

purest form ; his head covered with a silky, thickly grown white hair ; his neck torous ; the whole body covered equally with a rich flesh, except the head. His breath was easy, but intermingled with sighs ; he spoke slowly, but with the dignity of a monarch.

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ART. II.—INFANT SALVATION.

INFANT SALVATION IN ITS RELATION TO INFANT DEPRAVITY, INFANT REGENERATION, AND INFANT BAPTISM. By J. H. A. Bomberger, D. D., Pastor of the Race Street Evangelical Reformed church, Philadelphia. Lindsay & Blakiston. 1860. 12mo. pp. 192.

This little volume treats successively of Infant Depravity, Infant Regeneration, Infant Salvation, and Infant Baptism. It contains many things which are good, beautifully and forcibly expressed and well worthy of being seriously laid to heart by parents : but it also takes a few positions, which I consider erroneous and untenable. In the third section, which is by far the largest, the esteemed author endeavors to prove, that *all little children dying in infancy are saved, whether baptized or not*. I propose to examine his arguments and show that they do not establish the doctrine. This will lead me to notice not the excellencies, but rather the defects of the book.

"*In all God's covenant transactions with men, CHILDREN are included in the covenant with their parents.*" p. 58. This is the first argument. The examples of Adam in Paradise, of Noah after the deluge, of Abraham, and of the New and Better Covenant, to which the author refers, are beautiful and forcible illustrations of the fact that children are always included in the covenant with their parents. This I presume all will admit. Provision is indeed made in this way

for their salvation, but it does by no means follow, that all will therefore be saved. The fact that they are included does not make their salvation certain. For adults too are included in the covenant, and yet this is no proof that they will all be saved. Nothing can be said of certain conditions,—faith and repentance—in regard to these: because the argument is the fact that they “are included in the covenant,” and since this can be affirmed alike of the adult and children, they are therefore equally entitled to its advantages. In my opinion this argument by itself does not prove the salvation of any one, whether parent or child, much less of all children.

The Heidelberg Catechism, Question 74, tells us, that infants “as well as the adult are included in the covenant and church of God.” What is the inference? That they are therefore saved? No. For instead of inferring the salvation of any or all from their inclusion in the covenant, it says they shall therefore be *baptized*, and “admitted into the Christian Church and be distinguished from the children of infidels as was done in the old covenant or testament by circumcision.” All the children of the Jews and Gentiles are included in that New and Better Covenant; they have therefore equally a right to be baptized and thus “be brought into actual participation in the redemption of Jesus Christ.” p. 16: and yet according to the Catechism the baptized shall “be distinguished from the children of infidels,” although the latter are in like manner included in the covenant. The argument of the Heidelberg Catechism and that of our author, are the same: and yet their inferences are not alike. The former infers the right to be baptized, but the latter infers their salvation even without baptism.

The inclusion of the children of the Jews in the Abrahamic covenant, guaranteed to them the right to be circumcised—not the certainty of salvation: and if circumcised, they were entitled to all the temporal and spiritual blessings of Judaism. So the inclusion of all children in that New and Better Covenant, secures for them the right to be

baptized: and if baptized they have the promise of salvation through Jesus Christ. Were not the male-children of the Jews to “be cut off” from the people, in case they were not circumcised, notwithstanding their inclusion in the Abrahamic covenant? Gen. xvii. 14. But more of this hereafter. It does therefore not follow from the fact that they are included in the covenant, that all little children are saved, whether baptized or not.

“Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven,” Mat. 19: 14. p. 75. After giving an explanation at length of these words, the author says: “The conclusion, therefore, to which a candid consideration of this incident, and the various phrases, which occur in the Gospel report of it, lead us, is undoubtedly this: that our Lord teaches the salvation of all little children.” p. 109. From this conclusion I respectfully dissent. Let it be distinctly noticed, I deny not that all little children may be saved,—they may or they may not—Scripture being silent, this question is undecided; but I deny that *this passage of Scripture* proves that all are saved. Let us examine it, and also our author's remarks.

He tells us our Lord “does not say; ‘Suffer *these* children to come unto Me;’ but in the most general terms which language affords: Suffer children.” This statement I regard as unfair. It is true our Lord does not say: “Suffer *these* children:” and it is also equally true He does not say: “Suffer children:” but He says: “Suffer ~~the~~ little children.” It is known, our English translation of this passage of Scripture, is defective in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke. By referring to the original we find that Christ said *τα παῖδια*, and these words are used alike in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Luther in his German translation rendered them correctly, *die Kindlein*, alike in the three Gospels. In our English version of St. Mark x. 14. they are rendered: “Suffer *the* little children.” This agrees with the original Greek, as well as with the German translation. The definite article “*the*” is omitted in our English translation of this passage, in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke. It is therefore not correct to say that our Lord

used "the most general terms which language affords." Now it seems to me not to be fair, that the author should lay so much stress upon this imperfect translation, and use it, if not as an argument, at least in preparing the way for the introduction of his view on Infant Salvation. He cannot defend himself by saying, that he quoted the received translation. This is true: but did he not also quote the received translation of the passage: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations;" Matt. xxviii. 19. p. 170. Yet he corrects this, why not also the other? Any one in reading his remarks under consideration, can easily see that its correction would have required him to modify his language considerably. What precedes as well as what follows, shows that he desired to point out the universality of "the law of the kingdom, in regard to children." But this he could have done equally well by allowing our Lord to say: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me,"—the little children as contradistinguished from the adult, who have been coming unto Me from the beginning.

"Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Our author tells us: "Strange explanations of these apparently plain and simple words may often be met with—explanations which lose sight altogether of the true and avowed purpose of our Lord in uttering them." p. 95, 96. Having stated and refuted some of them, he says: "We must therefore, adopt another sense of these words as the only correct one. And that sense is the one most obviously lying in the declaration as it stands, without amplification or paraphrase, of such (little children) is the kingdom of heaven." He has scarcely told us that the correct sense lies so obviously in the declaration as it stands, that it needs no amplification or paraphrase, till he amplifies or paraphrases it himself by inserting "little children" in the words of Christ.

What is the sense of the words: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven?" Our author answers: "The kingdom of heaven consists mainly and emphatically of little children. All who have died in infancy, a countless host, 'early lost to be early saved,' all these are safely housed

in that kingdom above." "The kingdom of heaven consists of so large a proportion of *children* saved by the blood of the Lamb, that it may be said with truth, of such emphatically is the kingdom of heaven." p. 102. 103. This I presume, our author will admit is a fair and full statement of his view, which he regards as the only correct one. If I understand him correctly, (and I trust I may not misrepresent him) he supposes there are so many children in heaven, that it can be said, of such is heaven, or of such does heaven consist. He accordingly understands the words as referring to "a great multitude, which no 'man can number,'" and then concludes, that our Lord teaches the salvation of all little children." Is he however not begging the question? For in trying to prove that all children are saved, he says, "of such is the kingdom of heaven:" and now in explaining these words of Christ he tells us, "heaven consists *mainly* and *emphatically* of little children. All who have died in infancy, a countless host, *all these* are safely housed in that kingdom above." But this is the point in question, If indeed "*all who have died in infancy are in heaven,*" the question is decided. Does he not thus assume as a truth that all children are in heaven, and then use it to explain his argument: and after his argument is thus explained, he comes back again and gravely tells us, all children are saved. To say the least, I regard his view as also a "strange explanation of these apparently plain and simple words—an explanation which in like manner loses sight altogether of the true and avowed purpose of our Lord in uttering them." They can be misinterpreted and misused not only in the way he tells us others have viewed and used them, but also by viewing and using them to prove the doctrine of general Infant Salvation. There is indeed in heaven, "a great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues:" but whether this great multitude consists mainly and emphatically of little children, is a question which he has failed to answer satisfactorily.

He tells us: "*Because they are little children,* are they of

the kingdom of heaven." p. 103. Did he not prove successfully in the first section of his treatise, that they are by nature depraved,—conceived in sin and born in iniquity? In discussing their sinfulness, he allowed neither age nor size to annul it. Now however he tells us they are of the kingdom of heaven, because they are little. What becomes of his doctrine of Infant Depravity? Perhaps however, he will answer, not exactly *because they are little children*, (though he says so in his book), but because they are little children regenerated,—“joined to Christ in regeneration.” True, he endeavors in the second section of his treatise to show the necessity of Infant Regeneration. It does, however, by no means follow, that all *are* regenerated. The adult too “must be born again;” and yet this is no proof that they *are* born again. You cannot infer the actuality of a thing from its necessity. All men need bread, and yet not all have it; for some starve. If I mistake not, he has advanced no argument to prove this point: for all his arguments are simply in favor of its necessity. Their regeneration ought certainly to be established, before it can be used as an argument to prove their salvation. If they “have been joined to Christ in regeneration,” they will of course be saved, and the question is decided. But where is the proof, I ask respectfully, that all are regenerated?

Christ says “*of such*.” Let us examine these words. *Such* signifies: “of that kind,” “of the like kind.” Webster. It never means all, or its equivalent, “a countless host.” It is an adjective and therefore limits or defines. Let me illustrate. If I point to several two story brick houses, and say “*of such*,” do I mean all houses? You would not understand me so. For some are built of stone, others of logs, and others of marble: some have only one story, others three, four or more stories. I do therefore not mean all houses; but only those of this kind, in regard to size, material, appearance &c. If you see little, sick, dying children lying upon a bed and say “*of such*,” do you mean all children, including the healthy and the strong? Do you not simply mean those of this class?

