LL. D.:

“Let us, without prejudice, look into this question. (1.) *Ecclesia* is nowhere in the whole range of classical Greek usage used to denote a 'mob' or an unorganized or riotous crowd. (2.) It is nowhere so used in Septuagint Greek. (3.) It is no-where else in the 111 instances of its occurrence in the New

Testament used to denote a mob or riotous crowd. This should arouse suspicion that it may not have this unwonted meaning here. Certainly if it can mean a lawful and organized assembly here, we should give it that signification. It certainly can, and I believe should be, given the sense of a lawful assembly—even a political body possessed of civil functions.

“Ephesus was a free city of Greece. Every free city was governed by (1) jury courts — Diakastres — that had jurisdiction over all criminal cases. (2.) The ecclesia, which was an organized body composed of all free citizens entitled to vote, and presided over by a recorder. The meeting place of the ecclesia at Ephesus, as at Athens, was in the theater — as the capital at Frankfort is for the sessions of the Kentucky Legislature, (3) The council of five hundred corresponded to our Senate or the House of Lords. Ephesus, then, had an ecclesia, and its meeting place the great theater of the city, and its duty to look after the general peace and welfare of the city — not to sit as a criminal court to try personal offenses.

“Let us now examine Luke's account of what took place, remembering that the ecclesia may have been in session before the uproar commenced, or that it, as it was its duty to do, came immediately together as soon as cognizant of it. Demetrius and his workmen and the mob, Laving seized Gaius and Aristarchus, rushed with them into the assembly, 'and some [of the mob] cried one thing and some another, and the ecclesia was confused' by these varied cries, while no definite charge was brought to its notice of which it could take cognizance. Now mark it was not the ecclesia that was riotous, but 'oklos' — crowd that had rushed into the theater where the ecclesia assembly of Ephesus was in orderly session, or had gathered to hold one; for it was the 'oklos,' not the ecclesia, that the presiding officer of the ecclesia quieted. (See Acts 19:35.) He informed this riotous, 'oklos' crowd, 'if Demetrius and the workmen with him had a charge against any man, there were the courts and the proconsuls; but if it was about other things the ecclesia would settle it.' The ecclesia was responsible for public tumults, insurrections, etc., and the officer appealed to the crowd to be quiet and disperse, 'for,' said he, speaking for the ecclesia, 'we are even in danger of being accused about the tumult of today, there being no cause by which we [the ecclesia] can excuse this concourse' — sustrophes — not ecclesia. And having said this, he adjourned, dissolved, the assembly — ecclesia — not the sustrophes — mob — which he could not dismiss. Now, in this account, we have, in Greek, four terms used: 'deemos,' people; 'oklos,' crowd; 'sustrophes,' mob; 'ecclesia,' assembly — a body having civil jurisdiction. Ecclesia and sustrophes are never used interchangeably, never mean the same body.”

Were we to admit that ecclesia here meant a “mob,” since the church in no way involves a mob, this passage has no bearing on what is the church. Liddell and Scott, in their Greek Lexicon, define the word, “ekklesia, an assembly of citizens summoned by the crier, the legislative assembly.”

Dean Trench says: “Ekklesia...as all know, was the lawful assembly in a free Greek city of all those possessed of the rights of citizenship, for the transaction of public affairs. That they were summoned is expressed in the latter part of the word; that they were summoned out of the whole population, a select portion of it, including neither the populace, not yet strangers, nor those who had forfeited their civic rights — this is expressed in the first. Both the calling and the calling out, are moments to be remembered, when the word is assumed into a higher Christian sense, for in them the chief part of its peculiar adaptation to its auguster uses lie.”

If the kingdom and the church mean “the reign of grace in the heart without a visible organization,” as grace had reigned in the heart, at least, from the time of Abel, Dan. 2:44 and Matt. 16:18, could not have spoken of the kingdom and the church as not built before the New Testament age.

A kingdom without organization — definite, ascertainable laws, is but the creature of the babel of sectarianism. It never did exist, in nature, in politics or in grace; and never can exist. It is twin brother to the notion that there is an “invisible church” — as if there were invisible men and women! The only part of the church which is invisible is the internal part and that part which has “crossed over the river.”

That the term church in the New Testament, always means, literally, in the language of the New Hampshire Confession, “a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ,” and, in its few figurative uses, the aggregate of the local churches, and that the church and the kingdom are so related that neither can exist without the other, I have now clearly demonstrated.

THIS BEING THE CASE, EVERY PROMISE OF PRESERVATION AND PERPETUITY, MADE TO THE KINGDOM, IS A PROMISE TO THE CHURCHES OF WHICH IT IS COMPOSED, AND vice versa.

I will now proceed to prove the Bible promises that the church should never so far apostatize as to lose its existence as a true church.

I. “I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.” — Jer. 32:40. (1.) That this refers to the New Testament none will deny. (2.) That the church and the “covenant” are indissoluble, will not be denied. (3.) That this covenant and its subjects are in contrast with the old covenant and its subjects, is equally evident. From this it follows, that, inasmuch, as the people of the old covenant apostatized, and that they were repudiated of God, the new covenant and its people are everlastingly united to Him. This is positively affirmed: (a) an “everlasting covenant;” (b) “fear in their HEARTS;” (c) “that they SHALL NOT DEPART from me” — no departing from God, as under the old covenant, no apostate Israel, hence Church Perpetuity. The only possible way to deny that this is a positive promise of Church Perpetuity is to affirm that God departs from His people, who do not depart from Him, which is affirming that He is unfaithful.

II. “In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.” — Dan. 2:44. (1.) Here God affirms He will set up a kingdom — but one kingdom. (2.) This kingdom includes the church or churches, as the United States government includes the State or the States. (3.) That this kingdom and church or churches are indivisible, is certain. (4.) He affirms this kingdom, including His church, shall not be left to other people; i.e., under the law of the old covenant, the kingdom, because of apostasy, was given to the Gentiles — “other people,” but under the law of the new covenant there shall be no apostasy of the church, so as to cause it to be given to “other people” — to Wesley, Calvin, etc., and their followers. No room here for men to set up churches of their own on the ground of the original churches having all apostatized. (5.) This kingdom “shall NEVER be destroyed.” (6.) This kingdom “shall stand FOREVER.” (7.) This kingdom, instead of becoming apostate, shall be aggressive — “shall break in

pieces and consume all 'other kingdoms.'" (8.) The days of these kings refer to the days of the Caesars. The only possible way of avoiding this promise of Church Succession is to deny that this kingdom and church are indissoluble. That this denial is vain is evident, from the fact, that, in the New Testament, the two are never separate, and the promises of preservation therein to the one are equally to the other. So writers of all denominations hold them one. Here, then, in the Old Testament are the most unequivocal promises of Church Perpetuity.

III. "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." — Matt. 16:18. (1.) This is church, but one kind of church — a kingdom — not "branches." The New Testament says that, as individuals, Christ's disciples are "branches" of Him. But it nowhere so much as intimates there are "branches of the church." If there are "branches of the church" where is their trunk?? (2.) Christ built His church. Wesley, Calvin, Campbell, etc., built theirs. He built it on a sure foundation. — Isa. 28:16; Ps. 118:22; Eph. 2:20; 2 Tim. 2:19. (4.) The church and its foundation are indissolubly joined together by undying love. (5.) "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it," — it "shall never be destroyed," but "shall stand forever." Bengel well says: "The Christian Church is like a city without walls, and yet the gates of hell, which assail it, shall never prevail." "A most magnificent promise."¹ So say Stier, Adam Clarke, Scott, Barnes, G. W. Clarke, Bloomfield, Horsley, Vitranga, Olshausen, Doddridge and Lange, et mul al. Has Christ's promise failed?

The following are Campbellite concessions:

"The rock is not that against which the unseen is not to prevail; neither has the church ever become extinct. These we deem gross errors."² Mr. Fanning: "The church was built upon the rock laid in Zion; that she has withstood the rough waves of eighteen centuries, and that she will finally triumph over all the principalities and powers of earth."³ David Lipscomb: "God founded a church that 'will stand forever;' that the gates of hell shall not prevail against."⁴ "True witnesses of Christ never failed from the earth."⁵ †

† That these Campbellites and Pedeo-baptists, when they come to justify the origin of their churches, say the gates of hell did prevail against the church, is true. But, then they speak from their churches; here they speak from the Bible.

¹ Com. in loco.

² Lard's Quarterly Review for 1886, p. 309.

³ Living Pulpit, p. 520.

⁴ Gospel Advocate for 1867, p. 770.

⁵ Isaac Errett's Walks about Jerusalem, p. 142.

IV. "Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, all power is given unto me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." — Matt. 28:18-20. (1.) Christ here promises His presence. (2.) His presence is here implied to be the only guarantee of the fulfillment of the mission, but the sure one. (3.) This promise is to His church. That this is true is evident from the Great Commission having been committed to only the church. This will hardly be questioned. (4.) Christ's promise is to insure that the nations will be disciplined, baptized, etc. That He has promised to be with His church to guarantee the preservation of baptism — all things included in the commission — is, therefore, clear. (5.) Christ promises His presence always, all the days — pasas tas heemeras — not leaving a

single day for apostasy. (6.) If this church has gone into Babylon He is gone there too, and all are lost — “Lo I am with you alway even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Bengel says on this : “A continual presence, and one most actually present.” “This promise also belongs to the whole church.”¹ Inasmuch as Methodism, Presbyterianism, Campbellism, etc., are “but of yesterday,” this promise cannot apply to them. On this Stier says: “He is present with his mighty defense and aid against the gates of hell, which would oppose and hinder His church in the execution of His commands.”¹ So, G. W. dark, Scott, Matthew Henry, Barnes, Doddridge, Olshausen, and Adam dark, et. mul. al.

I Com. In loco.

V. “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body... Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it... that He might present it to Himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.” — Eph. 5:25, 29. (1.) This is taken from the relation of husband and wife. (2.) The husband that does not use his utmost power to save his wife is an unfaithful husband. (3.) Only his lack of power prevents him from saving his wife. (4.) For Christ to not use His utmost power to save His church would be for Him to be unfaithful to her. (5.) Only by His lack of power can the church apostatize. (6.) But, “all power in heaven and in earth” belongs to Him; therefore the church is insured forever against apostasy. He “gave Himself for it” and He is its “Savior.” (7.) An apostate church is not a “glorious” church, has spots, wrinkles, serious blemishes. (8.) But, inasmuch as Christ’s church has “no such thing,” His church shall never apostatize. On this Adam Clark says: “Christ exercises His authority over the church so as to save and protect it.”¹ Verses 26 and 27, Bengel, Matthew Henry and Adam Clark say allude to “the different ordinances which He has appointed;” hence they agree that the passages speak of the Church organization.

VI. Having been “built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord.” — Eph. 2:20, 21. (1.) This building — the church — is “fitly framed together.” (2.) It is framed — JOINED to its foundation — “in whom.” (3.) A church being framed...

I Com. in loco.

...to the foundation so as to be removed from the foundation is not “fitly framed,” the only “fitly” framing, according to the spirit and the design of Christianity, is that which so frames the church into its foundation, that it can never be razed by the devil; and, thus, Wesleys, Campbells, Calvins left to rebuild it. (4.) As it is “fitly framed” into its foundation, if the devil has forced it into Babylon, the foundation, too, is gone, for they are “fitly framed together.”

VII “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved.” — Heb. 12:28. Greenfield, Liddell, Scott and Thayer define the Greek, here rendered “moved,” “shaken,” and the Bible Union and the New Revision render it “shaken” instead of “moved.” (1.) If this kingdom cannot be “shaken,” surely the church cannot be forced from its foundation into Babylon. (2.) The church, therefore, must ever be faithful to its husband — Church Perpetuity.

VIII. Christ is the King of His church. — Matt. 21:5. (1.) To destroy the kingdom is to destroy the king as king. (2.) If Christ’s church has been

destroyed, as king, Christ is destroyed, † (3.) But as His kingship in His church is essential to save a lost world, if for no other reason, He would preserve His church from apostasy. (4.) In no instance has a king ever lost his kingship, except by being too weak to save it. (5.) But Christ has “all power,” therefore, He will save His kingship by saving His church from apostasy.

IX. Christ is “High Priest” of His church. — Compare Heb. 10:21 with 1 Tim. 3:15. (1.) Christ's priesthood is essentially related to His church. (2.) Therefore to destroy His church is to destroy His priest...

† To the attempt to evade the force of this argument, by the fact that Saul became King, and thence inferring God then was no longer King (1 Sam. 18:23) is a sufficient reply.

...hood. (3.) Inasmuch as He can never permit His priesthood to be destroyed, He can never permit apostasy to destroy His church.

X. Church Perpetuity grows out of the nature of the truth as the instrument of the Spirit. The spirit through the truth preserved the apostolic church. Unless the Spirit and the truth lose their power, they must thence preserve the church from apostasy until Christ comes. The same cause, under like conditions, will always produce the same effect. The truth is conditioned for all time only by sinful nature and the unchangeable Spirit; therefore Church Perpetuity.

XI. Church Perpetuity grows out of the mission of the Church. Her mission is to preach the gospel to the world, preserve the truth and the ordinances. The Scriptures make the churches the custodians of the ordinances and of all affairs of the kingdom of Christ, on earth. The Commission says, disciple, baptize and teach them to observe all the institutions of Christ — Matt. 28: 19, 20. (a) Those who make disciples are, naturally, the judges of the progress and the rights of the disciple, (b) Peter, on Pentecost, in that he commanded certain persons to be baptized, judged of their fitness for baptism. — Acts 2:38. (c) In asking “can any man forbid water,” Peter implied that water can be scripturally forbidden for persons who are unfit for baptism. — Acts 10:47, 48. (a?) In Philip saying to the eunuch, “if thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest,” he implied his right to refuse to baptize him, if he regarded him as not born again. Compare Acts 8:37, with 1 John 5:1.

Through the Apostles the churches were given the ordinances. (1.) Compare Acts 16:4; 1 Cor. 11:2. (2.) The Church is “the pillar and the ground of the truth.” — 1 Tim. 3:15. (3.) In caring for the things of the kingdom, the churches baptize into their membership — through their officers — those whom they think are believers. “Him that is weak in the faith receive.” — Rom. 14:1- (a) How receive if no authority to receive or reject? (b) Again, if the Church is not the judge, how can it know whether the candidate is “weak” or strong in the faith — or whether he has any faith at all? (c) Proslambanesthe means, “to admit to one's society and fellowship.” — Thayer's, Robinson's and the other Lexicons. Adam Clarke: “Receive him into your fellowship,”¹ so Comp. Com., Doddridge, etc. See 1 Cor. 5:4-5, where the church excluded a member and 2 Cor. 2:6-10, where she receives him back into her membership. (4.) In caring for the interests of the kingdom the churches exclude members. — 1 Cor. 5:4-9; 2 Thess. 3:6; Rev. 2:14, 15, 20; 3:10; Matt. 18:17-19. (5.) The church is to watch, guard the interest of the kingdom as a soldier, on guard, guards what is under his care. Teereo — rendered “observe” in the Commission — Matt. 28:20 — means to “watch, to observe attentively, to keep the eyes fixed upon, to keep, to guard, e.g., a prisoner, a person arrested....to keep back, to keep in store, to reserve.”² In

the following passages it, and its family, are rendered, “watched,” “keepers,” “keep,” “kept.” — Matt. 27:36; 28:4; Mark 7:9; John 2:10; 12:7; 17:12, 15; Acts 12:5,6; 16:23, 24:23; 25:4, 21; 2 Tim. 4:7; James 1:27. Thus the “keepers did shake;” “they watched him;” “Peter was kept in prison;” “the keepers before the door kept the prison;” “charging the jailer to keep them safely;” “commanded a centurion to keep Paul;” “that Paul should be kept in Caesarea;” “I commanded him to be...

1 In loco.

2 Thayer's, Robinson's and other Lexicons.

...kept;” “keep yourselves in the love of God.” Thus the church, at Philadelphia, is commended concerning the interests of the kingdom, in that “thou didst keep my word.” — Rev. 3:8.

In 1 Cor. 11:2, katekete — “to hold down, to detain, to restrain, to retain, hold firm in grasp, to maintain” — see the Lexs. — is used — “keep the ordinances” — Revised Version, “holdfast.” Thus we see, as plainly as that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that as the Jews, under the Old Dispensation, had the exclusive care of the word, the ceremonies, etc., so has the church under the new; that the church, as a soldier, with its eyes fixed on the interests of the kingdom, is to propagate, practice and guard them — as the Commission reads, “teach them to guard all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” As the Church, according to the word and the Spirit, obeys the Great Commission, Jesus is with it. — Matt. 28:20. † If the church were necessary in apostolic times it is necessary “always, even unto the end of the world.” — Matt. 28:20. Did not Christ provide for this necessity by providing for Church Preservation? Or, was there, here, a little omission which Wesley, Calvin, Campbell and other church builders provided for?

No doctrine of the Bible is more clearly revealed than is the doctrine of Church Perpetuity. As easily can one deny the atonement. Convince me there is no church today that has continued from the time of Christ, and you convince me the Bible is false. “Pedo-baptists” and Campbellites have admitted that Church Perpetuity is a...

† Inasmuch as the objection against Restricted Commission is based on the presumption that the church is not the custodian of New Testament institutions, the reader now has. In a nut, shell. the key to the whole subject of “Close Communion.” No church which believes itself a New Testament church can extend its privileges to those outside its membership— those who differ from It.

Bible doctrine, so clearly is it taught in the Bible. Prof. Bannerman, a Presbyterian, says: “There are statements in Scripture that seem distinctly to intimate that the Christian Church shall always continue to exist in the world, notwithstanding that all is earthly and hostile around her. He has founded it upon a rock; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”... That Christ will be with His church ‘always, even unto the end of the world,’ ministering the needful support and grace for its permanent existence on earth, we cannot doubt.”¹ “He has left us a promise that the powers of evil shall never finally prevail against or sweep it entirely away; and as belonging essentially to the due administration of that kingdom, and forming a part of it, the outward dispensation of the ordinances and worship in the church shall never fail.”² “The ministry, embracing an order of men to discharge its duties, is a standing institution in the Christian Church since its first establishment until now, and

Leslie, in his *Short Method with the Deists*, has fairly and justly appealed to the uninterrupted existence of the office as the standing and permanent monument of the great primary facts of Christianity, and, therefore, as demonstrative evidence of its truth.”³

Eld. J. M. Mathes, a leading Campbellite, adduces the recent origin of the Methodist church as one evidence that it is not the church of Christ. He says: “The M. E. church, as an organism is not old enough to be the church of God.”⁴

“In the darkest ages of Popery, God never 'left Himself without a witness.' It is true that from the rise...

1 *The Church of Christ*, by Bannerman, vol. I, p, 51.

2 *Idem.*, p. 333.

3 *Idem.*, p. 439.

4 *Letters to Bishop Morris*, p. 140.

...of that anti-Christian power till the dawn of the Reformation, the people of Christ may be emphatically denominated a 'little flock,' yet small as their number may appear to have been to the eye of man, and unable as historians may be, to trace with accuracy the saints of the Most High, amidst 'a world lying in wickedness,' it cannot be doubted that even then, there was a remnant, which kept the commandments of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ. If God reserved to Himself 'seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal,' in the reign of idolatrous Ahab, can we suppose, that during any preceding period. His Church has ceased to exist, or that His cause has utterly perished?”¹

The attempt is made, in two ways, to weaken the force of these Scriptures for the Perpetuity of Churches. (1.) By resorting to the loose, assumed meaning, of the word church, as not including organization. But in reply (a) I have shown that *ekklesia* always indicates organization. (See the first part of this chapter.) (b) No man can show where it ever excludes organization.² (c) There can be no reason why God — if there is such a church — should care so much for a general, indefinable, intangible, “invisible” body of men and women who have no definite places of meeting, no gospel and gospel ordinances committed to it, no definite and tangible objects before it, as to promise to preserve it, while He cared so little for a special, definable, tangible, visible body of men and women, with definite places of meeting, tangible objects before it, and gospel and gospel ordinances committed to it, as to give it no promise of preservation! (d) The preaching, the ordinances, the administration of discipline — all the work of the gospel — having been committed,...

