

A Review of the Question.

—BY—

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GEORGE AUGUSTUS LOFTON, D.D.,

*Author of Character Sketches, Harp of Life, Bible Thoughts
and Themes, Etc.*

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BEING A REVIEW

*of Dr. William H. Whitsitt's "Question in Baptist History,"
Including the Reviews of*

ALBERT H. NEWMAN, D.D., LL.D.,

*Author of History of the Baptist Churches of the United States.
Prof. Church History, McMaster University, Toronto.*

HENRY C. VEDDER,

*Author of Dawn of Christianity, Short History of the Baptists.
Prof. Church History, Crozer Theological Seminary,
Chester, Pa.*

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PREFACE.

The author of this volume considers that the "Question in Baptist History," as propounded and discussed by Dr. Whitsitt, has been settled already by the historical statements and arguments of Dr. Whitsitt himself, and of such other experts in Church history as Newman, Vedder, and others who agree with him. The position of Dr. Whitsitt, however, has been hotly controverted by a number of critics on the other side of the question, of more or less historic information; and by a large number of Baptists opposed to him, the authority of his critics has been accepted without little, if any, investigation of his position. The general tendency among our Baptist brethren would naturally be against Dr. Whitsitt's position; and almost any utterance against him on the other side of the question would not only be acceptable but hailed with joy by thousands who have not read his book, and who really know nothing of the question at issue. The tendency with the majority of us is not to examine a question the issue of which is contrary to our preferences, predilections, or preconceived opinions; and often, if not always, the man who is in advance of his brethren in the revelation of unwelcome truths has to wait for the world to overtake him, and to suffer in the meantime. This is certainly true in the case of Dr. Whitsitt.

The object of this volume is to confirm and strengthen what Dr. Whitsitt has already established; and the author has not only tried to follow faithfully the whole of Baptist history bearing upon the subject, but he is satisfied that he has found the key to the solution of the question at issue in the chapter from Crosby which constitutes a part of this volume, and which, with Evans, Gould, and others, confirms the Jessey Records and the Kiffin and other manuscripts in fixing the year 1641, A. D., as the date in which

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the English Baptists restored immersion as "believers' baptism," as discovered and maintained by Dr. Whitsitt. The "accredited Baptist historians," such as Crosby, Evans, Newman, Vedder, Burrage, Gould and others are all with Dr. Whitsitt on the question at issue.

In addition to what the author has written for this volume he has, by permission, added the several articles of Prof. Albert H. Newman, written for the *Christian Index*, including a Review of Dr. Jno. T. Christian's book entitled: "Did they Dip?" also the article by Prof. Henry C. Vedder, written for the *Examiner*, all of them a discussion of the "Whitsitt Contention." These articles which are included as chapters in this volume, emanate from the pens of expert authors of Church history; and while in some minor details they disagree with Dr. Whitsitt, they agree with him as to his main position. It may be proper to say that the chapters of this volume from the pen of the writer, were partially published in the *Baptist & Reflector*; but they have been carefully revised and enlarged so as to cover a more extended and thorough study of the subject. The author does not claim to be an expert in ecclesiastical history, but he thinks that he has read sufficiently to be convinced that Dr. Whitsitt is right in his position, and he gives this volume to the public as a conscientious production of his studies, and of the studies of others better qualified to judge of the contention. His only desire is to know the truth; and one great object of this work is to help relieve the Baptists of the illusive and useless error of an historical fiction—the traditional vagary of baptismal or church succession, after the manner of the Romanists and the Episcopalians. His great hope is that God will establish the Baptists upon the Bible and the Bible only as the rule of faith and practice among Christians, irrespective of traditionalism.

I call special attention to the chapter from Crosby, in the body of this volume, and to the Bampfield Document at the close. With a series of certified copies of the Jessey Church and other Records of the 17th century, I received this document too late to incorporate it in the Crosby argument. It belongs to the collection of 1710.

G. A. L.

Nashville, Tenn., January 25, 1897.

INTRODUCTION.

BY W. POPE YEAMAN, S.T.D.,
President Grand River College, Gallatin, Mo.

Bating the exhibitions of human infirmity almost always incident to controversy, the late contributions to Baptist literature incited by the "Whitsitt Question" may serve an excellent end. It will be an advance step and an effective factor in the forces of denominational progress when we shall have planted ourselves on the "Impregnable Rock"—God's Word—and shall have learned that uninspired history and tradition sustain no legitimate relation to correct methods of Biblical interpretation. If the New Testament teaches that immersion is that rite commonly called baptism, then the controversy should end—and by law of theological thought and the inspiration of faith it does end there. The credentials of a New Testament church are to be sought for not in the records of post apostolic institutions sacred or secular, but in fidelity to ultimate authority and conformity to original pattern. A church organized to-day on the basis of New Testament teaching would be a New Testament church if none other like it had existed since the first apostolic church.