I need not multiply examples: every one knows what these words generally signify. The houses and the children to which I have referred, are indeed different among themselves, and on this account the illustrations might seem to be inapplicable. But our author by allowing “that some special efficacy was connected with the imposition of the Redeemer’s hands upon those infants,” has made a difference equally broad and marked between those who received and those who did not receive His benediction. In his beautiful and graphic description of the significance of the Saviour’s treatment of those little children, he has pointed out very plainly whom our Lord meant by saying “*of such*.”

Let us however also see what our author means by saying “*such*.” On page 64 he tells us: “*Such*, we say, are the expectations” &c. “and *such* are the convictions” &c. Does he mean *all* expectations and *all* convictions? If I were to interpret his language in that way, he would have reason to complain of a gross misrepresentation, and would gently remind me that he did not mean all, but only that kind of expectations and convictions which he had described, and that every careful reader would understand him so.

Now what does Christ mean by the word *τοιουτων*, “*of such*?” I will venture to say, he means exactly what we mean by saying *of such*, viz: “of that kind,” “of the like kind.” We generally have no difficulty in understanding each other, when we use these words, why shall we have more difficulty in understanding them when our Lord uses them? Did He attach unusual and mysterious meaning to these apparently plain and simple words? Perhaps however, you are impatiently asking what kind? I reply that kind that “*come*” unto him. I will therefore, also amplify the words of Christ and say: Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for *of such* (as come unto Me) is the kingdom of heaven.

This explanation I think, will be confirmed by reference to the incident to which they belong. Read it care-

fully as it is recorded of St. Matth. xix. 13-15, or in the parallel passages of St. Mark x. 13-16, and St. Luke xviii. 15-17. Here are persons (probably parents) bringing little children to Christ: the disciples however rebuke them. There is now a dispute between the parents on the one hand, and the disciples on the other. The question is simply this: shall little children be brought unto Christ, or shall they not? The parents say, Yes: the disciples, No. Who shall decide this important and interesting question satisfactorily for all time to come? Behold, Christ is present, and both parties are willing to submit to His decision. He decides it in the affirmative by saying: "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." The great question is decided. Little children may come to Christ, and if they do come, they are saved. Are not all little children thus virtually divided into two great classes, (just like the adult are and for the same reason) those on the one hand that come, and those on the other that do not come unto Him? To understand these words, it seems to me, we need only read the incident carefully, remember under what circumstances they were spoken, and mark the point at issue. Christ did not evade the question, which was thus put to Him by the parents and his disciples for decision, by giving them a dubious reply: neither did He tell both parties, that it is immaterial whether little children are brought unto Me, or not, for they are saved at any rate. No. He rather insisted upon them coming unto Him, was much displeased with His disciples for interfering, and encouraged the parents to bring them. Upon what principle or according to what rule can the words "of such" be interpreted so as to mean all or "a countless host?" The meaning of the words, as well as the tenor of the whole incident, is against such an interpretation. The terms are so "explicit" that I can scarcely see how they can be used as an argument to prove the doctrine of general Infant Salvation.

How are little children saved? This is an important

question and well worthy our attention. Some people have an idea, they are saved simply because they are so little and helpless. No idea, however, can well be more unscriptural than that; for it militates against the doctrine of human depravity, the necessity of the atonement and a living union with Christ. Our author plants himself upon far higher ground than that, by insisting upon Infant Depravity and a connexion with Christ through regeneration. Little children are therefore saved, not because they are little and helpless: for though young and small, they are conceived and born in sin and subject to pain, disease and death. But they are saved because they are brought unto Christ, and thus united to Him in a true and living way and made actual participants in his redemption. For out of Him, there is no salvation for any one, no matter how young or old he may be. He tells us solemnly: "No man—or more correctly, not any one,—cometh unto the Father but by me." John xiv. 6. He thus assures us in the most explicit terms, that none, whether adult or child, can be saved without Him. Hence we may understand why He insisted so earnestly upon the little children coming unto Him, and why He was much displeased when His disciples attempted to prevent them from receiving the benediction from His hands.

If we ask what object the parents had in view in bringing their little children to Christ, we are told "that He should put His hands on them, and pray." They were thus brought by the parents and invited by Christ to come, not because they were already pure and holy and heirs of heaven, but that He might make them good and acknowledge them as His children by redemption. Our Lord appeared in the world and solemnly invited young and old, children and adult, to come unto Him, because all were sinners and therefore needed Him as a Saviour. He accordingly says: "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." Luke v. 32. This view I think is confirmed by several passages in the little volume I am reviewing. "Rightly apprehended, then, the invitation of

our Lord, calling the infants to Him, involved a true spiritual approach to Him in his mediatorial character." p. 85. "His words of invitation reveal Him as standing with open heart, ready to receive them into His inmost and saving love." p. 86. Very true. But now it seems to me, the admission of such an approach and reception is fatal to the doctrine of general Infant Salvation. Or are also those children saved, who do not approach Him in His mediatorial character, and who are not received into His inmost and saving love?