1 *History Waldenses*, Published by American Sunday School Union.

2 *Ecclesiology*, p. 102.

...not to a general, indefinable, intangible, invisible, body of men and women, with no places of meeting, no objects before it, but to organization, it is clear that, whatever may be promised to a non-organization, the very mission and the very design of the church lead us to expect its preservation. When Paul directed Timothy “how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth,” — 1 Tim. 3:15 — he spoke of organization with officers — “bishops” and “deacons” — see the context, in verses 1-13. The election of officers, the receiving, the discipline and exclusion of members, the keeping of the ordinances, — everything necessary for the work of the gospel and the salvation of a lost world was committed to “organized churches.” Compare Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 1:26; 6:2, 3,

5; 10:47; 15:22; 16:4; Rom. 14:1; 1 Cor. 5:4, 5; 2 Cor. 2:6; 1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Thess. 3:6; Rev. 2:14; 3:10, in which it will be seen that the churches elected their officers, received, excluded members, preached the gospel, kept everything in order. In preaching, baptizing, receiving, excluding, the churches are the powers through which the king of Zion governs, extends His empire. A. Campbell, of the churches, says: "But as these communities possess the oracles of God. . . they are in the records of the kingdom regarded as the only constitutional citizens of the kingdom."¹ Few deny this necessity for the churches, until they come to meet the impregnable stronghold of Bible promises of Church Perpetuity, when they disparage the churches for their own general, intangible, invisible — I must say it — nothing; and then they have Church Perpetuity promised to their pet — nothing. Some of them will say: "Yes, we admit, that

¹ Christian System, p. 172.

through all ages there were men and women who held Bible principles, Bible doctrines, Bible ordinances, etc." Yet, in the next breath, they deny that these were churches! Just as if the life, evinced by the maintenance of these "principles," these "ordinances" and the "doctrine" would not maintain the scriptural church organization! Where, today, find we men and women who maintain Bible principles, Bible ordinances, Bible doctrine, etc., without scriptural organization? Indeed, what is such a, life in manifestation but organization and the work of organization? The Scriptures represent the organization as indispensable to the purity, the preservation of the doctrine, the gospel and the ordinances. But, to rob the church of the promise of preservation, it is denied that the church is necessary to such purposes. What these deniers of Church Perpetuity think the church was instituted for, would require more than the wisdom of Solomon to tell. (2.) It is claimed that the apostasy of some churches proves the apostasy of all. Excuse me for reducing the objection to a logical absurdity, in stating it. As well prove that a whole army deserts from some having deserted. The Scriptures speak of some churches being spewed out, their candlesticks being removed. The Romish church is only apostasy. But the promises to the church and to the kingdom, as institutions, are, that "it shall stand forever," that "the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."

The attempt is, also, made to weaken the statements of commentators, etc., that the Scriptures promise Church Perpetuity. This is done in the same way by which the attempt is made to weaken the direct statements of the Scriptures, viz., by saying that these commentators mean the general, indefinable, intangible, "invisible" body of men and women — church means men and women — with no place of meeting, no objects before it — the "invisible church." To this I reply: Some of these writers have fallen into the error of speaking of an "invisible church," but (1.) I have shown that they speak of the "visible" church as being preserved. For example, Adam Clark says, that the church, of Eph. 5:23-29, is a church with ordinances. † (2.) But, if every one of these writers understood these promises as applicable to only an "invisible church" it does not, in the least, weaken their testimony to these promises guaranteeing Church Perpetuity. The promises of perpetuity to a church are one thing; to what kind of a church is given .these promises is quite another. I have not quoted any of these writers as defining the church to which the promises were given; but I have quoted them all to prove that the promises clearly leave no ground to doubt that perpetuity of some kind of a church if promised. Having proved that the churches‡ of the New Testament are organizations, to which are committed the gospel, the doctrine, the ordinances, the discipline — that they are thus "the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the PILLAR and GROUND of

the Truth,” (1 Tim. 3:15.) whoever denies that these are the church to which the promises of preservation are given has his controversy not with me so much as with the King of Zion. § So far as the use of the...

† An invisible church — if there is such a thing — has neither ordinances nor anything else. If any passage, in the Bible, seems to mean an “invisible” church, this passage is that one. The bad results of the “invisible” notion is seen in Cowboy Deanism, now in Texas, and elsewhere. On the plea that the church is made up of all believers, wherever they are and to whatever they are connected, it is calling our churches “Babylon,” those who maintain them, “church idolaters,” etc., and is endeavoring to destroy them. This is but the Pedobaptist notion of an “invisible church” “gone to seed.” The “invisible” notion is the seed of ecclesiastical nihilism and anarchy.

‡ “The learned Dr. Owen fully maintains, that in no approved writer, for two hundred years after Christ, is mention made of any organized, visibly professing church, except a local congregation of Christians.”— Church Members' Manual, p. 36, by William Crowell.

§ That the reader may neither be confused nor think that I am contused I will again state that I use “church,” in the singular, to denote the aggregate of churches. Just as it is used in Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22; 5:24; Col. 1:18. It is thus used by synecdoche, and I use “churches” for the Independent organizations—the literal churches, as in Acts 9:31; 15:41; 16:6; 19:37; Rom. 16:4, 16; 1 Cor. 7:17; 11:16; 14:33,34; 16:1, 19. To say “Baptist church” for all Baptist churches is, therefore, correct, so is it to say Baptist churches.

...testimony of these writers is concerned, it matters not, if these writers believed the churches of the New Testament are Romish or Mormon churches. They agree that whatever the churches of the New Testament are, they are promised Church Perpetuity. And I have proved them all organizations.

I will close this argument with the testimony of one Methodist and two Presbyterian scholars.

Adam Clarke: “The church of the living God. The assembly in which God lives and works, each number of which is a living stone, all of whom, properly united among themselves,” — this is organization, — “grow up into a holy temple in the Lord.”¹

Barnes, Presbyterian: “Thus it is with the church. It is entrusted with the business of maintaining the truth, of defending it from the assaults of error, and of transmitting it to future times. The truth is, in fact, upheld in the world by the church. The people of the world feel no interest in defending it, and it is to the Church of Christ that it is owing that it is preserved and transmitted from age to age ... The stability of the truth on earth is dependent on the church ... Other systems of religion are swept away; other opinions change; other forms of doctrine vanish; but the knowledge of the great system of redemption is preserved on earth unshaken, because the church is preserved and its foundations can not be moved. As certainly as the church continues to live, so certain will it be that the truth of God will be perpetuated in the world.”²

¹ 1 Com. on 1 Timothy, 3:15.

² On 1 Timothy 3:15, in “Old Landmarkism,” p. 44.

Again, says Bannerman: “The visible church is Christ's kingdom; and the administration of government, ordinance, and discipline within it, is but a part of that administration by which He rules over His people. That kingdom may at

different times be more or less manifest to the outward eye and more or less conspicuous in the view of men. But He has left us a promise that the powers of evil shall never finally prevail against it or sweep it entirely away; and, as belonging essentially to a due administration of that kingdom, and forming a part of it, the outward dispensation of ordinances and worship in the Church shall never fail. * * * There are express announcements in Scripture, warranting us to assert that the various institutions and rites that make up the outward provision of government, worship, ordinance, and discipline in the Church of Christ, should be continued to the end of the world.”¹

“The ministry, embracing an order of men to discharge its duties, is a standing institution in the Christian church, since its first establishment until now; and Leslie, in his *Short Method with the Deists*, has fairly and justly appealed to the uninterrupted existence of the office as a standing and permanent monument of the great primary facts of Christianity, and as therefore demonstrative evidence of its truth. ... There are a number of Scripture declarations of the promises, of the permanence and perpetuity of a ministry in the church, which have been appropriated and perverted by the advocates of apostolic succession into arguments in favor of the doctrine. ... In short, most of those Scripture statements, which afford us warrant to say that there shall be a church always on this earth, and that the office of minister and pastor is a standing appointment...

¹ Bannerman's *Church of Christ*, vol. 1, pp. 332, 333.

...in the church, have been pressed into the service of the theory that an apostolical succession in the line of each individual minister is essential to the validity of the ministerial title, † and, as most, if not all, the advocates hold essential also the existence of a church at all. Now, with regard to such statements of Scripture, it may readily be admitted — nay, it is to be strenuously affirmed — that they demonstrate this much, that a Church of Christ, more or less visible, is always to exist on the earth; but this conclusion has nothing to do with apostolic succession in the church. Further still, many of these texts may be held as demonstrating that the office of the ministry is a standing and permanent one in the church. ... There are not a few statements in Scripture that justify us in believing that the office of the ministry in the church can never, as an office, become extinct; that an order of men set apart to its public duties can never, as an order, be interrupted and come to an end, so long as the church itself endures.”¹

Prof. Bannerman, feeling the force of this, against the Presbyterian church, tries to evade it by a resort to the notion of a “universal Christian society, and in all the branches of the Christian church.” But this does not weaken the force of the quoted statements. How significantly, then, is every honest scholar bound to voice the Lord's statement: “Upon this rock I will build, my church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” — Matt. 16:18.

XII. “Unto Him be glory in the church, by Jesus Christ, throughout all ages, world without end.” — Eph. 3:21...

† Advocates for receiving persons into our churches, on alien immersions, have fallen into the Romanist and Episcopal error; for they claim that we can have no proof of a regularly constituted ministry until we can trace “every minister's pedigree back to apostolic times!” Just as if a Scriptural Church is not the authority to baptize !

¹ Idem, pp. 439, 442.

...By her fulfilling the great commission — her godly life — the church perpetuates and extends Christ's glory. Many, in our age, rather reverse this by having this glory out of the church. But this makes His glory dependent on the church. As this glory is “in the church throughout all ages, world without end,” the perpetuity of the church is assured.

The Scriptures more than justify the lines of Newton:

“Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God;
He whose word cannot be broken,
Formed thee for His own abode.

Lord, thy Church is still thy dwelling,
Still is precious in thy sight,
Judah's temple for excelling,
Beaming with the gospel's light.

On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake her sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
She can smile at all her foes.”

Or of Kelley:

“Zion stands with hills surrounded,
Zion kept by power divine;
All her foes shall be confounded,
Though the world in arms combine;
Happy Zion,
What a favored lot is thine.

In the furnace God may prove thee,
Thence to bring thee forth more bright,
But can never cease to love thee;
Thou art precious in His sight;
God is with thee;
God, thine everlasting life.”

Thus poets join scriptural expositors in declaring church preservation a fundamental Bible doctrine.

Having proved that the church should never apostatize is a fundamental Bible doctrine, I pass...

To notice that it is a fundamental infidel doctrine that it should apostatize.

A few years ago I met in debate a Spiritist, who affirmed, as a proposition, that the church has apostatized. So Mormonism teaches. Swedenborg says of the church: “Its condition may be compared with a ship, laden with merchandise, of the greatest value, which, as soon as it got out of the harbor, was immediately tossed about with a tempest, and presently being wrecked in the sea, sinks to the bottom.”¹

Says Buckle: “The new religion was corrupted by old follies, ...until after a

lapse of a few generations, Christianity exhibited so grotesque and hideous a form that its best features were lost, and the lineaments of its earlier loveliness were altogether destroyed.”²

Infidels, of the present, seeing that the church yet stands, are preaching its apostasy. Voltaire said the church would be extinct before A. D. 1800. Robert Ingersoll, and every infidel lecturer and writer, proclaim the doctrine of the apostasy. The Devil has believed in and worked for church apostasy ever since its birth. Christ said: “The gates of Hades shall not prevail against” the church; the combined powers of hell have ever said “they shall” and “that they have prevailed against it.” With which of these parties do you, my dear reader, agree? Remember, you cannot evade the question, by resorting to the assumption of an “invisible” church; for we have seen (a) that the only church which the New Testament speaks of is a local organization, and...

¹ True Christian Religion, p. 269.

² Buckle's, History of Civilization, vol. 1, p. 183.

...(b) if there were “invisible” churches, the promise of preservation is given to the “visible.”

Modern churches are essentially based on the infidel assumption, viz., the apostasy, harlotry of the blessed Bride or Church of Christ.

A. wife is “off on a visit.” To steal the wife's place, a woman circulates the report that the wife has been lost at sea. The woman knows this report is necessary to make room for her. So, every new sect builder and new sect — and sects now number hundreds — knowing there is no room for another Bride of Christy while the first is alive or true to Him, proclaim the death, or the unfaithfulness of His first Bride. Bangs, one of the earliest Methodist writers, said: “That the state of society was such in Great Britain at the time Wesley arose as to call, in most imperious language, for a Reformation, no one, at all acquainted with those times, I presume, will pretend to question.”¹ Again: “Methodism arose from the necessity of the times.”² Mr. Bangs omitted telling his readers that the very church — the Episcopal — that then ruled Britain, was a church which originated with the bold assumptions of the apostasy or harlotry of the Bride of Christ, and of the necessity of a “reformation.”

Porter, another standard Methodist writer: “More than a thousand years the church was sunk in the deepest ignorance and corruption, so that it is exceedingly doubtful whether there was a valid bishop on earth.”³ “The church was dead.”⁴ A sect, calling themselves “Bible Christians” — wonder if the Campbellites cannot get a suggestion from this name, as to what to call their church? — says: “In subsequent times, when reformation...

¹ Bangs' Original Church, p. 103.

² Idem, p. 302.

³ Compendium of Methodism, p. 329.

⁴ Idem, p. 337,

...was needed, a Luther, a Calvin, a Melancthon and others have been raised up, etc. ... Under Providence” — by the way, these sect builders all talk of a Providential call, but no one of them recognizes the others' call as sufficiently doing the work for which they were called, and none of them shows us what wonderful Providence called them! — “the body, known by the appellation of Bible Christians, began to assume an external, visible existence as a church,

about the year 1800, principally through the labors of Rev. William Cowherd.”¹ Of the German Seventh Day Baptists (?), William M. Fahnestock, M.D., of that sect, says: “About the year 1694 a controversy arose in the Protestant churches of Germany and Holland in which vigorous attempts were made to reform some of the errors of the church ... In the year 1708, Alexander Mack ... and seven others, in Schwartzenau, Germany, began to examine carefully and impartially the doctrines of the New Testament, and to ascertain what are the obligations imposed on Christians; determined to lay aside all preconceived” — the special plea of Campbellism — “opinions and traditional observances. The result of their inquiries terminated in the formation of the society, now called the Dunkers, or First Day German Baptists.”² Of a sect called “The Free Communion Baptists” (?), Rev. A. D. Williams, one of its ministers, writes: “At the close of the seventeenth century two pernicious errors had crept into ecclesiastical matters in some parts of New England.” As a result: “During the first-half of the eighteenth century a number of these societies were formed in Rhode Island and Connecticut.”³

1 Religious Denominations, p. 123.

2 Religious Denominations, p. 109.

Rev. Porter S. Burbank, of the “Free Will Baptists” (?), writes: “Generally there was but one Baptist denomination in America till the origin of the Free Will Baptists, a little more than sixty years ago. ... The Free Will Baptist connection in North America commenced A. D. 1780, in which year its first church was organized.” Then he proceeds to justify its organization, by such statements as: “Churches were in a lax state of discipline, and much of the preaching was little else than dull, moral essays, or prosy disquisitions on abstract doctrines.”¹ John Winebrenner, the founder of the Winebrennarians, who call themselves “The Church of God” — a suggestion for the Campbellites as that name is as near as any name, which the Bible calls the church, nearer than most of the names they have given their church — says: “We shall accordingly notice... that religious community, or body of believers, who profess to have come out from all human and unscriptural organizations” — just what the Campbellite church professes — “who have fallen hack upon original grounds, and who wish, therefore, to be called by no other distinctive name, collectively taken, than the Church of God.” So he says: “In October, 1830,” some persons “met together” and organized the “Church of God.”² Of course, though Mr. Winebrenner founded his church, like A. Campbell, he says it was originated in the first century! In a tract, published by the “Seventh Day Adventists,” at Battle Creek, Mich., — a sect which is doing far more than Ingersoll to introduce Sabbath desecration and materialism — entitled “The Seventh Day Adventist: a brief sketch of their origin, progress and principles,” we read: “Our field of inquiry leads us back...

1 Idem, pp. 74,75.

2 Idem, p. 172.

...only to the great advent movement of 1840-'44. Respecting that movement, it is presumed that the public are more or less informed; but they may not be so well aware of the causes which have led since that time to the rise of a class of people calling themselves Seventh Day Adventists.”¹ Then, on the assumption of all things needing reforming, it says: “A Seventh Day Baptist sister, Mrs. Rachel D. Preston, from the State of New York, moved to Washington, N. H., where there was a church of Adventists. From them she received the doctrine of the soon-coming of Christ, and in return instructed them in reference to the claims of the fourth commandment in the Decalogue. This was in 1844. Nearly that whole church immediately commenced the observance of the seventh day, and thus have

the honor of being the first Seventh Day Adventist Church in America.”²

Thus, we see how sects arise, how Christians are divided, how the world is led into infidelity by sectarianism. THE INFIDEL DOCTRINE, THAT THE BLESSED BRIDE OF CHRIST IS DEAD, OR HAS BEEN UNFAITHFUL TO HIM, IS THE BASIS, THE LICENSE OF THE WHOLE OF THE SECTARIAN TROUBLE. Once it is admitted, every one, good or bad, who becomes offended, and who can get a few followers, can get up a “new church,” so on ad infinitum. †

Thus, here comes Alexander Campbell, like all the other sect founders, claiming to reform the church, to “get back to the Bible,” etc. A. Campbell says that he originated the Campbellite church from “a deep and an abiding impression that the power, the consolations and joys — the holiness and happiness of Christ’s religion were...

† These sects, in the same breath, profess that “to have existed from the apostolic age is not necessary,” then exhaust their ingenuity in “refuting Baptists,” by attempting to prove them of modern origin!! Why this. If age is not necessary to a church???

1 Page 1.

2 Idem, p. 5.

...lost in the forms and ceremonies, in the speculations and conjectures, in the feuds and bickerings of sects and schisms.”¹ †

† See “Gospel In Water or Campbellism,” p. 620; cloth bound, price, \$2.00, by the author of this book. It is the most thorough refutation of Campbellism ever published and is recommended by Dr. John A. Broadus, Dr. Angus, of London, and many of our ablest scholars.

1 Christian System, p. 6.

CHAPTER 3 CHURCH PERPETUITY A BAPTIST POSITION

1. That Church Perpetuity is a Baptist position is inevitable from it? being a Bible position. (See Chapter 2. of this book.)