The necessity of coming to Christ, even in the case of little children, is still further confirmed by the following beautiful remarks. "The law He here lays down must be allowed to operate as freely as the invitation: 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' And the phrase, 'Come unto me,' employed in both cases, means substantially the same thing." p. 80. I am aware he makes this statement to show that the invitation given to children, is as general as that extended to the adult. But now I also argue from it the necessity of its acceptance. If the invitation is alike, the duty enjoined is also alike. Christ invites the adult to come unto Him, because they are sinners, and only by accepting the invitation can they hope to be saved. If now the invitation: "Come unto me," means substantially the same thing in its relation to the adult and children, then the duty of acceptance which it imposes is also substantially the same in its relation to both classes of persons. I need not prove at length the ability of little children to come to Christ. Our author admits this in language sufficiently plain and strong. He says: "Infants though they be, requiring parental arms to bear them, they can as effectually and savingly come to Christ as adults, and by an easier approach." p. 86, 87. Of course they cannot come in the same way, that the adult come. For the latter shall come personally in the way of faith, repentance and prayer: deny themselves, believe in Christ and thus receive Him in the fulness of His mediatorial character as their Prophet, Priest

and King. The former, however, cannot come exactly in this way: for they have no sense of sin, no knowledge of guilt, and they cannot repent. Yet they too shall come to be "apprehended" by the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Believing parents shall therefore bring them to the minister of Christ, and ask him to "put his hands on them and pray;" and he shall receive and bless them in the name of Christ, and they have the assurance: "of such is the kingdom of heaven." Baptism I conceive to be the divinely appointed means of bringing them to Him; and of such *baptized* children, it may be said, in our author's language which he uses with reference to the children in the incident before us, "what was visible and corporeal, was but the symbol and pledge of deeper and invisible spiritual operations," p. 81; that Baptism involves for them "a true spiritual approach to Him in His mediatorial character," p. 85; that they are "received" into His inmost and saving love, p. 86; "that some special efficacy was connected with the act," p. 80; and that grace "streamed from the Divine hands of Jesus into the souls of these little children, as really as the life of the vine transfuses itself through the smallest and tenderest shoots," p. 90. His remarks on the reception of these children, and the significance of the imposition of the Saviour's hands are so good, that I can scarcely resist the temptation to transcribe them.

We are told Langé proposes that the words "of such," be rendered: "because *for* such is the kingdom of heaven." This proposition would be also as favorable, if not more favorable, than the common version to my interpretation of these words of Christ. If you ask *for* whom is the kingdom of heaven prepared, the reply must be, for those who are saved through Christ.

To confirm the view he takes of this passage of Scripture, our author quotes the additional remark of St. Mark and St. Luke: "Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." After explaining how a little child receives the kingdom of God, he says: "It is thus, and

thus most prominently, that Jesus holds up these, and through them as types, all infants, as model members of His spiritual kingdom." p. 108. What infants are thus held up by the Lord himself as model members of His spiritual kingdom? Surely not "*all infants*." This is again begging the question; and it also destroys the point of comparison. But those infants, that were thus brought unto Him, and had made a "true spiritual approach to Him in His mediatorial character," are the model members of His spiritual kingdom. By admitting that "all infants," even those who never come to Christ, are model members, is virtually representing Him as teaching that the adult can be saved without accepting His invitation: "Come unto me." It is therefore not correct to say, that "they—that is these words—seem plainly to teach that every little child receives the kingdom of heaven." p. 108. Neither can his amplification be admitted: "Whosoever does not receive the kingdom of heaven as *(every) little child receives it*, shall in no wise enter therein." Christ says simply *ta pedia*.

I presume there is scarcely another passage of Scripture which is more frequently misinterpreted and misapplied than this: "Suffer the little children to come unto me," &c., and I make this remark at the risk of being charged with a similar offence. To say nothing of "pious and devout commentators," there are also many other persons ever ready to claim the promise without complying with the condition. If a child dies, it is often very consolingly said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven," without asking whether it was brought unto Christ or not. The eyes are thus joyfully fixed upon the words which contain the promise, whilst those are quietly passed by upon which that promise is based.

Our author also quotes the following words of Christ as being in favor of his position: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." "Even so it is, not the will of

your heavenly Father that one of these little ones should perish." Matth. xvii: 10-14. It will be observed that our Lord does now in this passage say, not "little ones," but "*these little ones*," which evidently implies that they were before Him; and that He also very likely pointed to them. If this was the case, they too had been brought unto Him, and I can also appeal to these words in favor of my interpretation.

"For the promise is unto you, and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts 11: 30. p. 113. This is the next passage of Scripture quoted in favor of the author's doctrine. I cheerfully admit that it asserts in plain terms that the promise is unto the Jews and their children, and also unto the Gentiles and their children—that all are included in that New and Better Covenant and therefore invited without distinction to come to Christ. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." It will be observed that it says not whether some or all the children will be saved: it simply affirms a "promise," which shows that provision is made for their redemption and that now the means shall be used to secure it. This is the same argument of inclusion in the Covenant which we have already had under consideration: we need therefore not repeat our remarks.

"Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation: even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Rom. 5: 18, 19. p. 128. This we are told is "another special Scripture proof of this cheering doctrine." Being a "special" proof, it claims our earnest attention. The conclusion of this argument is as follows: "As many as were made sinners without their moral assent, 'by one man's disobedience,' and who die before they reach the age in which men become personally responsible," so many, *at least*, shall



"by the obedience of one be made righteous." The whole human race was originally treasured up potentially in Adam, as its first representative, and when he sinned, his sons and daughters sinned in him. Christ the second representative of the human race, made an atonement, which is fully commensurate with the sin entailed by Adam on his posterity and also fully sufficient for all the actual sins of men. Their inclusion in Adam is the ground of their sinfulness by nature, and also constitutes their right to inherit that fatal legacy which he bequeathed to them. But something more than that inclusion is required: for unless a child is born naturally, it never comes into actual possession of original sin. "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation" as they were included potentially in their federal head: but that judgment comes upon them individually in the form of an actual punishment only by their natural birth. For as long as a child is not "born of the flesh," it is subject to no pain, no sorrow and no death. Their natural birth is therefore necessary not only to become actual members of the human race, but also to inherit original sin. So on the other hand, Christ by virtue of his incarnation took up humanity as a whole, and thus he was prepared to make an atonement "for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2: 2. This is the ground of salvation and constitutes the right to receive it. But something more again than this is required: for unless a child is now born spiritually it can never come into actual possession of the righteousness of Christ. "By the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life," as they were again included in Christ their second federal Head: but this free gift comes upon them individually in the form of an actual salvation only by their spiritual birth. This is therefore necessary to secure an "actual participation in the redemption of Jesus Christ." In proof of this I can appeal to the second section of our author's treatise, in which he affirms and vindicates the necessity of Infant Regeneration. The fallacy of his argument before us, consists therefore in

tacitly assuming that all little children "have been joined to Christ in regeneration." He admits the necessity; but fails to furnish us with the proof that *all* are regenerated. "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation: even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." You cannot infer, however, that all little children are "born of the Spirit," because they are "born of the flesh." Many shall be made righteous in Christ by His obedience, just as many were made sinners in Adam by his disobedience: but now as the natural birth is necessary in the case of the latter to inherit original sin, so the spiritual birth is necessary in the case of the former to inherit that righteousness which has been procured for them. As pertinent as our author's arguments are in proving the necessity of Infant Regeneration, so pertinent are they also in requiring him to prove that all little children are regenerated, before he can affirm their salvation.

"But the promised seed of the woman so far counteracts and remedies this sore evil—(viz: of the fall),—that none perish eternally because of that entailed condemnation. The inherited penalty is annulled." p. 133. What becomes now of the original or inherited sins of the adult? According to this view, they were forgiven and the penalty was annulled, when they were little children. Or was all this taken back again, when they grew up to manhood and did "by their own free, personal act willfully cleave" to their sins? It seems to me if sins are once forgiven, and if a penalty is once annulled, they are gone forever. Or is this sore evil of the fall counteracted and remedied, and is this inherited penalty annulled, only in the case of those who die in infancy? If so, by what authority does he make such a distinction in regard to inherited sin, between those who go down to an early grave, and those who grow up to manhood? Were they not in all respects alike in infancy? Did they not sustain the same relation to Adam, and also precisely the same to Christ? Surely if all little children "are destined by His grace to be received into



His arms as soon as they are born," their advantages must be alike. How can our author, therefore, according to this view, successfully maintain the doctrine of original sin in regard to the adult? That the Heidelberg Catechism calls for their "original as well as actual sins," will appear when we come to notice his last argument. The adulterer, the murderer and the pirate were once little children, and had they died in their infancy, I presume some would have been sure of their salvation. In speaking of Judas Iscariot, Christ tells us: it had been good for that man, not if he had died in infancy, but if he had not been born. Matth. xxvi. 24.

As already remarked, the conclusion our author draws from this passage of Scripture, is this, as many as were made sinners without their moral assent 'by one man's disobedience,' and die in infancy, "so many at least, shall by the obedience of one be made righteous." To confirm his opinion "that St. Paul really meant to affirm this very doctrine," he quotes the following: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 Cor. xv. 22. p. 136. This death in Adam the author refers to a bodily death, and being made alive in Christ, he refers to the resurrection from the dead. But resurrection is certainly not righteousness. To "revive the bodies of these little slumberers in their narrow tombs," is not making them "righteous." To establish his view of the previous passage, he ought to have planted himself upon universalistic ground, and said, as all were made sinners in Adam, so shall all be made righteous in Christ. But from such an interpretation he shrunk, when he came to explain these words. The two passages are not exactly alike, and hence cannot be used in this way. For the former refers to sin in Adam and righteousness in Christ: but the latter refers to temporal death in Adam, and the resurrection in Christ from the dead.