2. Notwithstanding that Dr. Armitage has denounced Church Perpetuity, in a letter to the author of this book, dated January 31, 1886, after his "History of the Baptists" was published, he virtually destroys his denunciation when, he says: "For nearly fifty years I have been feeling after that land with perpetual disappointment so far as the trend of ecclesiastical history is concerned. As is natural with every honest Baptist, there is a good instinct in his loving soul which feels after the links of a holy chain, which binds him to the apostolic age. ... No person living would be more thankful than myself, if you will show by unquestionable facts that since the Holy Spirit established the church at Jerusalem there never has been a time when the church did not repeat itself in living and organic bodies of Christians." If Church Perpetuity is "a bulwark of error" and "is the very life of Catholicism," why did Dr. Armitage so long after proof for it, and why did he say that the belief in it "is natural with every honest Baptist?"

Geo. B. Taylor, D. D., a late writer, says: "Baptist principles and Baptist practices have existed in all ages from the Reformation back to apostolic times." "I humbly claim that we originated not at the Reformation, nor in the dark ages, nor in any century after the Apostles, but our marching orders are the commission, and that the first Baptist church was the church at Jerusalem."¹

Pengilly: "Our principles are as old as Christianity. We acknowledge no founder but Christ."²

Dr. Peck: "Baptists in every age from the Apostles remained true to the kingdom which Christ came to establish."³

Dr. Howell: "I assert that from the days of John the Baptist to the present time the true Baptist church has ever been a missionary body."⁴

Mr. Orchard: "I have demonstrated so far as human testimony is allowed to prove any fact that the Baptist church, as the Church of Christ, has existed from the day of Pentecost to this privileged period."⁵

John A. Broadus, D.D., LL. D.: "And it would seem to be entirely possible and very probable that the patient research of generations to come may gather material for a much nearer approach to a continuous history of Baptists than is now practicable."

Many years ago Dr. Benedict, a Baptist historian, wrote: "The more I study the subject the stronger are my convictions that if all the facts in the case could be disclosed a very good Succession could be made out."⁶

Dr. Joseph Belcher: "It will be seen that Baptists claim the high antiquity of the Christian church. They can trace a succession of those who believe the same doctrine and administer the same ordinances directly up to the apostolic age."⁷

¹ The Baptists, pp. 5,8,35- published by the American Baptist Publication

Society.

2 Baptist Manual, p. 82.

3 Religious Denom., p. 197.

4 Letters to Watson.

5 Orchards' Baptist History, vol. 2, p. 11.

6 Benedict's Hist. of Baptists, p. 51.

? Religious Denom., p. 53.

The late William Williams, D. D., when Professor of Church History in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, refuting a statement that he taught that Baptists originated with the Reformation, wrote September 5, 1876: "I now hasten to reply that it is not the teaching of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, through its Professor of History, that the origin of Baptists is to be traced to the Church of Rome in the sixteenth century. ... The Baptist churches, in my opinion, are of divine origin, and originated in the first century under the preaching and founding of the Apostles of our Lord."

The lamented Charles H. Spurgeon wrote: "We care very little for the 'historical argument,' but if there be anything in it all, the plea ought not to be filched by the clients of Rome, but should be left to that community which all along has held 'by one Lord, one faith and one baptism.' ... It would not be impossible to show that the first Christians who dwelt in the land were of the same faith and order as the church now called Baptist. The time will arrive when history will be rewritten."

Geo. C. Lorimer, D.D.: "There are reasons for believing that the Baptists are the oldest body of Christians who dissent from the assumption of the Romish church. Historically they are not Protestants, for while they sympathize with the protest offered by the reformers at the Diet of Spire, 1529, in which this now famous name originated, their existence antedates it by many centuries."

There has probably never been a superior in Baptist history to the late, lamented Dr. Buckland, Professor of Church History in Rochester Theological Seminary. Just before his death he wrote me that he was a strong believer in Baptist Church Perpetuity and that he was, at that time, preparing to prove it from history. In his Madison Avenue lectures Dr. Buckland says: "Have Baptists a history? Prejudice and passion have always answered, no."¹

On the next page he says: "From the time when Christ walked the earth down to the present there has not been a period in which they have not suffered persecution. From the age of John the Baptist to the massacre in Jamaica, bigoted religionists have not ceased first to slaughter and then to slander them." On page 314 he says: "We cannot accept a place in the catalogue of sects or broken schismatical fragments of God's church."

To this could be added like statements from Drs. A. C. Dayton, T. T. Eaton, J. M. Cramp, J. Newton Brown, J. Wheaton Smith, J. R. Graves, D. B. Ray, William R. Williams, T. J. Morgan, S. H. Ford, both W. W. Everts, William Cathcart, T. G. Jones, D. D. Swindall, etc., etc., etc. Indeed, Armitage, indirectly conceded his position not in harmony with Baptists, when he says, at the conclusion of an assault on Church Perpetuity: "The principles above set forth are not generally adopted in Baptist history."²

1 Madison Ave. Lect., p. 311.

2 Armitage's Bap. Hist., p. 8.

CHAPTER 4: CHURCH PERPETUITY ADMITS OF VARIATIONS AND IRREGULARITIES IN BAPTIST FAITH AND PRACTICE.

Thomas Armitage, D. D., in a letter to the author, wrote December 31, 1886: "No person living would be more thankful to you than myself if you will show by unquestionable facts that since the Holy Spirit established the church at Jerusalem, there has never been a time when that church did not repeat itself in living and organic bodies of Christians who followed all its principles and practices without addition or diminution. From early in the third century to about the twelfth, there was scarcely a denomination of Christians in any land, so far as we can now trace them by actual faith and practice, in all points great and small, who would be held in full fellowship with the regular Baptist churches of today, if they were living today."

Prof. B. O. True, D. D., who occupies the chair of Church History in a leading Theological Seminary, recently wrote the author: "Do we mean, then, by Baptist churches merely those which hold scriptural views on the subjects and acts of baptism or those who conform in all essential matters of conduct, doctrine and polity to the will of Jesus Christ? I certainly do not say that these were not Baptists (speaking of those claimed for Baptists in past ages) and possibly Baptist churches."

These statements, made by Dr. Armitage, contain the explanation for some Baptists arraying themselves among the opponents of Church Perpetuity.

If Prof. True's testing the churches, claimed in the succession line, by their agreement "in all essential matters of conduct, doctrine and polity," be the true test, Baptists may agree that there is the Church Perpetuity.

Hence Prof. True's statement of those claimed in the Perpetuity line: "I certainly do not say that these were not Baptists and possibly Baptist churches." (My italics.) But, by Dr. Armitage's test, that those bodies claimed as Baptists, were "In all points, great and small," "without addition or diminution," exactly what Baptist churches now are and what they now hold "in full fellowship," many Baptist churches of the present as well as the past could not be fellowshipped as Baptists by our best churches. For many of them, to some extent, are Arminian; or feet washers; or have scarcely any church discipline; or disregard the Lord's day and command by meeting for worship "only once a month;" or contribute nothing or near nothing to their pastors, and nothing or near nothing to missions and education; and, in many cases, rarely look into their Bibles. The truth is, the good brethren who doubt historical and Bible Church Perpetuity because those churches of the past may not have been or were not "in all points, great and small, without addition or diminution," what the best Baptist churches now are, would most vehemently oppose applying the same test to English and to a large part of American Baptists of today. By their test, from the standpoint of Baptists in the Southern States, Baptists in the Northern are not genuine Baptist churches, because Baptists North, excepting that of the Campbellites, recognize alien immersion as valid, vice versa. Since man, "in all points, great and small, without addition or diminution," is not "in doctrine or practice what he ought to be," the test, by which these good brethren hesitate to acknowledge their Baptist brethren of the past ages as Baptist churches, would deny that we are men and women.

In case that history related that in case the Montanist; the Donatist, the Novation, the Paulician, and other churches in the perpetuity line not only retained in their membership one who had his "father's wife," but that they "were puffed up and had not rather mourned" at such a state of things; that they had teachers among them who taught that "except ye be circumcised, ye cannot be saved," that we "are justified by the law," that held "the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes," "the doctrine of Balaam," and were taught and led by "that woman Jezebel," without rebuke of the church, with what a great noise would they be disowned as Baptists. Yet, such were several apostolic churches. — Acts 15:1; 1 Cor. 5:1, 2; Gal. 5:4; Rev. 2:14-15-22.

In reply to Dr. Armitage I proposed to find an error in apostolic and Baptist churches of our own day equal to any one he could find in those claimed to be in the Baptist line of Church Perpetuity. Of course, the good brother did not accept the challenge. That challenge I make to any one. Yet weak hearted Baptist brethren, as to Church Perpetuity, are hesitating to own our own Baptist ancestors because they may not have been or were not "in all points, great and small, without addition or diminution," "in doctrine and practice," just what the best Baptist churches now are! A very large part of the saints of the Old Testament, tested by the lives of the best saints of today, were not God's people; and were they now living and living as they then lived, they could retain membership in no orderly Baptist church.

Admitting that many of those in the line of Church Perpetuity could not be held in "full fellowship" with our best churches now does not in the least militate against their being regarded as real Baptist churches, since, as I have just shown, the test of Dr. Armitage would cut off, as saints, the claim of the saints of the Old Testament, of English and of many American Baptist churches of today, as Baptist, and that its principle would cut off man's claim to be man. They were Baptist churches; but, like Old Testament saints, the churches of the first centuries, and those of the present, they were colored by their times.

By the test of Dr. Armitage and of all other weak-kneed brethren on Church Perpetuity, Baptist churches have no continuity from Christ to the present time, and, but few now known as Baptist churches are really Baptist churches. But dropping their test and applying the test by which we recognize, though not what they ought to have been or what they ought to be, all churches of the first century and the English and the American Baptist churches as genuine Baptist churches, Baptist churches have a continuous existence from the first century to the present.

That all true Baptists, when the true test is applied, with scarcely a dissenting voice among them, agree that Baptist churches have never ceased to exist since the first century, I believe true. Thus, Dr. Armitage, in the sentence I quoted from his letter to me, as much as says he believes in Church Perpetuity: "From early in the third century to about the twelfth, there was scarcely a denomination of Christians in any land, in all points, great and small, who would be held in full fellowship with the regular Baptist churches of today." "Scarcely," as in the sentence: "If the righteous scarcely be saved" — 1 Pet. 4:18 — implies that those churches, not withstanding their incidental errors, were essentially Baptist churches.

At the expiration of from one to five centuries from now — saying nothing of from ten to fifteen — to prove from a historical contrast of the life and the practices of the churches of this century with those of that time that, in "doctrine, practice and polity" they were not, "in all points, great and small,"

such as could be fellowshipped by each other, were they contemporaneous, would be an easy thing to do. In other words, by Dr. Armitage's test, by which he denies Baptist Church Perpetuity, the superior life of the Baptist churches of a future age proves the same churches of the past age were not Baptist churches.

I thank God that the history of the church shows such growth in the divine knowledge and such improvement towards the high standard of perfect New Testament life that future churches hesitate to own their own denomination of the past. For the same cause, in the future world, to own we are the same children of God that we were here will be yet more difficult. — See Eph. 5:27.

Only by a man's habits or regular course of life are we to know he is not a child of God. Likewise, isolated, occasional and brief aberrations, even in essential matters, can not alter the nature of a church or prove it not a Baptist church. In the preceding remarks and Scripture references, in this chapter, this is demonstrated. The Professor of History in the Campbellite College, at Irvington, Indiana, in a letter to me, Oct. 9, 1893, says: "Nor is it true that a church may not depart, in some measure, from the perfect ideal church of the New Testament and still be styled a church. The Seven Churches of Asia, held pernicious doctrines and yet were called by an Apostle, churches." In the fellowship of Baptist churches of our own day this is recognized. An isolated and occasional error or temporary variation as to what is Christian baptism, as to church polity, as to whether certain books of the Bible are canonical, as to the exact relation of grace and works to salvation, or as to being slightly dyed with an essentially modified form of Manichaeism, is not a more radical departure from the New Testament than is incest, following the error of Balaam, of Jezebel, substituting works for grace, or for the doctrine of Christ substituting the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes. In other words, as these errors of the churches of the first century invalidated them only when they became their permanent character, so errors, even when fundamental, in succeeding churches, cannot be allowed to invalidate their claim to a place in the perpetuity line, save when they become permanently characteristic.¹ Much less can we, for a moment, consider incidental errors in the history of our churches as entitled to any bearing on the succession question.

To the question, then: "Why recognize, as Baptist churches, sects in past ages which were guilty of errors equal to affusion, infant baptism, other Pedobaptist errors and errors of certain non-Pedobaptist bodies while you deny that Pedobaptist churches are New Testament churches?" the answer is: For the same reason that we recognize the churches of the first century, with all their errors — referred to in the foregoing — as Baptist churches, while we deny the recognition to all present contemporaneous non-Baptist churches. Pedobaptist and other non-Baptist churches by faith, constitution and practice, are essentially and permanently anti-New Testament. But, were we to admit much that is falsely laid to the charge of those sects which are usually...

¹ See Rev. 2:5; 3:3, 16, 19.

...counted in the succession line, it would be true of them only as greater errors were true of the churches of the first century, referred to in the preceding part of this chapter. Like it was with the church at Laodicea, Christ does not deny a church because of even a great temporary error, but He spews it out only because it becomes characteristically and permanently wrong.¹

I, therefore, conclude this chapter with this rule: Only by becoming characteristically, fundamentally and permanently unscriptural, as to either or both faith and practice, has a church ever thrown itself out of the Church

Perpetuity line, or can it ever do so.

1 Compare Rev., 3:16; 2:5.

CHAPTER 5 THE BURDEN OF PROOF ON OPPONENTS TO BAPTIST CHURCH PERPETUITY. THE MATERIAL ON WHICH THE HISTORIAN MUST DEPEND. THE DEGREE OF PROOF NECESSARY.

1. The burden of proof is on opponents of Baptist Church Perpetuity.

Says Greenleaf, the standard authority on Evidence in all our courts of law: “Presumptions are founded on the experience or permanency, of longer or shorter duration in human affairs. When, therefore, the existence of a person, a personal relation, or a state of things, is once established by proof, the law presumes that the person, relation, or state of things continues to exist as before, until the contrary is shown, or until a different presumption is raised, from the nature of the subject in question. Thus, when the issue is upon the life or death of a person, once shown to have been living, the burden of proof lies upon him who asserts the death.”¹

Whatley, an eminent authority on logic, in other words, makes the statement just quoted from Greenleaf: “There is a presumption in favor of every existing institution. No one is called on (though he may find it advisable) to defend an existing institution, till some argument is adduced against it.”²

Applying this law against infidelity, Whatley says: “Christianity exists, and those who deny the divine...

1 Greenleaf on Evidence, vol. 1, p. 46, 47.

2 Whatley's Rhetoric, p. 138.

...origin attributed to it, are bound to show some reasons for assigning to it a human origin.”¹

With the law, announced by Greenleaf and Whatley, to govern this investigation, those who claim the post-apostolic origin of Baptist churches are bound to show “some reasons for assigning them a human origin.”

Since all modern institutions, whether secular or religious, have a historical and well-known origin, whoever affirms the modern origin of Baptist churches must show where, when and by whom they were originated. Since “the law presumes that the person, relation, or state of things continues to exist as before, until the contrary is shown, or until a different presumption is raised, from the nature of the subject in question,” with a Baptist church existing in the first and the present centuries, in the language of Whatley, “we are not called upon to defend an existing institution” — Baptist churches — “until some argument is adduced against it — against their succession from apostolic churches. Reader and author may, therefore, join J. Wheaton Smith, D. D., of Philadelphia, in saying: “Why, sir, if between us and the apostolic age there

yawned a fathomless abyss, into whose silent darkness intervening history had fallen, with a Baptist church on this side, and a New Testament on the other, we should boldly bridge the gulf and look for the record of our birth among the hills of Galileo.”²

This book shoulders the burden of proof because Baptist Church Perpetuity can be sustained without the help of this law of investigation.

2. The material for proving Baptist Church Perpetuity:...

1 *Idem*, p. 143.

2 Letters to Albert Barnes.

A well known historian says: “But the pagan priests wrought so effectually on the fears of Diocletian, as to obtain from him in 303, an edict to pull down the sanctuaries of Christians and to burn their books and writings.”

Lecky, an infidel historian, says: “No impartial reader can, I think, investigate the innumerable grotesque and lying legends that were deliberately palmed upon mankind as undoubted facts, during the whole course of the middle ages; or can observe the complete and absolute incapacity the polemical historians of Catholicism so frequently display, of conceiving anything good in their opponents' ranks, and their systematic suppression of whatever can tell against their cause, without acknowledging how serious and inveterate has been the evil. Yet it is, I believe, difficult to exaggerate the extent to which this moral defect exists in most of the ancient and very much of the modern literature of Catholicism.”¹

Buckle, another infidel historian, observes of these times: “There was, properly speaking, no history — men not satisfied with the absence of truth supplied its place with falsehood.”²

As an illustration, infidel writers and lecturers quote from an anonymous writing, called “Synodycon,” to prove the silly — unsupported by a shadow of history as well as contradicted by it — falsehood, that the New Testament canon was settled by the Council of Nice, and that, too, by putting all the books for which inspiration was claimed under the communion table, promiscuously, and asking the Lord that the inspired records should get upon the table, while the uninspired should remain beneath; and, that their prayer was thus answered.

1 *History European Morals*, vol. 2, p. 225.

2 *History Civilization*, vol. 1, p. 222.

A document made probably by some lying monk, no one knows by whom or when. Its internal marks clearly prove that it could not have been written earlier than the latter half of the ninth century.

The False Decretals are another illustration of the unscrupulous forgeries of Roman Catholic writers: “About the middle of the ninth century a collection of canons and decretals appeared in the Frankish Empire, which bore the venerable name of Isidore, and embodied the so-called Isidoriana, but contained besides, also, a large number of spurious decretals. This was composed of the Fifty Canones Apostt., which was followed by fifty-nine forged decretal letters, professedly written by the first thirty popes from Clemens Romanus to Melchiades.”¹

These forgeries were laws in the Romish church, not called in question, until the Magdeburg Centuriones exposed them, at the time of the Reformation. Turrianus, a Jesuit, in 1572, entered the list as their defender, only to be routed.

Take the history of the Paulicians, who figure so prominently in the Baptist perpetuity line, as another illustration. Until recent discoveries — and they are very limited — “The only authorities whence we derive any knowledge of their sentiments are. Photius and Peter Siculus, who wrote against them with great bitterness, and on that account cannot be considered as worthy of entire credence. Photius was archbishop of Constantinople, and died A. D. 890, and Peter Siculus, a learned nobleman, died a few years later.”²

Of the Paulicians, Jones, quoting Peter Siculus, says: “To their excellent deeds the divine and orthodox emperors added this virtue, that they ordered the...

1 Kurtz's Church History, vol. 1, p. 340, old edition.

2 Baptist History by Cramp, p. 71-72.

...Montanists and Manichaeans (by which epithets they chose to stigmatize the Paulicians) to be capitally punished; and their books wherever found to be committed to the flames also; that if any person was found to have secreted them he was to be put to death and his goods confiscated.”¹

Of another important section of the Baptist perpetuity line says Dr. Armitage: “Early Bohemian books were burnt on suspicion or brand of heresy, and some individuals boasted that they had burnt 60,000 copies of their sacred literature.”*

Of the German Baptists, another important link in the chain, Armitage says: “The Jesuits attempted to blot this book (‘Reckoning of Their Faith’) out of existence and nearly succeeded. No copy is known to remain of the first edition, and but two of the second, one of which is in the Baptist Seminary at Morgan Park, Illinois.”² “Their enemies distributed forged articles of faith, called ‘Nicholasburg articles.’”²

Of the early records of the Welsh Baptists — they are in the perpetuity line — Davis says: “Many of the Welsh writings, which were far more important than gold, were destroyed about the year 285.”³ “Diocletian's strict orders were to burn up every Christian, every meetinghouse and every scrap of written paper belonging to the Christians, or anything that gave any account of their rise and progress.”⁴

Modern misrepresentations and slanders of Baptists illustrate the sifting necessary in taking the accounts of ancient Baptists as given by their enemies. Thus, in a letter from Leipsig, Germany, January 4, 1881, Prof. D. ...

* History of the Baptists, p. 32.

1 Jones' Church History, p. 244.

2 Idem, p. 384.

3 Davis' History of the Welsh Baptists, p. 18.

4 Idem, p. 9.

...G. Lyon, of Harvard University, wrote: “Closely akin, indeed, another form of persecution, is the social ostracism which Baptists here must endure. They are regarded as the lineal descendants of the Anabaptists of Luther's time, and the

word 'Wiedertausen' † is the German synonym for all that is low and evil. Persons who have social standing would lose it by visiting Baptist churches. A lady who attended a Baptist Sunday-school festival in Hanover, two weeks ago, was not willing for her name to be known. She had heard that it was there customary to turn the gas off and indulge in general kissing. In another place a lady whose husband intended visiting a Baptist meeting was fearful lest he should be won to Baptist views. When he persisted she warned him not to drink any of the coffee — which is sometimes served — evidently supposing that the coffee contained some secret winning power.”

If in scholarly Germany such slanders are now made and credited against the Baptists, what of the ages of darkness preceding!

If the reader asks: “Why the difficulty of tracing a succession of Baptist churches from apostolic time to our own?” in the destruction of records, the forgeries and the slanders of Baptist enemies he has the answer to his question.

3. The degree of proof necessary to historically prove a continuity of Baptist churches from the apostolic age to the present.

Prof. Haeckel, an infidel and an eminent scientist, says: “What do we know of the essential nature of electricity, or the imponderables generally, whose brief existence is not proved? What of ether, upon which our science of light and optics is founded; and what of the...

† From wieder, meaning again, anew, and tausen, meaning baptizers—
Re-baptizers.

...atomic theory on which our chemistry is built? We do not certainly know these things.” Yet what scientific man would question these sciences? Who can prove the present animal and vegetable world, by every link, to have descended from the creation? Who can prove the facts, link by link, in the doctrine of the correlation of forces and the conservation of energy? Who can prove his descent from Adam? More: Who can prove his genealogy ten generations back — even five? Yet who would deny these things until historically proven, year by year? Yet, strange to say, the demand upon Baptists is not simply to show that there were Baptist churches in the first century, and that we have glimpses of them as they occasionally appear in the past centuries, but that unless we can clearly see them in continuous line for the past eighteen centuries, they did not exist unceasingly during that time!

What reasonable man questions the Biblical canon because of the scarcity of the records for its history? Who denies the discovery of America because the time and the name of its discoverer are unsettled?

Greenleaf says: “In all human transactions, the highest degree of assurance to which we can arrive, short of the evidences of our own senses, is that of probability.”¹

I, therefore, close this chapter with the remark. Strict conformity to this rule, laid down by Greenleaf, which governs our courts of law, is all that the Christian apologist asks of the infidel and all that this book asks of the opponents of Baptist Church Perpetuity — not whether there is any room for doubting Baptist Church Perpetuity, but whether there is a historical

“probability” of its being true.

I Test. of the Evangelist, p. 45.

CHAPTER 6 - THE NEGATIVE PROOF. BAPTIST CHURCH PERPETUITY, FROM THE APOSTOLIC AGE TO THE PRESENT, EVIDENT FROM BAPTIST OPPONENTS BEING UNABLE TO ASSIGN AND AGREE ON ANY HUMAN FOUNDER AND POST-APOSTOLIC ORIGIN FOR BAPTIST CHURCHES.

Answering my questions: When, where and by whom was the first Baptist church originated? I have the following from Roman Catholic bishops, priests and Protestant scholars, given me A. D. 1893:

The priest of Shreveport got out of the difficulty by writing: “You have in Dallas two or three priests with valuable libraries. Interview them.” — J. Gentille, Shreveport, La. The Archbishop of Cincinnati wrote me: “I cannot get time to answer all my letters. These questions cannot be answered without explanations, which I have not time to make. And there is no reason why you come to me for them. You have men near you — priests and others — Who can do it better than I. — G. H. Elder.”

With more judgment, many other Romanists dropped my letters aside without so much as acknowledging their being received. With less judgment than any of the others, the following Romanists attempted to answer:

The bishop of New Orleans, answered: “In Germany, called Anabaptists, by Nich. Stork, 1522.”

Priest Jno. S. Murphy, of St. Patrick's Church, Houston, Texas, answered: “Stork, a short time after Luther proclaimed his heresies.”

It seems that the bishop of New Orleans, the Houston priest, and one or two Protestant writers, when they answered, must have had the same Romish, slanderous authority before them. But the Cincinnati archbishop, the Shreveport priest, and other scholars, either knew nothing of that authority, did not remember it, or did not think it reliable. Here comes the spokesman for Cardinal Gibbons, who contradicts the New Orleans bishop and the Houston priest, and, by his attempt to answer, without intending to do so, concedes the impossibility of assigning the origin of Baptist churches to any man or age since the first century. He writes: “Cardinal's residence, Baltimore, Md., Sept. 4, 1893. Your questions are not possibly capable of exact and very positive answers. The Baptist church of the present time seems to be the lineal descendant of the old Anabaptists of Reformation times. They have their most probable origin in the Mennonites or Dutch Baptists. These arose, as you know, after Martin Luther. The forefathers emigrated into England in the time of Henry the VIII, and of Queen

Elizabeth. However, the first church known as the Baptist church seems to have been built in London in 1606. The year 1547 is about the earliest date set by reliable historians for the existence of a Baptist denomination. As a sect they can not go back to a more remote date than that. It is not sound history or good reasoning to try to connect them with an earlier sect or heresy; though you may find some similarity between their teachings and the teachings of the ancient Waldenses, or sects and controversies even earlier.” — C. F. Thomas, Chancellor. The reader will notice how Cardinal Gibbons, by using the word “seems” and such phrases as “not possibly capable of an exact and very positive answer,” concedes that no man can confidently fix a modern origin and on a modern originator for the Baptist church.

Turning to Protestant scholars, we find the same hesitancy and confusion. Prof. H. C. Sheldon, Methodist, Professor of History in Boston University, evasively wrote me: “A portion of the so-called Anabaptists who appeared in Germany in the third and the following decades of the sixteenth century, might be called Baptists.”

The Professor of Church History in the Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary, wrote me: The “Baptists were originated by 'some Swiss, about 1523.”

H. M. Scott, Professor of Church History in the Congregational Theological Seminary, in Chicago, wrote: “It arose in Zwickau, Saxony, A. D. 1520, under the Zwickau prophets, Storch and others.”

A. C. Lewis, Professor of Church History in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, in Chicago, wrote me: “I regret not being able to give you the categorical answers you seem to anticipate... The questions as put do not admit of short and categorical answers... The first Baptist church was not formed or organized, but evolved out of Ana-Baptist antecedents.”

Professor L. L. Paine, of the Congregational Theological Seminary, of Bangor, Maine, wrote me: “When Luther begun his reformation 'there were so-called Ana-Baptists. But the Baptist denomination is later. The origin of the English Baptists is very obscure. They appear in the reign of Elizabeth, persecuted.”

Professor John Clarke Ridpath, Methodist, of Du Paw University, evasively answered: “The answers of your questions turns upon the definition of the word Baptist... There is, therefore, a sense in which we should say that there was a Baptist church in the age of Luther. There is another sense in which we should have to deny the proposition... I should not readily admit that there was a Baptist church as far back as A. D. 100, though without doubt there were Baptists then, as all Christians were then Baptists.”

The President of the Campbellite College, at Bethany, wrote me: “The Baptists appeared first in Switzerland” Who founded the first Baptist church that ever existed, “cannot be determined. There were no Baptist churches before the beginning of the sixteenth century though immersion was practiced from the beginning.”

A. P. Cobb, Pastor of the First Campbellite Church, in Springfield, Ill., wrote me: “Was there a Baptist Church when Luther began his Reformation? Yes. In Switzerland, 1523. Large churches fully organized in 1525-30 in South Germany. Who originated the first Baptist church? I cannot tell.”

The Pastor of the First Campbellite Church, Ann Arbor, Mich., wrote me: “Was

there a Baptist Church when Luther began his Reformation? The Baptists had large churches fully organized between 1520-30 in Switzerland. They were persecuted by both Zwingli and the Romanists. Who originated the first Baptist Church that ever existed? I do not know.”

The Professor of Church History in the Campbellite College, at Irvington, Ind., indorsed the following quotation — which he enclosed with his letter — from the Journal and Messenger, of Cincinnati: “Baptists believe that the churches founded by the Apostles were essentially Baptist. That they believed and practiced what Baptist churches believe and practice today. They also believe that persons holding these essential doctrines were found all along down through the centuries, from the days of the apostles until now. But they do not fix upon any particular time when the first Baptist church of modern times came into existence. They find that such churches existed in Switzerland in the early part of the sixteenth century — the days of Zwingli and Luther. They find that about the same time such churches were to be found in Holland and the Low Countries; and that soon after they were to be found in England. They find that as early as 1640-44 they were existing in various parts of our own country, and that their founders for the most part came from England or Wales. Not to speak of Roger Williams, it is found that Hanserd Knollys founded a little Baptist church in New Hampshire; that a similar church was founded in New Jersey, another in Pennsylvania and others in the Southern States, in the seventeenth century. No one church in this country can be called the mother church of Baptists.”

His words are: “As it did not seem possible to answer in the brief space of your card, the reply has been delayed. In the meanwhile the enclosed extract from the Journal and Messenger... sets forth all the facts in the case, as given in church history.”

B. D. Dean, Professor of Church History in Hiram College, wrote me: “Was there a Baptist church when Luther began his Reformation? No, not under that name. Baptist churches sprang up simultaneously in different countries as the result of the Reformation. I know of no Baptist churches calling themselves Baptist churches prior to 1600.” Professor Dean, in his letter, indorses the following statement: “In Switzerland, in Germany, in Holland, it has been found impossible to decide when Baptists first appeared, or which were the first churches of Baptists in those lands... and it is quite as difficult to decide the question about Baptists in England.”

Had I asked any of the foregoing scholars: Who was the first President of the United States? When and by whom was the Methodist Church originated? The Presbyterian? The Lutheran? The Campbellite? The Episcopal? In a half dozen words they could have answered. Yet, in answer to when and by whom Baptist churches originated, we see they spend more time refusing to attempt an answer, than would be necessary to tell the name and the date of the origin of Baptist churches if they were of modern and of human origin; or, they evade the question; or, they annihilate each other's answers by their contradictions of each other; or, they admit the impossibility of answering my questions; or, they indirectly, without intending it, concede Baptist churches are neither of human nor of modern origin.

Closing these answers is the following, which I received when I received the others just quoted, from Prof. Walker, Professor of Church History in Harvard University: “As you are probably aware, your questions relate to one of the most disputed points in church history. Whether the Baptist movement can be traced back of the Lutheran Reformation or not, is a question which has been much

debated of late...Some men of weight in church history, and notably the German scholar, Ludwig Keller, of Munster, would find a continuous relation between the Anabaptists of the Reformation period and individual sects like the Waldenses, and through them a line of free and possibly evangelical churches, back to the early days of the church.”

In view of these statements of representative scholars — to which an almost unlimited number can be added — that HISTORY DOES NOT ASSIGN TO BAPTIST CHURCHES A HUMAN FOUNDER AND A POST-APOSTOLIC DATE OF ORIGIN IS SETTLED BEYOND DOUBT.

Turning to other denominations, we see there was nothing with the distinctive marks of the Romish church until many centuries after the first. The blasphemous title of “Universal Bishop” was conferred on Boniface the III, A. D. 606. This was the origin of the Pope and of the Romish church — originated by the Emperor Phocas. In A. D. 756 the Pope became temporal sovereign.¹

See Smith's Dictionary of Christian Antiquities, vol. 2, p. 1651-1675, for a most scholarly and conclusive demonstration of the post-apostolic origin of Popery; and with it, vol. 1, p. 209, demonstrating the non-apostolic origin of the hierarchy. †

By consulting Bergier's Dogmatics, vol. 1, p. 488; Dollinger's First Age of the Church, pp. 318, 319; Darra's History of the Christian Church, p. 350; Alzog's Universal History, p. 105, it will be seen that Baptists are Scriptural as to baptism while Romanism is an apostasy. Thus, Darra concedes that in the first age of the church, “baptism was conferred by immersion.” Dollinger concedes: “Like that of St. John, by immersion...”

† That there was no hierarchy, of any kind, in the apostolic churches, the reader may see by consulting Doddridge, Bloomfield, McKnight, the Bible Commentary, Olshausen, Barnes on 1 Cor. 5:4; 2 Cor. 2:6; or Jacobson on Acts 20:17, 18; Tit. 1:5; or Meyer Baumgarten, Olshausen, Doddridge, Hackett on Acts 6:2-5, or Schaff- Herzog Encyclopedia, vol. 1, p. 294; Coleman's Apostolic and Primitive Church, Davidson's Ecclesiastical Polity, p. 157; Kurtz's Church History, vol. 1, p. 67; Mosheim's, vol. 1, chap. 2, sec. 8; Schaff's, vol. 1, p. 134; Wadlington's, p. 41; Neander's Plant., tr. p. 149; Fisher's, p. 37; Smith's Bible Dictionary, vol. 1, p. 310; Conybeare's and Howson's Life and Epistles of Paul, vol. 1, p. 465; Kitto's Cyclopaedia, article Bishop; Ulman's Reformers before the Reformation, vol. 1, p. 124; Thayer's N. T. Lex., p. 536. Nothing is more certain from exegesis, lexicography and history than that the apostolic church was, in its government, Baptist.

¹ Dowling's History of Humanism, p. 55.

...of the whole person, which is the only meaning of the New Testament word. A mere pouring or sprinkling was not thought of. St. Paul made this immersion a symbol of burial with Christ, and the emerging a sign of resurrection with Him to a new life.”

Dollinger further concedes: “There is no proof or hint in the New Testament that the Apostles baptized infants or ordered them to be baptized. When the baptism of households is spoken of it is left doubtful whether they contained children and whether, if so, they were baptized.”¹

The same thing is true of transubstantiation, confession to priests, of giving only the bread to the laity, of purgatory, of penance, of image worship, of

burning candles before the altar, of every distinctive feature of the Romish church. Thus, nothing is more certain than that, instead of the Romish church having the Christian Succession, it has the succession of being spewed out of Christ's mouth.² But Dr. Duncan says: "That when Gesenius, the great German Hebraist and Biblical critic, first learned what Baptist churches were, he exclaimed: 'How exactly like the primitive churches.'"³

The Lutheran church was originated by Martin Luther, A. D. 1525, in Germany.

The Episcopal, from a Romish church, became the "Episcopal church," A. D. 1534, by Henry the VIII forcing the Romish clergy to proclaim him the "supreme head of the Church of England."

The Presbyterian church was founded especially by Zwingli and John Calvin, A. D. 1516-1530, in Switzerland.

1 First Age of the Church, pp. 318,319. These are Romish historians.

2 Rev. 3:15-18.

3 Hist. Bap., p. 71.

The Methodist church was originated by John Wesley, A. D. 1729, in England.

The Campbellite church was brought into complete existence by Alexander Campbell, A. D. 1829, in the United States of America.

These are but illustrations of the recent and human origin of all non-Catholic churches, except the Baptist.

Except the Episcopal — and that, we have just seen, has not so much as a shadow of claim to be in the Apostolic Church Perpetuity line — only the Baptist church even pretends to be as old as Christianity. We have just demonstrated that history points to no human or post-apostolic date of origin for Baptist churches.

In a case a millionaire dies and leaves his estate to a man whom the will mentions as John Wilson, and, as having been born A.D. 1849, and there are, and have been, but four of that name in all the world, three of whom were born after 1849, that only the one born at that date can receive the estate is beyond question. As history agrees that all churches, excepting the Baptist, came into existence after the apostolic church was founded; and, as the apostolic church, by its very purpose of organization, mission and direct promise of the Scriptures, is assured of preservation until the second coming of Christ, that the Baptist is the only one that has the Church Perpetuity is certainly true.

Chapter 7 - IN THE PERPETUITY OF BAPTIST PRINCIPLES FROM THE APOSTOLIC AGE TO THE PRESENT IS NECESSARILY THE SAME PERPETUITY OF BAPTIST CHURCHES.

Prof. Albert H. Newman, D.D., December 13, 1893, wrote me: "The probability is that there never was a time when Christians of a decidedly evangelical type, possessing many of the features of the Baptists, and with organizations closely resembling Baptist churches, did not exist. There are times, however, when we can find no record of such churches. We can, I think, say with all confidence that there has been an unbroken succession of evangelical life. Beyond this I do not care to go." And, alluding to my question: "Has there ever been a time since the first century when there was no genuine Baptist church on earth?" Dr. Newman closes this statement in the next sentence: "But I should be very far from making the strong assertion which you suggest."

The Journal and Messenger, a leading Baptist paper, of Baptists and their doctrines, says: "They believe that persons holding these essential doctrines are found all along down through the centuries, from the days of the apostles until now."

Dr. Armitage's title page to his history reads: "A history of the Baptists traced by Their Vital Principles and Practices from the time of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the year 1886." (My italics.) This concedes a perpetuity of "Baptists" who practiced "Baptist Principles from the time of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the year 1886" — unless language is meaningless. But what are "Baptist Principles" and "Practices," as practiced by "Baptists," but church organization and church work — preaching, observing "the ordinances," administering discipline — church life? What more does this book affirm? To whose book does Dr. Armitage's title page better belong — to his, that denies the truth of his title page, or to mine, which avows it?

J. L. M. Curry, LL. D., in his Introduction to Dr. Armitage's History, well says: "Believers came together into the primitive churches by an elective affinity, an inwrought spiritual aptitude and capacity; and constituted a brotherhood of the baptized, a holy fellowship of the redeemed, a community of regenerated men and women, united to one another by the same animating spirit. A New Testament church, the apostolic model, was a result, a product, an evolution from antecedent facts and principles."¹ Dr. Curry says: "Things will follow tendencies."²

If believers thus came together in apostolic times, into New Testament churches, and "things follow their tendencies," as reasonably affirm that while the "tendency" of the gospel in apostolic times was to make churches, yet, in the dark ages, it was the reverse. Only by imagining ourselves in "Hafed's chance world" can we imagine that the "principles and practices" and their Christ, which produced gospel churches in the first century, have not produced them ever since.

The Campbellite boasts of great faith in the power of the gospel. Yet, to make room for Mr. Campbell's church, he denies that the gospel produced New Testament churches during the dark ages. Who really believes in the power of the gospel —

the Baptist who boldly affirms...

1 p.8.