He uses also the passage of Scripture before us as an argument, if not directly at least indirectly, to prove his doctrine. Every one, I suppose will admit, that all, the

adult and children, became mortal in Adam, and that all will be raised up from their graves by Christ. But now although He will raise up all little children from their narrow tombs, it does by no means follow, that all will therefore be saved. He will also raise up all the adult from their graves, and yet this is no proof of their salvation. If this passage teaches universal infant salvation, it also teaches universal adult salvation. For St. Paul does not distinguish in this case between infants and the adult: he includes both in the word "all" in each proposition. I am pleased to find that our author by his own interpretation, has not only destroyed his argument, but also escaped the charge of teaching Universalism. For he has limited this being "made alive" to the resurrection, and resurrection is not salvation. Christ tells us there is a "resurrection of life," and also a "resurrection of damnation." John v. 29.

His remarks in regard to the good even infants may accomplish, their birth day, their sickness, their death, and their graves, are beautiful, and well calculated to touch the hearts of parents. Some scenes are thus vividly brought before their minds, through which they have passed, and in which they have been deeply interested.

Finally he says: "The last Scripture proof of the doctrine of general Infant Salvation which I shall adduce, is furnished by *the revealed object of the final judgment.*" p. 144. The only ground of everlasting condemnation in the judgment day, he tells us, will be personal sins freely committed by the sentenced transgressor. I cannot expose and refute the error of this argument better than by quoting the language of the Heidelberg Catechism. The tenth Question asks: "Will God suffer such disobedience and rebellion to go unpunished? Answer. By no means, but is terribly displeased with our original as well as actual sins: and will punish them in his judgment temporally and eternally." Actual sins and personal sins, I presume are synonymous terms. It will be observed that according to the Catechism, God is terribly displeased with our *original* as well as actual or personal sins, and will *punish*

them, (the original as well as the actual or personal sins) temporally and eternally. Is it then correct to say: "the only ground of everlasting condemnation in the judgment day, will be *personal sins* freely committed by the sentenced transgressor"? There is evidently a discrepancy between this statement and the doctrine of the Heidelberg Catechism in regard to the object of the final judgment. If the doctrine of general Infant Salvation requires such a view of the judgment, it is *prima facie* evidence of its erroneousness.

He says: "Read the Saviour's description of the character of those who shall then go away into everlasting punishment, and tell me, can departed infants be included in that class"? p. 145. I answer by saying: Read the Saviour's description of the character of those who shall then go into everlasting life, and tell me, are departed infants included in that class? Again he asks: "When did they deny Him before men, that it should be supposed He would deny them before His Father in heaven"? I reply by asking: When did they confess Him before men, that it should be supposed He would confess them before His Father in heaven? Equally irrelevant are his remarks in regard to the character of barren fig trees, the unprofitable servant, and the guests that spurned the wedding garment. It is a rule: "From negative premises you can infer nothing."

It seems to me, the esteemed author has omitted a strong, if not one of the strongest arguments in favor of Infant Salvation. It is found in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans vi: 3-5: "*Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.*" Being thus buried with Christ by baptism into His death, infants participate in the grace of the Gospel, and in this way the benefits of his me-

diatorial work are not only promised to them, but also transferred to them. Being planted together in the likeness of His death, they shall also be planted in the likeness of His resurrection. This argument of course proves the salvation only of the *baptized*, not of the unbaptized. Are not therefore these words of Paul a refutation of the doctrine, that all children are saved, whether baptized or not?

His doctrine of general Infant Salvation, necessarily implies that some will be saved without baptism, (for it is known that many die who have not been baptized) and yet the author wishes to show the importance of Infant Baptism in the fourth section of his treatise. A question, therefore, meets him in the beginning, which he states in the following words: "But why, if children dying in infancy will certainly be saved, whether baptized or not, why have them baptized at all." p. 153. I have endeavored to give his replies to this question "a candid consideration," but must confess they do not satisfy me: for it seems to me, his arguments and illustrations serve to prove only the *right* of infants to be baptized. That I am not mistaken, is evident from his own concluding remark. For he says: "If, therefore, the considerations just presented satisfy you, as I think they must, that even such children, (viz: those dying in infancy) *are entitled* to the sacrament," &c. p. 162, 163. See also p. 161. That all children have a *right* to be baptized, because they are included in the covenant, and because redemption from sin is promised to them, all will admit who have faith in the doctrine of the Heidelberg Catechism. But this is not answering the question: "Why have them baptized at all, if they will certainly be saved without baptism?" By admitting their certain salvation, it will be no easy matter to prove the necessity, or even the importance of Infant Baptism. And this is one of the most common and plausible objections to it. Just so soon as parents think it unnecessary or even unimportant, they will neglect to have their children baptized. Were I an unbeliever, I would be disposed to say:

He tells me that my unbaptized child will be saved, and that is all I want. I ask not what he says of Infant Depravity, and Infant Regeneration and Infant Baptism: he may adduce never so many passages of Scripture in favor of these doctrines, and be never so logical in stating and explaining, and never so eloquent in defending them; if in the end he only assures me that my child will be saved, I am satisfied. By giving me this assurance, he tells me that his *baptized* child is no better than mine, and mine is no worse than his: that his has gained nothing, and mine lost nothing. For *both are saved*. Why therefore baptize it? Please prove the necessity of Infant Baptism, after admitting the certain salvation of the unbaptized.

In this connexion I most respectfully remind the esteemed author of his own language. In speaking of the neglect of Infant Baptism, he says: "It is because infants are thought to be somehow released from innate sin and sure of salvation, even independently of the Gospel plan of salvation, that it is held to be practically unimportant, or at least unessential, whether they be baptized or not." p. 15. Does he not himself think they are "*somehow released from innate sin and sure of salvation*," by allowing their salvation without baptism? Does he not also hold it "to be *practically* unimportant, or at least *unessential*, whether they be baptized or not?" Perhaps, however, he may answer, not "independently of the Gospel plan of salvation." But pray what is this Gospel plan of salvation? Undoubtedly the redemption through the Lord Jesus Christ. The atonement, however, by itself as long as it remains without and beyond man, will not save him: it must pass over to him, to deliver him from the law of sin and death, and impart to him a new principle of life and immortality. He admits this in the following words: "We do know, likewise, that in order to be saved by Jesus Christ, they must be found in Christ, be quickened in their souls by Him and have His atonement really applied to them." p. 42. But how "applied?" The power of the Holy Ghost is truly necessary: but must not also means

be used, not only in the case of the adult, but even in the case of little children? The redeemed are miracles of grace, saved in a mysterious way, but not without means. Just as Christ used means in performing miracles—clay to open the eyes of the blind, bread and fishes to feed the hungry, and water to make wine,—so he also uses means, *even his own*, in making us participants in the blessings of his atonement. Hence he appointed the Sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Supper, and so solemnly enjoined their use. Are they not means to be used in carrying out that plan?

In all covenants with man something must be done on his part. Thus, for instance, all the members of the human race were included potentially in "the first covenant made with Adam in Paradise." And yet that inclusion by itself was not sufficient: there was to be obedience or disobedience. Adam disobeyed, and that disobedience of their federal head was the means of bringing death upon the whole race. Rom. 5: 12. So also in the Abrahamic covenant. All the children of the Jews were included in it, and entitled to all the temporal and spiritual blessings of Judaism. And yet they did not receive these blessings, unless they were circumcised. Circumcision was the divinely appointed means of receiving them into the covenant and of preparing them to enjoy its advantages. They had not only a *right* to be circumcised, but the circumcision was the means or the condition upon the fulfillment of which life itself as well as all the blessings of Judaism were suspended. The uncircumcised were excluded from the covenant and disinherited. All male children were accordingly to be circumcised: and in case a child, though included in the covenant and entitled to its blessings, was not circumcised, it was not allowed to inherit the blessings of God's people. For the Lord told Abraham: "That soul shall be cut off." In their case the promise did not "hold unconditionally good." If "denied the sacrament by the negligence or unbelief of parents," were they not excluded from the covenant, disinherited and put to death? Was

it not "thus in the power of a skeptical father or mother," to prevent them from enjoying life, together with all the advantages of the people of God? Our author tells us: "Indeed if they neglected it they should be condignly punished, (I say they, the negligent parents, not the unoffending children) by being at once deprived of those children, of whom they thus proved themselves so unworthy." p. 166. He thus admits in terms sufficiently plain the necessity of circumcision as a condition of enjoying the privileges of Judaism. Such negligent parents, it is true, were punished by sustaining the loss of their children: but the punishment itself fell most directly and heavily upon the children themselves. For they lost far more than the parents did. Their loss was life itself, together with the enjoyment of the temporal and spiritual blessings of Judaism. Gen. xvii: 14. Were not their exclusion, dispossession and temporal death significant? Did they not point to something similar beyond that which was seen and temporal? Did not the covenant look to a spiritual and eternal inheritance, of which Canaan was but a type? It will be remembered that these uncircumcised children were thus excluded, disinherited and put to death, according to a divine command. Their death was not accidental, nor even the result of some malignant disease, which had baffled the physician's skill, but it was a punishment inflicted by a judicial sentence. If unworthy of a temporal life and a residence in Canaan, why worthy of a spiritual life and a home in heaven? If not fit to be with the Jews in the temple at Jerusalem, why fit to be in the upper Sanctuary? Could it be said of them in that popular, but questionable language, "early lost to be early saved?" If they were "unoffending," the punishment seems to have been unjust. They had no voice in deciding the question of their circumcision, just like the sons and daughters of Adam were not consulted in regard to the propriety of eating the forbidden fruit in the garden, yet that did not screen them from suffering the penalty. The descendants of Adam might just as well be called "unoffending:" and yet of

them it must be said individually, what is said of the uncircumcised male child of the Jews, "he hath broken my covenant."