2 Idem, p. 11.

...that so great is the power of the gospel that from the first to the present century it has perpetuated gospel churches, or the Campbellite who denies this? Talk about Perpetuity of Baptist “principles and practices” or of Baptists without Perpetuity of Baptist churches — without Baptists to observe and propagate them! As well talk about Christian principles and practices perpetuated by Jews, Masonic principles and practices by non-Masons, or life without corresponding form or appearance, as to talk about the Perpetuity of “Baptist principles and practices” without Baptist churches to observe these “practices and principles.” Or, as well speak of Masons, Oddfellows, Republicans, Democrats or Romanists continuing without organization, as to speak of Baptists continuing during the dark ages without churches. Or, as the principles and the practices of physicians inevitably imply physicians; of lawyers, lawyers; of engineers, engineers; of Buddhists, Buddhists; of Mohammedans, Mohammedans; of Mormons, Mormons; of Lutherans, Lutherans; of Episcopalians, Episcopalians; of Methodists, Methodists; of Campbellites, Campbellites; of Presbyterians, Presbyterians; so, “the principles and the practices of Baptists from the time of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the year 1886,” inevitably demand the existence of Baptist churches during the same period. Consequently, in response to a complimentary copy of Bro. Armitage's Baptist History which the publishers presented me as soon as it was published, soliciting a recommendation, I gave it a recommendation, commending it for “much valuable material and as also a refutation of the erroneous theory of its author,” viz.: that there has not been a Perpetuity of Baptist churches with a perpetuity of their “principles and practices.”

In the name of all reason and experience, what are people thinking about when they say; “I believe in the Perpetuity of Baptist principles and practices from the apostolic age to the present, but I am not so certain as to the same Perpetuity of Baptist churches!” Pray, do stop and answer the question: Whom do we now find believing and practicing the Baptist principles but Baptists? — Baptist churches? “Baptist principles and practices” being preaching, baptizing, observing the Lord's Supper and administering church discipline, they cannot be observed save in Baptist church organization. The moment they are done by individuals who are not in scriptural churches, by thus denying the necessity of Baptist churches, they cease to be “Baptist” thereby becoming subversive of New Testament church order. I therefore conclude this chapter by saying: “The principles and the practices of Baptists” being conceded to have existed — a belief of all true Baptists who are scholars — during the past 1800 years, all the demands of the bottomless pit cannot shake my faith in the truth that there has been the same Perpetuity of Baptist churches.

CHAPTER 8 THE MONTANISTS.

In historic times Phrygia comprised the greater part of Asia Minor. "Montanism" appeared there about the middle of the second century.

Montanism enrolled its hosts and was one of the greatest Christian influences throughout the early Christian centuries. As there was at the time, when Montanism arose, no essential departure from the faith in the action, the subjects of Baptism, church government or doctrine, the Montanists, on these points, were Baptists.

Of the Montanists, Armitage says: "Tertullian and the Montanists denied that baptism was the channel of grace."¹

Kurtz says: "Its leading characteristics were a new order of ecstatic prophets, with somnambulistic visions and new relations; a grossly literal interpretation of scriptural predictions; a fanatical millenarianism; a self-confident asceticism; an excessive rigor in ecclesiastical discipline. Thus, without dissenting from the doctrinal statements of the church, Montanism sought to reform its practice. In opposition to the false universalism of the Gnostics, the Montanists insisted that Christianity alone, and not heathenism, contained the truth."²

Schaff says: "Montanism was not originally a departure from the faith, but a morbid overestimating of the practical morality of the early church."³

1 Armitage's Hist. of the Bap., p. 177.

2 Kurtz's Ch. Hist. vol. 1, p. 131.

3 Schaff's Hist. Chr. Ch.vol. 1, p. 302.

Kurtz further says: "Still their moral earnestness and zeal against worldliness and hierarchism and false spiritualism rendered important service to the church, both in the way of admonition and warning."¹

Wadington concedes: "Another cause of the temporary fame of the Montanists was the severity of the morality inculcated by them."²

Dorner says of the Montanists: "This is a form of vigor and widely influential significance. In it the original Christian feeling, the Christian people, the democratic basis of the church predominated against the Gnostic and against the hierarchal element." Against "Gnosticism, Montanism was the shyest and most self-sufficient."³ Gnosticism was, at that time, the great and dangerous enemy of true Christianity.

Another well-known historian says: "Among those hostile to the Alexandrian school, is to be numbered Montanus. His aim evidently was to maintain or to restore the scriptural simplicity, nature and character of the religion of the New Testament with a constant reliance on the promise of the Holy Spirit." Guericke's crediting the statement, that the Montanists did not believe in any visible church, is refuted by Tertullian's statements on baptism and by their well known character. It is discredited by Schaff and other historians.⁴ Thus Schaff says of the Montanists: "Infant baptism only it seems to have rejected."[†]

† Let this refute the statement of Augustine and Palagius, so often quoted, that infant baptism was universal in the early churches.

1 Idem, p. 131.

2 Wadlington's Ch. Hist., p. 78.

3 Dorner's Person of Christ, vol. 1, p. 256.

4 See Schaff's Hist. Chr. Ch. vol. 1, pp. 364, 365; Armiltage's Bap. Hist. p.176.

Guericke concedes that "they received the general truths of Christianity, as understood by the universal church."¹

Admit that the Montanists did have women teachers among them, and that some of them practiced trine immersion, since the position of women in the New Testament Church is a disputed point, and since both it and trine immersion are only an irregularity, neither of which is as bad as open communion, feet washing and non-cooperation in missions, they cannot invalidate those churches as New Testament churches. [Here read in Chapter IV of this book.] Their millenarian views, while they may have been extravagant, could but class them with the church of Thessalonica.²

Schaff charges the Montanists with believing in the celibacy of the clergy. But he admits they had no law or rule that forbade the marriage of ministers; and then concedes there are two sides to even the charge of discouraging their marriage. The explanation probably is: as owing to the persecutions of the Christians, Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, rather favored celibacy as a temporary thing, so did the Montanists as to their ministers.

The charge of believing in the continuance of inspiration, of ecstasies, inward experiences and that their leader claimed to be the Holy Spirit, are much what Campbellites charge against the Baptists of our age.

Mosheim took up these charges and credited Montanus, their great leader, with calling himself the Comforter. But his translator, in a foot note, corrects him and says: "Those are undoubtedly mistaken who have asserted that Montanus gave himself out that he was..."

1 Guericke's Ch Hist., vol. 1, pp. 191-93.

2 See 2 Thess. 2:2, 3.

...the Holy Ghost."¹ Hase says of Tertullian, one of the great Montanist leaders: "He placed a high estimate upon that consciousness of God, which he contended might be found in the depths of every soul, but he was fond of contrasting with proud irony the foolishness of the gospel with the worldly wisdom of his contemporaries, and the incredibility of the divine miracles with ordinary understanding of the world. His writings are partly controversial...and partly devotional. They are, however, so written that the devotional element constantly appears in the former, and the polemic in the latter, in behalf of strict morality and discipline."² Hase says of Tertullian's writings: "The Montanistic spirit is perceptible in them all, but in the earliest of them it holds up the simple, noble nature of Christian morality in opposition merely to an effeminate form of civilization, gradually it proceeds to severer demands, and shows an increasing consciousness of its pneumatic nature in opposition to those who were merely physical Christians; and, finally it was especially hostile to the Romish Church, in proportion as the latter ceased to favor Montanism. For it was not so much Tertullian as the Roman bishop who changed his views with reference to that

system... Tertullian, to whom the Paraclete was rather a restorer of apostolic order than an innovator, and religious ecstasy was rather a theory than a principle, became so prominent that he was looked upon as the model for Latin theology. This theology was rather disinclined to philosophical theories respecting divine things; it spoke of Athens and the Academy as irreconcilable with Jerusalem and the church and turned its...

1 McLean's Note, p. 188, vol. I, of Mosheim's Ch. Hist.

2 Hase's Hist. Chr. Ch., p. 88.

...whole attention to questions respecting the condition of the church, and things essential to salvation.”¹

Of Tertullian, Moller says: “To him the very substance of the church was the Holy Spirit and by no means the Episcopacy whose right to wield the power of the keys he rejected.”² Thus, in Church Government they were Baptists. In the following, we have this yet more explained: Says Neander: “Montanism set up a church of the Spirit, consisting of spiriteles homines in opposition to the prevailing outward view of that institution. Tertullian says: ‘The church, in the proper and prominent sense, is the Holy Spirit in which the Three are One, — and next, the whole community of those who are agreed in this faith (that God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are One,) is called after its founder and consecrator, (the Holy Spirit,) the church. † The Catholic point of view, expresses itself in this — viz., that the idea of the church is put first, and by this very position of it, made outward; next, the agency of the Holy Spirit is represented as conditioned by it, and hence derived through this mediation. Montanism, on the other hand, like Protestantism, places the Holy Spirit first, and considers the church as that which is only derived*... The gifts of the Spirit were to be dispensed to Christians of every condition and sex, without distinction... They were thus led to give prominence once more to the idea of the dignity of the universal Christian calling, of the priestly...

* Christian reader; decide which of these. In the light of the Bible, Is the true church!

† Nam et ecclesia proprie et principaliter ipse est Spiritus, in quo est trinitas unius divinitatis. Illam ecclesiam congregat, quam Dominus in tribus posuit, (where two or three are gathered together in his name) atque ita exiude etiam numerus, qui in hanc fidem conspiraverint ecclesiae ab auctore et consecratore consetur. L. C.

1 P.701.

2 Schaff-Herzog Ency., vol. 2, p. 1562.

...dignity of all Christians, which had been in a measure suppressed.”¹

Tertullian defines the ecstatic condition thus: “In spiritu homo constitutus, praesertim cum gloriam Dei conspicit, vel cum per ipsum Deus loquitur, necesse est excidat sensu, obumbratus scilicet virtute divina” — probably meaning only what David meant, when he said: “my cup runneth over;” or, as the poet, in describing the ecstasy of the young convert — “on the wings of a dove I was carried above.”

Admitting the Montanists did run to the extreme as to visions and prophecies does not affect the validity of their churches, for Neander, describing the visions of one of their prophets, says: “The matter of her visions corresponded to what she had just heard read out of the Holy Scriptures, what was said in the

Psalms that had been sung, the prayers that had been offered;” there are things, in our best churches, more harmful than that extreme. ††

Gieseler admits that “the Montanists had not an uninterrupted series of prophets.”² Thus, whatever was this extreme, it was not permanent or continuous.

Armitage: “The one prime idea held by the Montanists in common with Baptists, and in distinction to the churches of the third century was, that the membership of the churches should be confined to purely regenerate persons; and that a spiritual life and discipline should be maintained without any affiliation with the authority of the State. Exterior church organization and the efficacy...

†† Tertullian thus narrates this: “Jam vero prout scripturae leguntur, aut Psalmi canuntur, aut allocutiones proferuntur, aut petitiones delegantur, ita inde materiae visionibus subministrantur.” Translated; But truly according as the Scriptures are read, or Psalms are sung, or addresses are delivered, or prayers are offered, thence, from that medium are materials by which we are assisted by visions.

1 Neander's Hist. Chr. Ch., vol. 1, pp. 518,61B.

2 Gieseler's Bed. Hist., vol. 1, p. 141.

...of the ordinances did not meet their idea of Gospel church existence without the indwelling Spirit of Christ, not in the bishops alone, but in all Christians. For this reason Montanus was charged with assuming to be the Holy Spirit, which was simply a slander.” Yet, from superficial examination, Armitage gives too much importance to the charge of “visions” and “revelations” against them.

The sum of these answers I give in the words of one of the highest authorities in church history:

Says Wm. E. Williams, D. D.: “The Comte de Champagny, who has written, though an ultramontane Catholic, so eloquently and eruditely on the early history of Christianity and the collision of it with Judaism on the one side and Paganism on the other side, has said of the Montanists, that it was hard to find any doctrinal errors in their views; that they were rather like Jansenists or Methodists in their high views of religious emotion, and experience. They were accused of claiming inspiration, when they intended, probably only, like the early followers of Cameron among the Covenanters, or Wesley among the English Methodists, the true experience of God's work in the individual soul.”²

Again, says Dr. Williams, of the Montanists: “They insisted much upon the power of the Spirit, as the great conservator and guardian of the life of the Christian church. Now, as far back as the days of Montanism, this was offensive to Christian churches, which became, under the power of wealth and fashion, secularized and corrupted.”³

1 Hist. Bap., p. 175.

2 Williams' Lect. Bap. Hist., p. 129.

3 Idem, pp. 118,129.

Says Dr. Dorner: “Montanism may be styled a democratic reaction on the part of the members of the church, asserting their universal prophetic and priestly rank against the concentration of ecclesiastical dignities and rights in the episcopate.” “In this aspect, Montanism was a reaction of the substantial, real principle against the formal unity of the episcopate, which entrusted to the

unworthy, and those who were destitute of the Spirit, power over those who were filled with the Spirit.”¹

Again, says Dorner: “If now Montanism implicitly reproached the church with hitherto possessing too little of the Holy Ghost, it is evident that, dogmatically viewed, the charge implies, that however much the church might have spoken concerning the Son, or the Logos, and the Father, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit had been hitherto kept in the background.”²

The central power of Montanism was — I am word and spirit and power, which it represented as its conception of the Holy Spirit in His relation to the church. The character of the Montanists and their being the original church is thus clear.

Moller says: “But Montanism was, nevertheless, not a new form of Christianity; nor were the Montanists a new sect. On the contrary, Montanism was simply a reaction of the old, the primitive church, against the obvious tendency of the day, to strike a bargain with the world and arrange herself comfortably in it.”³

That the Montanist churches were Baptist churches is the only legitimate conclusion from their comparison with the facts in this chapter.

1 Dorner's Per. of Christ, vol. 1, p. 363.

2 Idem, p. 398.

3 Scbaff Herzog Ency., vol. 2, p. 1562.

CHAPTER 9 THE NOVATIANS.

Says W. W. Everts, Jr.: "A century later than Montanus, 250 A. D., there was converted at Rome, on what seemed his dying bed, and amid severe conflicts, a distinguished Pagan philosopher, named Novatian. The genuineness of this conversion was attested, not only by his learned treatises — which, in Neander's estimation, rank him as the most distinguished of the early theologians of Rome — but, by his life of stern self-denial and his death by martyrdom. He renewed the moral protest of Montanus."1

The Novatians extended throughout "the Roman Empire, from Armenia to Numedia, in Spain. They were especially strong in Phrygia, where the Montanists fused with them, and in the great cities, Constantinople, Alexandria, Carthage and Rome."2

"The occasion of the schism was the election of Cornelius bishop of Rome. Novation was elected by a minority who objected to the lax discipline favored by Cornelius."2

Scriptural church discipline, consecrated church membership and church purity, being the issues between Cornelius and Novatian, in their candidacy for the pastorate of the church of Rome, the election of Cornelius was equivalent to a repudiation, by the majority of that church, of these marks of a scriptural Church. There...

1 Baptist Layman's Book, p. 17.

2 Idem, p. 17.

...being no other course left, the scriptural minority of that church, led by Novation, withdrew fellowship from the unscriptural majority. In Baptist church life this has often since been done. Baptist councils and civil courts, whenever they have been called upon to decide which is the original church, have invariably decided it is that party which stands upon the original platform. †

The charge that the division was caused by Novatian's ambition and jealousy is the attempt of Cornelius to shield himself and his apostate party. (1.) From the great issue which historians agree to have divided them, the charge is evidently false. (2.) Historians exonerate Novatian and his people from this charge. Instead of jealousy being the ground on which Novatian and his people withdrew fellowship from Cornelius and his party the biographer of Socrates, the church historian of the fourth century, who did not belong to the Novatians, says: "Socrates takes no notice whatever of the declaration of Cornelius, that Novatian separated from ecclesiastical communion through jealousy, because he had not been elected bishop; that he managed to get himself elected by three prelates. whose reason had been clouded by the fumes of wine, and that pardon granted to those who sacrificed to idols during the persecution excited by Decius against the church was but a pretext for his schism."1

Says Schaff: "Novatian against his will was chosen bishop by the opposition."2

Of Cornelius' letter, whence these charges against Novatian are mainly gathered, Neander says: "Not less wanting in good sense than unworthy of a Christian."3

† The action of Baptist councils, in all cases. Is but advisory. That of Civil

courts only to protect the original body in its property rights.

1 p, 9,10, of the Life of Socrates, in Socrates' Eccl. Hist.

2 Schaff's Hist. Chr. Ch , vol. 1, p. 450.

3 Meander's Hist. Chr. Ch., vol. 1, p. 238,239.

...Neander says: "According to the accusation of this passionate opponent we must, indeed, suppose at the outset he was striving, from motives of ambition, after the episcopal dignity, and was thence trying to throw himself at the head of a party,... We have the less reasons to doubt that it was his zeal for the more rigid principles which inspired Novatian from the first, because they accorded so perfectly with his character. The accusations of his opponents should not be suffered to embarrass us; for it is the usual way with the logical polemics to trace schisms and heresies to some untoward, unhallowed motive, even when there is no evidence at all that any such motive exists. Novatian had on some occasion solemnly declared, after the Roman bishopric was vacated by the death of Fabian, that he would not be a candidate for the Episcopal dignity — an office to which, perhaps, on account of the high respect entertained for him by a large portion of the community he might easily have attained. But he said he had no longing for that office. We have no reason, with Bishop Cornelius, to accuse Novatian in this case with falsehood. He could say this with perfect sincerity; he, the quiet, loving ascetic, the theologian, glad to be left undisturbed to his dogmatic speculations, surely had no wish to burden himself with an office so overwhelmed with cares as that of a Roman bishop had already become. ...Novatian was only contending for what he conceived to be the purity of the church and against the decline of discipline, without wishing or seeking for anything beside. Settled in his own convictions, zealous in the defense of them, but averse, by natural disposition, to everything that savored of boisterous, outward activity, he was, against his own will, made the head of a party by those who agreed with him in principles, and compelled by them to assume the episcopal dignity. In this regard he could say with truth, in his letter to Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, that he had been carried on against his will."1

To the charge that Novatian never was immersed, † the reply is (1.) His pouring was intended to be so profuse as to cover him in his sick bed — to be an immersion. "Baptize" signifies that its object shall be covered and had nothing to do with how that covering is effected. While there may be a debatable question as to whether they really got Novatian covered with water, the intent being immersion as near as possible is clear from the Greek record. †† (2.) Considering that immersion was the universally recognized law and custom at that time, as he recovered, if they did not get him covered in baptism at first, there is reason to believe that on his recovery he was baptized. Vales states that clinics, when they recovered, were required to go to the bishop to supply what was wanting in that baptism.2

That Novatian did not so do may be only another slander against him. Considering the extent to which he was slandered, to believe that on his recovery he was baptized, is much easier than to believe that, against the rule,...

† Eusebius thus quotes Cornelius' slanderous letter. In which Novatlan's baptism is mentioned; "Who aided by the exorcists, when attacked with an obstinate disease, and being supposed at the point of death, was baptized by aspersion, in the bed in which he lay; if, indeed, it be proper to say that one like him did receive baptism." — Eusebius' Eccl. Hist., p. 6, chap. 43.

†† πεрιхνθεις, by which Novatian's baptism is mentioned, is from περı which

means “around, about,” and from $\epsilon\pi\iota\kappa\upsilon\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$, to “pour, flow, stream.” Perikutheis, therefore, should be here rendered, “poured around,” with the idea of intended covering over, as when, on a dam giving way, the waters overflow and bury all before them— baptizing by pouring. Thus Liddell and Scott define perikrino, “to plaster over;” perikusos, “covered with gold;” perikuisis, “a pouring round, or over;” perikuteerion, “a vessel for pouring over,” pericuteerios, “pouring round about or over, bathing,” perikonnumi, “to heap around with earth.” These uses of peri with keo and its family, clearly show that Novation's pouring was Intended to cover him, as near as could be done. Had it been the intention to only pour on him, as affusion for baptism does, Cornelius would certainly have used the word epikutheis Instead of perikutheis. See Liddell and Scott's Lexicon on epikeo, epikuisis, etc.

1 Neander's Hist. Chr. Ch., vol. 1, pp. 239, 241.

2 Armitage, p. 178.

...the custom and the Scriptures, which were for only immersion, he was content with his clinic baptism and that so many hundreds of ministers and churches followed his leadership when he was unbaptized, and that, too, without protesting against his imperfect baptism. (3.) Admit all that Baptists opponents claim, viz.: that he never was, in any way, immersed, as the Novatians were not founded by him and did not get their baptism from him, all it proves is, that one Baptist minister, among hundreds, from a failure in the attempt to cover him with water, was never baptized. But, as Novatian baptized by the authority of immersionist churches, his baptisms were all valid though the churches were censurable for allowing him to baptize while himself imperfectly baptized. Should it, then, be conceded to Baptist opponents that Novatian was imperfectly baptized, it proves but a censurable irregularity, in but one case, in no way invalidating any church claim.

As to Novatian and his people believing in baptismal regeneration, the charge rests on Cornelius' slanderous account of his baptism. In fact, Cornelius does not say Novatian was baptized to save his soul. He says he was baptized on what was, at the time of his baptism, thought to be his death bed. Death bed baptisms are as reliable as death bed conversions. The Novatian high conception of spiritual life and the consequent battle of the Novatians for a spiritual church are utterly incompatible with the charge that Novation and his people believed in water salvation. No party has ever contended for a scripturally regenerate church while holding to baptismal regeneration.

Hippolytus has been quoted as a Novatian and as proving the Novatians believed in baptismal salvation. But Armitage says Hippolytus “is supposed to have suffered martyrdom by drowning in the Tiber, A. D. 235-239.” Hase2 says: “Hippolytus could hardly have lived to witness the Novatian schism.”

The Novatian church government was substantially that of Baptists of our own time. Bishop — episcopos — then meant what it meant in the first churches and what it now means with Baptists — a pastor, superintending the church of which he was pastor. Prelatical bishops in the Novatian age were just sprouting — not sufficiently adopted to be a characteristic of any large body of Christians. That the bishop of Rome was not a prelatical bishop is evident from the fact that Novatian was a bishop by an ordination, which gave to him no prelatical charge. Says Cornelius: “When he was converted he was honored by the presbytery, and that by the power of the bishop [the pastor] placing his hand upon him [according him] to the order of bishops.”³ Having by this no charge he became a candidate for pastor of the church of Rome. Of this age, Mosheim says: “But it is to be carefully observed, that even those who, with Cyprian, attributed this

preeminence to the Roman prelate, insisted at the same time, with the utmost warmth, upon the equality, in point of dignity and authority, that subsisted among all the members of the episcopal order. In consequence of this opinion of an equality among all Christian bishops, they rejected, with contempt, the judgment of the bishop of Rome, when they found it ill-founded or unjust, and followed their own sense of things with a perfect independence.”⁴

1 Armitage's Hist. Bap., p. 184.

2 Hase's Hist. Chr. Ch., p. 700.

3 Eusebius' Eccl. Hist., p. 5, ch. 43.

4 Mosheim's Church History, cent. 3, part 2, sec. 2.

To the charge that the Novations would never restore to church membership one who had been excluded for a gross offence, even on his repentance: Admitting this true, it only proves an error of discipline, not so bad as when easily proved guilty, to retain such — a thing often now done, and even done in Baptist churches.

To the charge that the Novatians held there was no forgiveness from God for such, the answer is, (a) They taught no such thing. (b) Even if they did teach it, it is no worse than, by retaining them in the church, to teach they are on the road to heaven.

Says Adolf Harnack, one of the most eminent and critical historians: “Down to 220, idolatry, adultery, fornication and murder, were punished in the Catholic church by formal excommunication. ... This practice was first broken by the peculiar power which was ascribed to the confessors, in accordance with an archaic idea which lived in the end of the third century, and then by an edict of Pope Calixtus I, which spoke of readmittance into the church as a possibility. The edict caused the schism of Hippolytus; but as the schism was healed towards the middle of the third century, it seems probable that the successors of Calixtus returned to the old, more rigorous practice. At all events, it must be observed that the new and milder views were applied only to the sins of the flesh. As none, who in the peaceful period, between 220 and 250, relapsed into Paganism, was likely to ask for readmittance into the Christian church, idolatry was left entirely out of the consideration. But with the outbreak of the Decian persecution a great change took place. The number of the lapsed became so great that the very existence of the congregation was endangered. ... Novatian was not from principle opposed to the re-admittance of the lapsed. ... It is simply a stubbornly repeated calumny that Novatian or his party ever declared penitence to be of no use. ... Cyprian's argument was, that since salvation could be obtained only through the church, every one who was definitely severed from her must forever perish. Consequently, to refuse communion of the church to one who had definitely separated himself from the church, would be an anticipation of the judgment of God; while the re-admittance of a lapsus could in no wise prevent God from refusing him salvation. On the other side, when Novatian considered it the right and duty of the church to exclude forever all heavy sinners, and denied her power to give absolution to the idolater, it is apparent that his idea of the church, of the right of the priest, in short, his idea of the power of the keys is another than that held by his adversaries. The church is to him not the 'conditio sine qua non,' for salvation is an institution educating mankind for salvation, but the congregation of saints, whose very existence is endangered if there is one single heavy sinner among its members. To him the constitution of the church, the distinction between laity and clergy, the connection with the clergy, are questions of secondary importance. The one question of primary importance is to

be a saint in the communion of saints. It is unquestionable that the Novatians retained many most valuable remnants of old traditions, and their idea of the church as a communion of the saints corresponds exactly to the idea prevalent in the first days of Christendom.”¹

Socrates says that Novatian exhorted those who were excluded from the church for the gross offence of being traitors to the faith, “to repentance, leaving the pardoning...

1 Schaff-Herzog Ency., vol 2, pp. 1670, 1671.

...of their offence to God, who has the power to forgive all sin.”¹

Neander says: “Novatian, too, declared the fallen brethren must be cared for and exhorted to repentance. He, too, acknowledged God's mercy toward sinners, and allowed it right to recommend the fallen to that mercy; but that men could once more surely announce to them that forgiveness of sins they had trifled away, this he was unwilling to concede, because he could find no objective ground for such confidence.”²

Of course, Baptists know how to regard Harnack's succeeding statement, that such discipline was “an open injustice,” and that “the idea of the church as a community of saints could not fail to end in either miserable delusions, or in bursting asunder the whole existing Christendom.”

Says Hase: “Novation was a prudent advocate of the faith generally embraced in the church.

The Novatians excluded from the church all who had been guilty of deadly sins † and taught, that while such should be exhorted to repentance and hope of divine mercy, no prospect should be held out to them that they should ever be re-admitted to a church* which should consist of saints and purified persons.”³

Much of the trouble was to avoid persecution. Thousands of unregenerate church members in time of persecution denied Christ; then, when persecution was over, to get back into the church, would come up with a...

† A duty that Paul, in 1 Cor., 5:1-5, makes obligatory on churches in all ages.

*By 2 Cor., 2:6-10, this an error. But not as disastrous to the life of the church as disregard to 1 Cor., 6:5,— a sin in our churches now. The extreme corruption and aggravation of offenders in Novatian's time may be some excuse for this severity.

1 Socrates' Eccl. Hist., p. 248.

2 Neander's Hist. Chr. Ch., vol. 1, p. 246.

3 Hase's Hist. Chr. Ch., p. 67.

...whining confession. Thus the church was greatly scandalized, as this led on to greater disregard of church obligations. Hence, says Socrates: “Those who took pleasure in sin, encouraged by the license thus granted them, took occasion from it to revel in every species of criminality.”¹

Robinson says: “The case is briefly this: Novatian was an elder in the Church of Rome. He was a man of extensive learning, and held the same doctrine † as the church did, and published several treatise in defense of what he believed. His address was eloquent and insinuating, and his morals were irreproachable. He saw

with extreme pain the intolerable depravity of the church, Christians within the space of a very few years were caressed by one emperor and persecuted by another. In seasons of prosperity many rushed into the church for base purposes. In times of adversity they denied the faith and ran back to idolatry again. When the squall was over, away they came again to the church, with all their vices, to deprave others by their example. The bishops, fond of proselytes, encouraged all this, and transferred the attention of Christians from the old confederacy for virtue, to vain shows at Easter, and a thousand other Jewish ceremonies, adulterated, too, with paganism. On the death of Bishop Fabian, Cornelius, a brother elder, and a vehement partisan for taking in the multitude, was put in nomination. Novatian opposed him; but as Cornelius carried his election and he saw no prospect of reformation, but, on the contrary, a tide of immorality...

† The Scriptures include all the Christian belief and practice as doctrine. But, since the latter part of the eighteenth century, the history of dogmas and dogmatics has been raised, in Germany, to the rank of a distinctive branch of sacred science.” Hence, in church history, the word doctrine often or generally means only dogmatics— having no allusion to church government, ceremonies or discipline.— See Schaff-Herzog Ency., vol. 1. p. 650: Aldens' Univ. K., vol. 5, p. 341. Thus the term is used in stating that the various names agreed in “doctrine” with the Romish church.

1 Socrates' Eccl. Hist., b. 4, ch. 28, p. 248.

...pouring into the church, he withdrew and a great many with him. ...Great numbers followed his example, and all over the empire Puritan churches were constituted, and nourished through the succeeding two hundred years. Afterward, when penal laws obliged them to lurk in corners and in private, they were distinguished by a variety of names and a succession of them continued until the Reformation.”¹

Neander says: “The controversy with the Novatians turned upon two general points; one relating to the principles of penitence, the other to the question, what constitutes the idea and essence of a true church? In respect to the first point of dispute, Novatian had been often unjustly accused of maintaining that no person, having once violated his baptismal vows, can ever obtain the forgiveness of sin. ...But, first, Novatian by no means maintained that a Christian is a perfect saint. ...Novatian, too, declared that the fallen brethren must be cared for and exhorted to repentance. He, too, acknowledged God's mercy toward sinners, and allowed it right to commend the fallen to that mercy; but that men could once more surely announce to them that forgiveness of sins which they had trifled away; this he was unwilling to concede because he could find no objective ground for such confidence. With regard to the second main point in the controversy, the idea of the church, Novatian maintained that one of the essential marks of a true church being purity and holiness, every church which neglected the right exercise of church discipline, tolerated in its bosom, or readmitted to its communion such persons as, by gross sins, have broken their baptismal vow, ceased by that very act to be a true Christian church, and forfeited all rights and...

1 Robinson's Eccl. Researches, p. 126.

...privileges of such a church. ...Novatian ...laid at the basis of his theory the visible church as a pure and holy one, and this was, in his view, the condition of the truly catholic church.”¹

Without adding other testimonies, suffice it to conclude this chapter with J. M. Cramp, D. D., whom Dr. Armitage pronounces, "A sound theologian and thoroughly versed in ecclesiastical history."² "We may safely infer that they abstained from compliance with the innovation, and that the Novatian churches were what are now called Baptist churches, adhering to the apostolic and primitive practice."³

The biographer of Socrates says: "The Novation church was not only sounder in doctrine, but at the same time abounded with the most eminent clergy."⁴

1 Neander's Hist. Chr. Ch., vol. 1, pp. 243, 246, 247.

2 Armitage's Hist. Bap., p. 926.

3 Cramp's Hist. of Bap., p. 59.

4 Intro. to Socrates' Eccl. Hist., p. 7.

CHAPTER 10 - THE DONATISTS.

“The Donatists agitation arose in north Africa, A. D. 311, in what are now known as the Barbary States; but it centered in Carthage, Numidia, and the Mauritania. Its field covered nearly seven degrees of north latitude, immense centers of commerce and influence, soils and climate, marking a stretch of land 2000 miles long by about 300 wide, reaching from Egypt to the Atlantic and fringing the Atlas mountains, the Mediterranean and the desert ... Mensurius, Bishop of Carthage, manfully opposed the mania which led thousands to court martyrdom in order to take the martyr's crown; because he thought it savored more of suicide than of enforced sacrifice for Christ. But he died in 311, and Caecilianus, who was of the same opinion, was ordained in his place, with which election a majority were dissatisfied. Others were displeased because he had been ordained by Felix, who was charged with giving up the Bible to be burnt, and a division took place in the church. The retiring party first elected Majorinus, their bishop, who soon died, and after him Donatus, of Casae Nigrae. This party was greatly increased and was read out of the Catholic body, Constantine taking sides against them.”¹ On this account it is well to remember that the giving up of the Bible to be “burnt,” in connection with the well known fact, that many readily denied Christ otherwise, throws much light upon the story of the Donatist party courting martyrdom. It furnishes the strong presumption...

¹ Armitage's Bap. Hist. pp. 200, 201.

...that these cowardly and wealthy Christ deniers branded the true soldiers of the cross as hunting for an opportunity to die for Christ's sake. But, admitting that the enemies of Donatists have not overdrawn the matter, instead of essentially affecting their character as churches, it only shows that they had been persecuted until they morbidly courted the privilege of testifying for Christ by their deaths — an error far less serious than the compromising spirit of our own times by which Christ is so often denied. To attribute the split between the Donatists and their enemies to election of Felix as pastor, or the Novatian split to the election of Cornelius, would be as ridiculous as to attribute the American Revolution of 1776, to a little tea. All the revolutions were only the outburst of a storm, originating from great and intolerable wrongs. It was a protest of the pious part of the church against the impious; the necessary result of loyalty to the doctrine of a regenerate church membership. Says Kurtz: “Like the Novatians, they insisted on absolute purity in the church, although they allowed that penitents might be readmitted into their communion. Their own churches they regarded pure while they denounced the Catholics as schismatics, who had no fellowship with Christ, and whose sacraments were therefore invalid. On this ground they re-baptized their proselytes.”¹

Mosheim: “The doctrine of the Donatists was conformable to that of the church, as even their adversaries confess, nor were their lives less exemplary than that of other Christian societies, if we accept the enormous conduct of the Circumcelliones which the greater part of the sect regarded with the utmost detestation and abhorrence. The crime, therefore, of the Donatists lay properly in the following things: In their declaring the church of Africa,...

¹ Kurtz' Ch. Hist. vol. 1, p. 246.

... which adhered to Caecilianus fallen from the dignity and privileges of a true church and deprived of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, on account of the offenses with which the new bishop and Felix of Aptungus, who had consecrated him, were charged; in their pronouncing all the churches which held communion with that of Africa, corrupt and polluted; in maintaining that the sanctity of their bishops gave their community alone the full right to be considered as the true, and pure, the holy church; and in their avoiding all communication with other churches from an apprehension of contracting their impurity and corruption. This erroneous principle was the source of that most shocking uncharitableness and presumption that appeared in their conduct to other churches. Hence they pronounced the sacred rites and institutions void of all virtue and efficiency among those Christians who were not precisely of their sentiments and not only re-baptized those who came over to their party from other churches, but even with respect to those who had been ordained ministers of the gospel, observed the severe custom either of depriving them of their office, or obliging them to be ordained the second time.”¹

Who can not see in this the picture of the Baptists of our own times and see the denunciation of Mosheim the very words of present Baptist opponents?

With Kurtz, Mosheim thus exonerates the Donatists of the violence of the Circumcelliones: “It cannot be made to appear from any records of undoubted authority that the bishops of that faction, those at least who had any reputation for piety and virtue, either approved the proceedings, or stirred up the violence of this odious rabble.”²

¹ Mosheim's Hist., part 2, ch. 5, sec. 8.

² Idem, part 2, ch. 5.

“You,' said the Donatists, 'do not prove your charges against us, relative to the Circumcelliones.' 'Neither,' said Augustine, 'do you prove your charge against the church’— thus admitting the charge not proven. “Strange as it may appear, neither in Mosheim nor Milner, nor any other writer who has made some lame apologies for this reputed confederacy, do we find any mention of the important fact that the whole body of the Donatists, both their bishops and their laity, disclaimed any knowledge of such a race of men as the Circumcelliones, or any concern with them.”¹

While this violence was, perhaps, unjustifiable, yet it is a question as to whether, had we as full a history of that event as of the peasants' war of Munster, it would not, as in their case, show that they were far more right than wrong — that like them, they were goaded to desperation by the combined wrongs of corrupt and oppressive politico-ecclesiastical governments. Be this, however, as it may, history clears the Donatists of the doings of the Circumcelliones.

Schaff concedes: “Like the Montanists and Novatianists they insisted on rigorous church discipline and demanded the excommunication of all unworthy members.”²

Chambers' Universal Knowledge: “The Donatists, like the followers of Novatian, went upon the principle that the essence of the true church consisted in purity and holiness of all its members individually, and not merely in the apostolic foundation and doctrine.”³

Neander says the Donatist principle was: “That every church which tolerated unworthy members in its...

1 Benedict's Hist. Donatists, p. 148, 149.

2 Scbaff's Hist. Ch., vol. 1, p. 366.

3 Vol. 4, p. 367.

...bosom was itself polluted by the communion with them. It thus ceased to deserve the predicates of purity and holiness, and consequently ceased to be a true Christian church, since a church could not subsist without these predicates.”
...”The Donatists maintained that the church should cast out from its body those who were known, by open and manifest sins to be unworthy members.”¹

Neander farther says: “According to the Catholic point of view, to the essence of the genuine Catholic church belonged its general spread through the medium of episcopal succession down from the Apostles. From the conception of the Catholic church in this sense was first derived the predicates of purity and holiness. On the other hand, according to the Donatist point of view, the predicate of Catholic ought to be subordinate to those of purity and holiness.”*

Dupin, a Roman Catholic, says: “The Donatists maintained that the true church ought to consist of none but holy and just men. They confessed the bad might be mixed with the good in the church, but only as secret sinners, not as open offenders.”²

Bohringer sums up the meaning of the Donatist movement: “The Donatists, Novatians and Montanists wanted a pure and holy church, because the purity of its members constitute the genuineness of the church.”³

Walch: “The chief cause of their schism was their abhorrence of communion with traitors.”³

Neander says the Donatists, claimed: “When the church, however widely extended, becomes corrupt by...

* idem, p. 208

1 Neander's Ch. Hist., vol. 2, pp. 203,205.

2 Baptist Layman's Book, p. 19.

3 Idem, p. 21.

...intercourse with unworthy members, then that church, in whatever work and corner of the earth it might be which had no manifestly vicious members within its pale is the genuine Catholic church.”¹

Guericke says: “The after of the Christian church would have been very different ...had it once more resorted to the primitive discipline and hedged up the way to the multitudes of unconverted persons who were crowding into it, and had it sought, not indeed by a more artificial organization, but in the exercise of a deeper and simpler faith in God, to render the church more selfconsistent and less dependent upon the State.”²

These historians make very clear that in the third and fourth centuries, Montanism, Novatianism and Donatism were the great witnesses for New Testament church membership. Between the Baptists and then” opponents was the contest that has been the contest ever since and which today is the great contest between Baptist and others, viz.: a regenerate or an unregenerate church.

But, I will give the reader a sample of their debates over this question: To the

argument of Augustine, that the parable of the wheat and tares growing together till the end of the age taught that known unworthy members ought to be retained in the churches, the Donatists replied: "The field, the Lord says, is the world, therefore not the church, but this world, in which the good and the bad dwell together till the harvest; that is, they are reserved till the judgment day." This interpretation, which is that given by our Lord, they asserted, could not be gainsaid, since, said they, if the Apostles, the companions of our Lord himself, should have learned from the tares, that is, the children of the devil, springing up in the...