Now we are told: "Baptism was substituted in the place of circumcision." p. 168. Very true. See also Heidelberg Catechism, Quest. 74. Our author declares, "the fact itself is undeniable. St. Paul affirms it in Colossians 2: 11, 12." What is the inference? If the disobedience of Adam was necessary to bring death upon his descendants, and if circumcision was necessary in the Abrahamic covenant to secure the blessings of Judaism, is not Baptism in like manner necessary to secure the blessings of the New and Better Covenant? If indeed, "This law of the Old dispensation was transferred to the New dispensation," p. 168, are not now the unbaptized like the uncircumcised, also excluded and disinherited? If simply "the outward form of the sacrament was changed," it seems to me, that then Baptism is equally necessary in the New dispensation. The attentive reader feels that our author's argument of circumcision proves too much for him. For in speaking of the circumcision of the Gentile proselytes, *adults and children*, he says: "This was made the *invariable condition* of their being admitted to that great typical feast of the Jews, which so preëminently foreshadowed the spiritual blessings of the Better Covenant." p. 167. It accordingly establishes not only the "*right*" to be baptized, but also the necessity. And this is more than he wants—more than is consistent with his doctrine of Infant Salvation. If circumcision was "*the invariable condition*," is not Baptism also "*the invariable condition*," because of its substitution? With such examples of the conditions of the covenant before me, and his admission of the necessity of circumcision, I cannot admit the conclusion that all children will certainly be saved, whether baptized or not.

In conclusion, I most respectfully quote the author's statement of the benefits of Infant Baptism as a refutation of his doctrine of general Infant Salvation. Those benefits are as follows, viz:

1. *In Baptism the child receives, through the promised mercy of God in Jesus Christ, immediate release from the penalty of original sin by a formal covenant transaction.*" p. 177.

2. The second benefit secured, is the official removal, from the child properly baptized, of the stain or pollution of native depravity." p. 177, 178.

3. The third benefit, is the present renewal of the nature of the child in Christ Jesus by the Holy Ghost." p. 179.

4. The last direct benefit which he specifies, is that God graciously receives such children into special covenant relationship with Himself through Jesus Christ, makes them the objects of His peculiar care, mercifully promises to bestow upon them such spiritual blessings as will promote the growth of grace granted at their baptism." p. 180, 181.

It will be seen that he does not hesitate to say in plain terms what he regards as the benefits of Infant Baptism, and I have no disposition to quarrel with him in regard to this point, yea I am rather pleased that he represents Baptism as a means of grace, and therefore rises above many modern authors who look upon it as an empty form. If now, however, in *Baptism the child receives immediate release from the penalty of original sin—if Baptism is the official removal of the stain of native depravity—if it is the present renewal of the nature of the child in Christ Jesus by the Holy Ghost*, and if *grace was granted to it at its baptism*, what becomes now of the unbaptized children? If these are the benefits of Baptism, then the unbaptized cannot possess them, or are they communicated in some other way? And yet we are assured they are saved. Can they be saved without these benefits—without a release from the penalty of original sin, without the official removal of the stain of native depravity, without the present renewal of their nature in Christ Jesus, and without grace being granted unto them? To allow the certain salvation of the unbaptized is virtually to say that those benefits are after all of little or no account so far as their ultimate happiness is concerned. It is saying to the baptized, You have gained nothing in the end; and to the unbaptized, You have lost nothing. You

are both saved. If, therefore, the above mentioned benefits are really of any account in securing the salvation of the baptized, they are to that extent a refutation of the doctrine of general Infant Salvation.

Taking all these things together,—“keeping in view the Saviour's treatment of little children, and His declaration concerning them,”—remembering that all covenants have certain conditions, upon the fulfilment of which their blessings are suspended,—adding to these the argument of St. Paul in Romans 6 : 3-5, and the above described benefits of Infant Baptism,—let me ask, has the respected author established the doctrine, that all little children dying in infancy will certainly be saved, whether baptized or not?

I have examined this little volume with much interest, and I trust also with profit: but failing to establish this doctrine, it has served only to strengthen the view which I held before. Had the author limited himself to the salvation of baptized children, the most of his arguments would be relevant and forcible, and his book would be calculated to do much good: but by allowing himself to include all children, and thus even the unbaptized, he has involved himself in inconsistency and neutralized some of his forcible statements. I cannot conclude without expressing my regret that I have found it necessary to differ with a beloved brother in the ministry on such an interesting and important subject as Infant Salvation.

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