1 Neander's Hist. Ch., vol. 2, p. 208.

2 Guericke's Ch. Hist., vol. 1, p. 281.

...church by the neglect of discipline, were to be left in the communion of the saints, they never would have expelled from the thresholds of their churches, Simon, Erastus, Philetus, Alexander, Demas, Hermogenes, and others like them. Yes, indeed, said the reforming Donatists, the mixed policy of the Catholics would make void the whole public instructions throughout the divine writings pertaining to the separation of the wounded from the sound, the polluted from the clean."¹

Any one who is familiar with the present controversy between the Baptists and their opponents will readily recognize that both sides and arguments are represented in the Donatist controversy.

It has been charged that the Donatist held to infant baptism. In reply (1.) As no church that ever believed in infant baptism held so tenaciously to church membership and spirituality, as did the Donatists, and as infant baptism and such a church are irreconcilably antagonistic, that the Donatists opposed infant baptism is evident. "Their principles would undoubtedly lead them to the rejection of infant baptism."² (2.) History otherwise refutes the charge. Says Armitage, "Long says: 'They refused infant baptism.'"³

Long was an Episcopalian and wrote a history of the Donatists.

Guy de Bres said: "That they demanded that baptized infants ought to be baptized again as adults."

Augustine, replying to the Donatists: "Do you ask for divine authority in this matter? Though that which the whole church practices is very reasonably believed to be no other than a thing delivered by the Apostles, yet..."

1 Benedict's History Donatists, pp. 85, 86.

2 Cramp's Bap. Hist. p. 60.

3 Armitage's Hist. Bap., p. 201.

...we may take a true estimate, how much the sacrament of baptism does profit infants, beg the circumcision which God's former people received."¹

Osiander, says: "Our modern Anabaptists are the same as the Donatists of old."

Fuller, Episcopalian: "The Anabaptists are the Donatists new dipt."²

As the Anabaptists were especially noted for opposition to infant baptism, Fuller's statement is very clearly against the Donatists having baptized infants.

Bullinger is often quoted as saying: "The Donatists and the Anabaptists held the same opinion."

Twick, Chron. b. 6, p. 201, says: "The followers of Donatus were all one with the Anabaptists, denying baptism to children, admitting believers only thereto who desired the same, and maintaining that none ought to be forced to any belief."³

D'Anvers, in his Treatise on Baptism, says: "Austin's third and fourth books against the Donatists demonstrated that they denied infant baptism, wherein he maintains the argument of infant baptism against them with great zeal, enforcing it by several arguments."³

Bohringer, a late biographer of Augustine, says: "Infant baptism is the only point of difference between Augustine and the Donatists, and this grew out of the Donatist notion of the church."⁴

Alluding to and endorsing Bohringer's statement, W.W. Everts, Jr., than whom, perhaps, no one in America has a better knowledge of church history, says: "This is only a more confident statement of what Gotfried Arnold..."

1 Idem, p. 20.

2 Fuller's Ch. Hist. Britain, book 5, sec. 5:ll.

3 In the Baptist, by T. G. Jones, D. D., p. 70.

4 Ch. In the Wilderness, p. 42.

...and Ivirney had said before in identifying the Donatists and modern Baptists."¹

Augustine presided over a council of 92 ministers, which aimed at the Donatists, Montanists and Novations, declared: "We will that whoever denies that little children by baptism are freed from perdition and eternally saved, that they be accursed."

Armitage says: "It is commonly conceded that Augustine wrote a separate work against them on infant baptism which has not come down to us. If he did, the fair inference would be that they rejected that doctrine."²

Yes, and if Armitage had thoroughly investigated, he would have learned that Dr. Benedict has, in his History of the Donatists, produced sufficient amount of Augustine's writings to so clearly prove that the Donatists rejected infant baptism as to leave the fact beyond any reasonable doubt. Cramp regards it possible that some Donatists practiced infant baptism.

In his history of the Donatists, Benedict mentions four divisions called Donatists,³ the last two did not go out from the original company. If any of the people who were called Donatists ever held to infant baptism, some of the last two divisions must have been the ones.

Merivale says of the Donatists: "They represented the broad principle of the Montanists and Novatians, that the true Church of Christ is an assembly of real pious persons only. ...Jerome and Augustine and others class the Donatists with the Novatians as to general aim and purpose, and Augustine sneers at them as 'spotless saints'"⁴

1 Church in the Wilderness, p. 42.

2 Armitage's Bap. Hist., p. 201.

3 p.135.

4 Armitage's Bap. Hist., pp. 200,201.

The church government of the Donatists was substantially the same as that of the Baptists of our own time. W. W. Everts, Jr., says: "We clearly trace among them the polity of the apostolic and Baptist church. Independence of the hierarchy was universally maintained, and no higher authority than the local church was acknowledged. Insubordination to bishops and councils was their conspicuous and unpardonable offence. ... They maintained, therefore, a position of irreconcilable order."¹ The hierarchy at the time the Donatists split occurred being but in its bud, even Donatist opponents then had not the full grown hierarchy of later times. Muston represents the voice of history when he says: "In the first centuries of the Christian era, each church founded by the disciples had a unity and an independence of its own." "The bishops being elected by the people of their diocese."²

Long, an Episcopalian: "The Donatists rejected the Catholic liturgy and set up for themselves in a more congregational way."³

Says Benedict: "In all their operations as a religious community I have discovered nothing peculiar to episcopacy, or the episcopal regimen, except the diocese, which in early times was deficient in what in later times becomes essential to diocesan episcopacy."⁴

As Whatley observes: "A church and a diocese seem to have been for a considerable time, co-extensive and identical; and each church a diocese, and consequently each superintendent, though connected with the rest by ...

1 Church in the Wilderness, pp. 16, 18.

2 Israel of the Alps, vol. 1, pp. 4, 7.

3 Long's Hist. Don., p. 55.

4 Benedict's Hist. Don., 138.

...the ties of faith and charity, seems to have been perfectly independent, as far as regards any power and control."¹

"In point of fact. ...the word (diocese), which perhaps retained to a certain degree its general rather than its technical sense, is found applied in turn to every kind of ecclesiastical territorial division. Suicer alleges other authorities to show that the word is sometimes employed in a sense closely resembling our word parish, viz: The district of a single church or parish. It has been observed that this was a Latin and especially an African use of the term."² This use of the word diocese in Africa, the land of the Donatists, not only removes all ground to suppose that it implied episcopacy, but in its being there used for a single congregation, it proves the Donatist bishop and his diocese only a pastor and a congregation, as with Baptists now.

Only a few hierarchal bishops are necessary to the largest country. But among Baptists a very large number is necessary. The fact, therefore, that 279 Donatist bishops were present at the council of Carthage explodes the possibility of reasonably believing the Donatists had Episcopal prelates. Another like proof is, there were "410 Donatist bishops assembled together."³ Who ever heard or dreamed of 410 Romish, Episcopal, Greek or Methodist bishops in as limited a territory as was North Africa? As W. W. Everts, Jr., well observes: "The number of the Donatist bishops proves that every pastor received

the title, a name which Donatists very much disliked.”⁴

1 Benedict's Hist. Don., p. 139.

2 Smith's Dic. Chr. Antiq., vol. 1, pp. 558, 559.

3 Bap. Layman's Book, pp. 19, 22.

4 Idem, p. 22.

The Donatists were not Campbellites and Romanists, but were Baptists, in that they believed in the blood before the water, salvation by grace and not by the work of baptism.

Says Benedict: (Optatua way the Donatus adversary.) “Optatus was in union with the Donatists in requiring faith before baptism. The repetition of the rite was the principle matter of dispute between the parties, except that Optatus, with his party held. to the salutary influence of baptism. Baptism, said he, makes a man a Christian, and how can he be made a Christian the second time? Baptism in the name of the Trinity confers grace, which is destroyed by the second baptism.”¹

To the charge that the Donatists held to the union of church and State, I reply: (1.) As no other people, holding to a regenerate church membership, the blood before the water, only believers' baptism, and to a congregational church government ever, at the same time held to this adulterous union, the charge is incredible. (2.) The only ground of this charge is, the Donatists appealed to the emperor to decide whether they were heretics. Dr. Armitage well says: “Nothing could have been more stupid and inconsistent” than this, as “they were struggling for a pure church against the laxness of the Catholic party.”² This remark of Armitage is on the report that the appeal was made, to unite church and State, a report not supported by history. A. D. 312, on gaining control of the empire, Constantine proclaimed freedom of religious belief to all.³ But, to deprive the Donatists of this liberality, it seems their enemies accused them of being traitors to the emperor. Based on the Romish report,...

1 Benedict's Hist. Don., p. 19.

2 Armitage's Bap. Hist., p. 201.

3 Benedict's Hist. Don., p. 11.

Gibben says: “Both parties accused each other of being traitors ... The cause of the Donatists was examined with attention, perhaps it was determined with justice, but perhaps their complaints were not without foundation, that the credulity of the emperor was abused by the insidious acts of his favorite Otius.”¹ As the result of the emperor's decision, the Donatists “were treated as transgressors of the imperial laws.”² “He certainly exiled some, and is said to have deprived them of their churches.”³ This persecution is said to have been the cause of the violence of the Circumcelliones who,⁴ though not being Donatists, were excited to their deeds by these cruel persecutors. Thus, it is probable that the Donatists consented to the appeal, not to get up a union with the State, but to get the emperor to decide they were orthodox Christians. This decision they seemed to have desired only to save them from persecution. It was on the same principle on which Baptist now, in case of a split in any of their churches, on the ground that one party is heretical, appeal to Cassar's court to decide which is the true Baptist church — not for State aid or any form of union of church and State, but for their property rights. The first Baptist confessions of faith were especially to show the authorities that their enemies slandered them — that they were good citizens. An enemy, with the scarcity of history that characterized the time of the Donatists, could as easily pervert

these appeals of Baptists of modern times, as of the time of Constantine, into an appeal for union of church and State. About sixty-eight years after the Donatists...

1 Idem, p. 9.

2 Idem, p. 12.

3 Wadlington's Ch. Hist., p. 151, note.

4 Hase's Hist. Chr. Ch., p. 158.

...appealed to Constantine, "on his accession to the throne, the Donatist bishops transmitted to" Julian, his nephew, "a petition in which they besought a ruler who required only justice, to rescind the unjust decrees that had been issued against them."¹ Here they are appealing to the emperor to remove the very decrees against the passage of which they aimed in their first appeal, nearly sixty-eight years before. In this appeal there is not so much as an intimation of desire for union of church and State. Why; then, in the name of fairness to a people, confessed on all sides to have been a truly Christian people should they everlastingly be besmirched with the charge of believing in union of church and State?

Even were we to admit they did, in the moment of error, seek the union of church and State, since it was opposed to their principles and is opposed to their usual position, it in no way affects their claim to be in line of Church Perpetuity.

Armitage says: "It is but just to say that, so far as known, this is an isolated act in their history, and not one of a number in the same line." *

All it can possibly prove is a momentary missing the mark. History clearly shows the Donatists utterly opposed to persecution and the union of church and State. Petilian describes a true church as one which "does not persecute, nor inflame the minds of emperors against their subjects, nor seize on the property of others, nor kill men."² Benedict says the Donatists "uniformly represented their community" as the one "which suffers persecution, but does not persecute."³ "A people who suffer persecution,..."

* Annltage's Hist. Bap., p. 202.

1 Benedict's Hist. Don., p. 41.

2 Idem, p. 53.

3 Idem, p. 83.

...but do not persecute was their stereotyped and cherished motto."¹ "Nowhere in all church history, can be found a more non-resisting people under the assaults of their enemies except by arguments."¹ "They were treated as rebels by Macaries, the Roman general, and his mission and policy were to hurry them into the Catholic church, peaceably if he could, forcibly if he must."¹ in their controversy with the Catholics "one often finds repetition of the following pertinent questions of the reformers: 'What, has the emperor to do with the church? What have the bishops to do at the palace? What has Christianity to do with the kings of this world?'"² "At an early period this persecuted people entirely renounced the church and State policy, and, of course, 'What has the emperor to do with the church?' was their reply to the offers of royal bounty."³

Guericke says: "The emperor sent them money for distribution as a loan, but Donatus Magnus, sent it back with the obstinate protestation against the union of church and State."⁴

Neander: "Another more important point of dispute related to the employment of force in matters of religion. The Donatists bore their testimony on this point with emphasis in favor of the cause which the example of Christ and the Apostles, with the spirit of the gospel, and the sense of man's universal rights, called forth by the latter, required. The point of view first set forth in a clear light by Christianity, when it made religion its common good of all mankind and raised it above all narrow political restrictions, was by the Donatists..."

1 Idem, p. 38.

2 Idem, p. 100.

3 Idem, p. 32.

4 Guericke's Ch. Hist., vol. 1, p. 281; also Neander's Ch. Hist., vol. 2, p. 195.

... manfully asserted, in opposition to a theory of ecclesiastical rights at variance with the spirit of the gospel, and which had sprung out of a new mixture of ecclesiastical with political interests." "Quid est imperatori cum ecclesia?" — What has the emperor to do with the church? — was fundamental with the Donatists.

T. J. Morgan, D. D., ex-Professor of Church History in the Chicago Baptist Theological Seminary: The Donatists ...resisted the interference of the State in ecclesiastical affairs."2

Child, an infidel, says: "The members of their party were forbidden to receive presents from the reigning powers. The corruptions resulting from the union of church and State became their favorite theme of eloquence. They traced all degeneracy to the splendor and luxury of the times, and railed at bishops whose avarice led them to flatter princes."3

The Donatists, like the Novatians and the Montanists, in the following, were Baptist. Petillian, one of their most eminent ministers, said: "I baptize their members, as having an imperfect baptism, and as in reality unbaptized. They will receive my members ...as truly baptized, which they would not do if they could discover any fault in our baptism. See, therefore, that the baptism which I give you may hold so holy that not any sacrilegious enemy will have destroyed."4 So, Baptist baptism, only, has, in all ages and in all countries, been universally conceded to be good.

As to the action of baptism, as Benedict remarks: "It may be proper to notify the readers that not only the..."

1 Neander's Ch. Hist., vol. 2, p. 212.

2 In The Standard, of Chicago, March 18,1880.

3 Child's Prog. Relig. Ideas, vol. 3, pp. 29,30.

4 Benedict's Hist. Don., p. 56.

Donatists, but all others then, whether Catholics or dissenters, practiced immersion; and the practice also was prevalent with all parties of requiring faith before baptism."1

To the slander, that the Donatists believed in suicide, I let Benedict reply: "In his correspondence with Dulcitus, he, Gaudentius, was requested to

surrender his church to the Catholics. In his reply to this request the resolute bishop addressed the Tribune in these terms: 'In this church, in which the name of God and his Christ is always invoked in truth, as you have always admitted, we will permanently remain as long as it may please God for us to live.' This is the whole of the threatened suicide of Gaudentius. The whole story which has gone the rounds of church history originated in the perverted language of Augustine. 'You,' said he to Gaudentius, 'declared with other words I grant, that you would bum your church, with yourself and people in it.'"²

In this contemptible and malicious charge, coming from where all the slanders against that whole band of witnesses for Christ came, we see the necessity of examining the charges against the Donatists and other ancient Christians with great allowance and care.

Prof. Heman Lincoln, D. D., recently Professor of Church History in Newton Theological Seminary, wrote; "The Donatists held. . . many of the principles which are regarded as axioms by modern Baptists. They maintained absolute freedom of conscience, the divorce of church and a regenerate church membership. These principles, coupled with their uniform practice of immersion, bring them into close affinity with Baptists."

1 Idem 130; Robinson's Eccl. Researches, p. 150.

2 Idem, p. 125.

We may, therefore, having examined the only charges on which the Donatists are called in question as Baptists, conclude the examination as proving, beyond any reasonable doubt, that, in all essential respects, the Donatists were genuine Baptist churches.

CHAPTER 11 - THE PAULICIANS.

The origin of the name, Paulicians, is: "Constantine, from the neighborhood of Samosata and connected with a Gnostic generation. ...found in the perusal of the New Testament a world unknown, and became animated with the hope (about 660) of bringing back a state of things which had existed in the apostolic church.

He assumed the name of Silvanus, and called those communities which acknowledged him as a reformer, Pauline congregations. By their opponents they were called Paulicians."¹ Instead of Constantine having originated the Paulicians, or of their beginning in his time, Mosheim says: "Constantine revived, under the reign of Constans, the drooping faction of the Paulicians, which was now ready to expire and propagated with great success its pestilential doctrines."* Thus, they were revived, just were Schaff and others leave them, in a weak condition under the name Donatists. But, as is seen in Chapter XIX of this book, this is not the origin of the people who were called Paulicians.

Manichaeism being the main charge against the Paulicians, is here noticed first.

"Photius possessed great ability. ...Gass says another synod deposed Photius in 867 as a 'liar and adulterer, parricide and heretic.' This is the chief witness on whose evidence the Paulicians are condemned."²

* Mosheim's Eccl. Hist., cent. 7, part 2, sec. 1.

¹ Hase's Hist. Chr. Ch., p. 159.

² Armitage's Hist. Bap., pp. 234, 236, 237.

Mosheim says: "The Greeks treated the Paulicians ...as Manichaeans; though, if we may credit the testimony of Photius, the Paulicians, expressed the utmost abhorrence of Manes and his doctrine." Even Mosheim concedes: "Most evident it is that they were not altogether Manichaeans, though they embraced some opinions that resembled certain tenets of that abominable sect."¹

Kurtz: "The Catholic controversial writers of the ninth century traced the sect of the Paulicians and even their name to a Manichaean family of the fourth century...But later investigations have failed to discover any trace of Manichaean tenets in their system."² Universal Knowledge: "The charge of Manichaeism was falsely brought against them by their persecutors."³

Cramp: "Manichaeism was looked upon as a concentration of all that was outrageously bad in religious opinion and became the fashion to call all heretics Manichaeans. Hence many excellent men have been so stigmatized whose views and practices accorded with the word of God."⁴

Armitage: "They have always been coupled with Manichaeans and nothing has been too base to say of them. Bossuett and Bowers have distinguished themselves in this calumny, but Bowers has been effectively answered by the learned Lardner. ...The Paulicians themselves certainly should have known what they were, and both these witnesses (Photius and Siculus) explicitly state that they repelled the charge with great spirit. But what differences did it make with these maligners? So...

¹ Mosheim's Eccl. Hist., cent. 9, part 1, sec. 5.

² Kurtz's Ch. Hist., vol. I, p. 207.

3 Art. Paulicians.

4 Cramp's Hist. Bap., p. 68.

...long as they could befoul their fame by that odious brand, they pinned it to them as if it were true. Gibbon states that the Paulicians disclaimed the theology of Manes, and the other kindred heresies, and the trinity generations of eons which had been created by the fruitful fancy of Valentine. The Paulicians sincerely condemned the memory and the opinions of the Manichaean sect, and complained of the injustice which impressed the invidious name on the simple votaries of St. Paul and of Christ. Although these witnesses judged them by a false standard of their own raising, to which the Paulicians are allowed no counter evidence, nor cross examination, nothing but denial and protest, Photius pretended fair play when he took up his pen to write 'Contra Manichaeas' in one book, without telling what they did believe; and then, on a false assumption, followed by three others to confute them as though they were disciples of Manes. ... There were different classes of Manichaeans as well as Paulicians, but Photius and Siculus lump them en masse and convict themselves again and again of misrepresentations in matters of public notoriety. ... They admit that Constantine, the leader of the Paulicians, received the New Testament as his inspired guide, and cited it to prove his tenets, and then charged him with claiming to speak by the Holy Spirit. They failed to charge him with any new doctrine, but alleged that he pretended to speak by the Holy Spirit, and then charged him with borrowing his doctrines from the Scythian, Pythagorean, and other pagan teachers. They condemned him for professing to be the power of God, but failed to show that he ever attempted miracles! They ridicule the Paulicians as an aristocratic organization, then sneered at them because they gave the Scriptures to everybody because they had no priests, and because instead of listening to the ravings of their inspired leader, they read the Scriptures publicly! They charged them with dissolute lives, with gluttony and obscenity at their festivals; and, in the same breath, tell us that they studiously married, drank no wine and ate no flesh! They taught that they might eat fruit, herbs, bread, but neither eggs nor fish. In other things they discredit their whole testimony under ordinary rules which govern evidence.”¹ “Arnold, of Germany, Beausobre and Lardner have honored themselves and the subject with sedate investigation and judicial candor, and have set right many of the inconsistencies and contradictions of Photius and Siculus.”¹

Wm. R. Williams: “The Paulicians, a later body, were eminent especially for their love of Paul's Epistles, which they so admired, that their teachers, many of them, changed their names for those of some of Paul's helpers and converts. For centuries defamed and pursued, they held their course, testifying and witnessing. Hase, the modern church historian, himself a Rationalist, speaks of them as continuing under various names down quite near to our own age.”²

Dr. Brockett, a special investigator of the Paulicians, says: “With the proofs now at our command of the identity of the Cat florists and the Waldenses with the Bogomiles,” (Paulicianists) “this admission proves fatal to the Manichaean doctrines of the whole.” † 3

Sir William Jones, one of the most learned investigators, says: “Their public appearance soon attracted the notice of the Catholic party who immediately branded them with the opprobrious name of Manichaeans; but they...

† That some of them held to a modified, and, almost harmless Manichaeism, is not denied. Some of them, for a time, may have been seriously Manichaean. [Here see

Chapter IV, of this book.]

1 Armitage's Hist. Bap., pp. 234,236, 237.

2 William E. William's Lect. on Bap. Hist., pp. 129,130,

3 The Bogomilles, by L. P. Brockett, p. 125.

...sincerely (says Gibbon), condemned the memory and the opinions of the Manichaeian sect and complained of the injustice which impressed that invidious name on them.”¹

Of their great leader, Benedict says: “From the time he got acquainted with these writings (the gospels and Paul's Epistles) it is said he would touch no other book. He threw away his Manichaeian library and exploded and rejected many of the abused notions of his countrymen.”² So Jones substantially says.³ Benedict: “The religious practices of this people are purposely mangled and misrepresented.”²

Says Neander of the Manichaeian charge against the Paulicians: “The truth is that in their period there was a universal inclination to call everything of a dualistic tendency Manichaeian; while no one seemed to correctly understand the distinctive marks which separated the gnostic from the Manichaeian tenets. We find nothing at all, however, in the doctrines of the Paulicians which would lead us to presume that they were an offshoot from Manichaeism; on the other hand we find much which contradicts such a supposition.” †

Jortin: “Though charged with the Manichaeian errors they have been honorably freed from this reproach by respectable writers.”⁴

Notice, secondly, the charge that the Paulicians rejected parts of the Bible. Cramp does not so much as regard the charge worthy of notice. He mentions their leader as having had given him by a deacon, “a copy of the gospels and of the Epistles of Paul.” That he “read,...

† Neander's Hist. Chr. Ch., vol. 3, p. 244.

1 Jones' Ch. Hist., p. 244.

2 Benedict's Hist. Baptist, p. 12.

3 Jones' Ch. Hist., p. 243.

4 Jortin's Rem. on Hist., vol. 3, p. 478; Lardner's Cred. G. Hist., vol. 3, pp. 422,546; Cramp's Bap. Hist, pp. 71, 73, 77.

...believed and obeyed.” Manichaeism, by which he had been deluded, was immediately renounced. His Manichaeian books were thrown aside and the sacred writings exclusively studied.¹ This is pretty conclusive evidence that so far as the Paulicians had knowledge of the Bible they fully accepted it as inspired. Gibbon says of Constantine, the Paulician leader: “The four gospels and the epistles” (it is not certain they were able to possess the whole Bible) “became the measure of his studies and the rule of his faith; and the Catholics who dispute his interpretation acknowledge that his text was genuine and sincere. But he attached himself with peculiar devotion to the writings and character of St. Paul. The name of the Paulicians is derived by their enemies from some unknown teacher; but I am confident that they gloried in their affinity to the Apostles to the Gentiles. ...In the gospels and the epistles of St. Paul his faithful follower investigated the creed of Christianity; and whatever may be the success a Protestant reader will applaud the spirit of the inquiry.”² This does not harmonize with Gibbon's and some others' statement that they rejected the Old Testament and the Epistles of Peter. No man can be a consistent follower of the gospels and Paul's Epistles and at the same time reject the Old Testament

— their very root, so much preached from in these books. As this charge is, therefore, self-evidently false as to the Old Testament, there is no reason for believing the rest of it, especially as the Epistles of Peter in no way are discordant with the gospels and Paul's Epistles.

Hase says: "Their principal attention was directed to a revival of apostolic and spiritual Christianity.

1 Jortin's Rem, on Hist., vol. 3, p. 478; Lardner's Cred, G. Hist., vol. 3, pp, 422, 546; Cramp's Bap. Hist., pp, 71, 73, 67.

2 Armitage's Bap. Hist., p. 237.

On every subject they appealed to the New Testament as a sacred book for the people in the text used by the church, but with the exclusion of the Epistles of Peter."*

Mosheim: "They received all the books of the New Testament except the two Epistles of Peter, which they rejected for reasons unknown to us, and their copies were the same with those used by all the Christians, without the least interpolation of the sacred text; in which respect they also differed from the Manichaeans."1

Says Dr. Brockett, perhaps the highest authority as to the Paulicians; "This assertion that they rejected the entire Old Testament...is reiterated by all the Greek and Roman Catholic writers, from Petrus Siculus, in the ninth century, Monachus and Alanus in the thirteenth, down to Mathew Paris, Roger de Hoveden, and Gevase of Canterbury: yet we have the most conclusive evidence that it was not true. Euthymius Zygabenus, the secretary of the Emperor Alexius Comnenus when Basil was examined by the emperor, and a most bitter enemy of the Bogomiles, states in his Panoplia (as stated by Evans' Historical Review, etc., p. 36) the Bogomiles accepted seven holy books, which he enumerates as follows: 1. The Psalms; 2. The Sixteen Prophets; 3, 4, 5 and 6. The Gospels; 7. The Acts of the Apostles, The Epistles and The Apocalypse. Some writers have charged them with rejecting the Epistles of Peter and the Apocalypse, but there is no evidence of this. The Bogomiles' New Testament was word/or word that of the early Sclavic apostle, Methodius. Of this Jirecek furnishes, on page 177, the most conclusive proofs. If, then, this statement of their enemies, like so many others, is proved to be false, what...

* Hase's Hist. Chr. Ch., p. 160.

1 Mosheim's Eccl. Hist., part 2, chap. 5, sec. 6.

...assurance is there that their alleged dualistic doctrines were anything more than an old falsehood revamped."1

Considering the slanderous character of the witnesses who make this charge, the inconsistency and contradictory nature of their testimony for it, and the positive testimony to the contrary, all fair minded men must agree on throwing it out of court. Even it were proven, since they had not the necessary opportunities to test the Biblical canon; since it is not infallibly certain we have all the canonical books; and since, therefore, to test their being Baptists by their infallibility as to the canon, would be an unreasonably severe and unfair test, we may dismiss the charge.

Martin Luther, at one time, rejected the book of James. Giving them no opportunity to look into a book for an answer when asked, what are the canonical

books, not near half the churches of any denomination could mention them; yea, more, there are useful preachers whom this test would confuse. Here, read Chapter IV of this book: Let us quit torturing these ancient witnesses for the truth on a rack that few churches of our own time could stand.

The origin of the charge is given by Sir Wm. Jones: "One of their imputed errors is that they rejected the whole of the Old Testament writings; a charge which was also brought by the writers of the Catholic school against the Waldenses and others with equal regard to truth and justice. But this calumny is easily accounted for. The advocates of popery, to support their innovations and usurpations in the kingdom of Christ, were driven to the Old Testament for authority, adducing the kingdom of David for example. And when their adversaries rebutted the argument, insisting that the parallel did not hold, for...

1 The Bogomiles, by L. P. Brockett, p, 126.

...that the kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world, is a very different state of things from the kingdom of David, their opponents accused them of giving up the divine authority of the Old Testament. Upon similar principles it is not difficult to vindicate the Paulicians from other charges brought against them."1

Says Prof. Geo. P. Fisher, D. D.: The Paulicians "did not oppose marriage." †

To the charge that they denied baptism and the supper, I reply, (1) they were accused of this by enemies, who, like Campbellites, were unable to see the differences between denying the ordinances as ordinances and denying them as saving institutions. (2.) History contradicts the charge. Kurtz does not so much as notice this charge. Neither does Wadington. See their histories. Jones says: "In these churches of the Paulicians, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper they held to be peculiar to the communion of the faithful, i. e. restricted to believers."2

Gibbon is quoted: "In practice, or at least in theory, of the sacraments, the Paulicians were inclined to abolish all visible objects of worship, and the gospels were, in their judgments, the baptism and communion of the faithful."2 The reader will observe (a) that Gibbon is very uncertain as to what was the position of the Paulicians. (b) His statement, that the "words of the gospel were baptism and communion of the faithful," taken in connection with the statement that they "were inclined to abolish" the "sacraments as visible objects of worship" implies that while they observed the ordinances they did not look to them for a medium of salvation, but looked to...

† Fisher's Hist. Chr. Ch., p. 162.

1 Jones' Ch. Hist., p. 245.

2 Benedict's Hist. Bap., p. 12.

...the words of the gospel. Being a poor infidel and thus blind to spiritual things, Gibbon understood this to mean rejecting the ordinances.

Mosheim: "They rejected baptism and in a more especial manner, the baptism of infants, as a ceremony that was in no respect essential to salvation. They rejected, for the same reason, the sacrament of the Lord's supper."1

Whatever Mosheim may mean to teach, this statement must be taken in the light of its phrase, "As a

ceremony that was in no respect essential to salvation.” Just as in cent. 11, part 2, chap. 5, sec. 4, he says: “They considered marriage as a pernicious institution, and absurdly condemned without distinction all connubial bonds,” which a foot note to the same page thus explains; “The eleventh article is scarcely credible, at least, as it is here expressed. It is more than reasonable to suppose these mystics did not absolutely condemn marriage, but only held celibacy in high esteem, as a mark of superior sanctity and virtue.” The truth is, while this note hits the mark as to their not rejecting marriage, it misses it as to the explanation of the charge. The explanation in this and in the case of baptism and the supper is: The Romanists accused them of rejecting both marriage and the two ordinances because they denied them as sacraments — rejecting them only as saving institutions. Mosheim's explanation of their meaning, in cent. 9, part 2, chap. 5, sec. 6, yet more clearly slurs us up to this interpretation: “They refused to celebrate the holy institution of the Lord's supper; for as they looked upon many precepts and injunctions of the gospel to be of merely figurative and parabolic nature, so they understood by the bread and wine, which Christ is said to...

1 Mosheim's Eccl. Hist., cent. 9, part 2, chap. 5, sec. 6.

...have administered to his disciples at his last supper, the divine discourses of the Savior, which are a spiritual food and nourishment for the soul, and fill it with repose, satisfaction and delight.” Taking baptism and the supper as “merely figurative and parabolic,” symbolizing the great truths of the gospel, ...is the Baptist position of all ages, for which, by those who look to them as saviors, from Campbellism to its mother Rome, Baptists have been unceasingly misrepresented and reproached.

Mosheim makes the same blundering interpretation in cent. 12, part 2, chap. 5, sec. 4, where, treating them as Catharists — from not knowing they were Paulicians — he says, they held “that baptism and the Lord's supper were useless institutions, destitute of all saving power.” Just as Campbellites and other Romanists, today, charge Baptists with making these two ordinances “useless,” simply because they can see no use in obeying Jesus unless the obedience saves from hell. Benedict gives us an illustration of the same charge, made in a discussion, against the Baptists, at a time when no one doubts that they baptized and observed the supper. In this discussion, between a Baptist and a Romanist, the Romanist says: “You Anabaptists, tell us once, something about supper. I suppose you observe none, since you know nothing about a sacrament * * * Yes, you have always the scriptures at your finger ends, for you Anabaptists read nothing but the holy scripture, hence it is that you read nothing concerning the sacrament of the altar.” * * * Therefore you are ignorant of the sacrament of the altar.”¹

Says Brockett: “Harmenopoulos, a Byzantine monk of the tenth century, more candid than most of his fellows, says, as quoted by Evans, that the Bogomiles...

1 Benedict's Hist. Bap., p. 101.

...practiced the rite of water baptism (and if they did they must have received it from the Paulicians) but did not attribute to it any perfecting virtue (тελειоυν) virtue.¹ This last expression is significant in this connection as showing that this rite was administered to all believers (Credentes) in distinction from spiritual baptism, or consolamentum ...It is, we believe, generally admitted that the early Armenian church, of which the Paulicians were

an offshoot, did not practice trine immersion, though they immersed their converts once.”²

Brockett proves they baptized, by “Their well known and universally admitted repudiation of infant baptism. Harmenopoulos, a Greek priest of the twelfth century, expressly declares that they did practice single immersion but without unction, etc., and only upon adults, on the profession of their faith. He adds that they did not attribute to it any saving or perfecting virtues, which is in accordance with their other teaching.” Reiner, the inquisitor, who had originally been one of them, says: “They say that a man is first baptized when he is received into their community and has been baptized by them, and then hold that baptism is of no advantage to infants, since they cannot actually believe. We find in the histories of Jirecek and Hilferding numerous incidental allusions to the baptism of persons of high rank, such as the ban Culin, Tvardko III, King Stephen Thomas, the Duke of St. Sava, etc. * * * who are said to have been baptized into the Bogomile faith. That during the period of the greatest persecutions, the ordinances were administered secretly, and perhaps at night is very probable, but there is no evidence that it was ever omitted. That would have been impossible in an oriental...

1 The Bogomiles, p. 119.

2 Idem, p. 119.

...church.¹ To the authorities here named for the proposition that the Credentes, or believers were baptized must be added Alarms de Insulis, a French writer of about A. D. 1200, whose treatise against heretics was published by Massons of Lyons, in 1612. He is cited by Hallam, Middle Ages, vol. 3, pp. 359, 360, note Am.”² Alanus speaking of Albigenses, who were fully identified with the Bogomiles, says: “They rejected infant baptism, but were divided as to the reason ...It does not appear they rejected either of the sacraments.”³ “Nothing is said by Hoveden of their rejection of the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist, which would have certainly been mentioned by as careful a writer as Hoveden if it had existed.”³

As to their having opposed marriage, though it has been disprovingly alluded to, in the foregoing, I will quote the statement of Prof. Geo. P. Fisher; The Paulicians “did not oppose marriage.”⁴

While I have more testimony to prove the Paulicians were Baptists as to the ordinances, I conclude this point with these as amply sufficient: (1.) They did administer the ordinances. (2.) Only to believers. (3.) They recognized the scriptural truth, that only immersion is baptism. (4.) As they baptized only believers they believed in a regenerate church membership.

The Paulicians were Baptists in church government. Of them Benedict quotes Gibbon: “Churches were founded upon the plan and model of the churches. They were incapable of desiring the wealth and honors of the Catholic prelacy; such anti-Christian pride they bitterly...

1 Idem, p. 41.

2 Idem, pp. 121, 122.

3 The Bogomiles, p. 122.

4 Fisher's Hist, Chr., Ch., p. 162, also p. 126 of Church Perpetuity.

...condemned.”¹ Armitage: “Dr. Semler accords them more correct ideas of

godliness, worship and church government than the Catholics of their time, and these virtues drew upon them more persecution from the hierarchy than their doctrinal views.”² Robinson: They were called “ Acephali, or headless.”³ They were doubtless as Benedict explains, so called because they rejected Romish rules. Mosheim: “They had not, like the Manichaeans, an ecclesiastical government administered by bishops, priests and deacons; they had no sacred order of men distinguished by their manner of life or any other circumstance from the rest of the assembly; nor had councils, synods or such like institutions any place in their religious polity.”⁴ This language might be misunderstood to mean that they had no ministers at all. But it is the contrast between the simplicity of the ministry, as among Baptists now, and the prelacy, as in the Romish churches now. The next words of Mosheim clearly so explain: “They had certain doctors whom they called Sunecdemi, i. e. companions in the journey of life, and also notarii. Among these there reigned a perfect equality, and they had no peculiar rights, privileges nor external mark of dignity to distinguish them from the people. The only singularity that attended their promotion to the rank of doctors was, that they changed their lay names for scripture ones.”⁴ Wadington quotes and adopts the statement of Mosheim as his own. * Kurtz: “Their form of worship was very simple and their church government modeled after that of . . .

* Wadington's Ch. Hist., p. 478.

1 Benedict's Hist. Bap., p. 13.

2 Armitage's Hist. Bap., p. 239.

3 Robinson's Eccl. Researches, p. 92.

4 Mosheim's Eccl. Hist., cent. 9, part 2, chap. 5, sec. 5; Wadington's Ch. Hist., p. 478.

... apostolic times.”¹ Kurtz shows the apostolic church government to be what we regard Baptist.

Says Hase: “The community of Paulicians had a chief. . .but neither he nor any of his fellow pilgrims and scribes exercised any hierarchal powers.”*

Neander says: “They recognized it as belonging to the popular essence of Christianity. That it aimed to establish a higher fellowship of life among all ranks and all classes, tolerating no such distinctions as the existing ones between clergy or priests and laity. They had among them, it is true, persons who administered ecclesiastical offices, but these, like the rest, were to be looked upon as members of the communities. They were distinguished from others neither by dress, nor by any outward mark. The names, also, of their church officers were so chosen, as to denote the peculiarity of their vocation, which was to administer the office of spiritual teaching, to the exclusion of all sacerdotal prerogatives.” **

Dr. Brockett says: “A hierarchy of any sort was utterly abhorrent to the spirit and temper of both the Bogomiles and their affiliated sects in the West.”² Some have supposed they had an ecclesiastical chief dignitary. But as Brockett says, and the foregoing quotations prove: “The Bosnian djed, or elder, seems to have been at this time about A. D. 1220 the presiding officer of the affiliated sects or denominations, somewhat like the former presidents of our triennial conventions. He was primus inter pares, but possessed no judicial or ecclesiastical . . .

* Hase's Hist. Chr.Ch., p. 160.

** Meander's Hist. Chr. Ch., vol. 3, p. 264.

1 Kurtz's Ch. Hist., vol. 1, p. 271.

2 The Bogomiles, p. 58, 60, 71.

...authority”¹ [See Jirecek, Geschichte der Bulgaren, p. 180.]

Neander says of their doctrine and life: “Certain it is that the Paulician doctrines as a whole, not only required,” but were calculated to foster, a spirit of sober and strict morality.”[†]

Sir William Jones, of the Paulicians, says: “I see no reason to doubt that we should see in them the genuine successors of the Christians of the first two centuries.”²

I, therefore, conclude this examination of the Paulicians in the language of perhaps the highest authority on the subject — Brockett — “The Armenian Paulicianists were clearly Baptists.”³

[†] Neander's Hist. Chr. Ch., vol. 3, p. 266.

1 Idem, p. 127.

2 Jones' Ch. Hist., p. 245.

3 Bap. Eev., vol. 4, No. 10.