If church title papers are to be attested by an unbroken baptismal succession from the days of the Saviour down through the centuries, then it may be seriously questioned that any of Dr. Whitsitt's critics can establish claim to church membership. If the present controversy leads the minds of brethren away from "mint and dill and cumin" to "the weightier things of the law" then may we be thankful that it was instigated.

Dr. Whitsitt's contention in no wise affects the main question in the time-worn baptismal controversy. The gist of the case as presented by the pro and con contentions is a question of fact. First, was immersion practiced as a Christian rite in England prior to the year 1641? Second, was Roger Williams immersed? The testimony offered in evidence is all necessarily historical. The uncertainty of any unofficial record, as is almost all uninspired history, is notorious; this is especially true of church and convention records written by unlettered and inexperienced men. It is well-known that church records in this day of letters are provokingly vexatious to the student of contemporaneous church history.

All that can be done by the careful and conscientious student of old and unofficial records and obscure incidental annals is to deliberately weigh probabilities. And in doing this he must consider not only what was written, but also the circumstances and conditions under which it was written. These facts of testimony enter into the question of the competency of the witness and the relevancy of his testimony. When we apply this rule to the case before us it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the preponderance of probability is on the side of the Whitsitt contention. The testimony introduced by some of Dr. Whitsitt's reviewers, but omitted by him, evidently corroborates the testimony which he has introduced and greatly strengthens his cause. Limited space forbids an analytical review of that testimony in this paper. But the unbiased reader accustomed to estimating the significance of facts can—and will—do this for himself.

The only wish and aim of this brief introduction is to induce an unprejudiced judgment based on the logic of facts. Brethren should bear in mind that the question at issue is not one of certitude but of probability; and that the decision either way is not vital to the New Testament integrity of Baptist churches so far as the ordinances are concerned. It is quite proper in this view of the case to insist that a learned and useful brother and an honored and valuable institution are of far more worth to truth and righteousness

than the settlement either way of an indifferent question.

We all regret—and Dr. Whitsitt perhaps, as much as any of us—that the papers from which this controversy sprung were written just as they were. But the world is full of things to be regretted, and yet they are overruled for the good of all them that love God, and we may reasonably indulge the hope that Baptists will be a better and a more united people because of the Whitsitt controversy.

Drs. Lofton, Newman and Vedder have in their respective treatments of the subject of this volume evinced an unpartisan, unprejudiced and Christian spirit of inquiry, research and argument. The reader who cares more for truth than for partisan triumph will read the following pages with pleasure and profit.

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CHAPTER I.

THE ANABAPTISTS FROM 200 A.D., TO 1200 A.D.

BEFORE considering the "Question" at issue between Dr. Whitsitt and others, I wish to consider the general subject of Baptist history in the light now before us. According to the results of modern research from original sources it is evident that some of our notions will have to undergo modification. The iconoclast of "historic method," however strong our biases to the contrary, is knocking down some of our historic ideals. I once firmly believed that organic and unbroken Baptist church succession was susceptible of historic proof; but, for some years past, my mind has gradually undergone change, in view of the new developments originating in the more accurate and historic method of dealing with the subject of Baptist history.

It would now seem that Baptist history, since the apostolic period, has been a New Testament evolution, through the chaos of Romanism—not, however, from Romanism itself. I believe in the doctrine of spontaneous generation, so far as the development of Baptists is concerned, wherever the seeds of the gospel are sown. Ob-

literate Christianity from the face of the earth; but if God's word and Spirit abide in the soil of the human race Baptists will spring up. It may be laid down as an axiom that Baptists and Baptist churches are as inherent in the gospel as a chicken is in a hen's egg; and in many instances and places this axiom, as history shows, has proven a self-evident proposition. But while this is a fact in particular, it is also generally true that Baptist progress and history are the outcome of long planted seed, sometimes latent, sown in the soil of the centuries which preceded the Reformation, and more fully developed after that period, according to more favorable conditions. The continuity of the gospel and of God's people through every age is indubitable; and Christ has never been without witnesses; but, so far as historic proof is concerned, the orderly and organized form of the Church and Christianity are not, according to the gospel pattern, apparent through the dim mazes of those centuries which were dominated by Romanism and its subsequent modifications. The Jewish temple and its service, God's organized government of Israel, were destroyed and God's people were carried away into captivity for seventy years; but a small remnant returned, restored the temple and its service, and re-established the theocracy of Israel. What was true of the type seems to have proven true of the

antitype. Objectively the gates of hell seemed to prevail against the Church of Christ for centuries; but subjectively God has always had the "seven thousand" who would not bow the knee to Baal, even where the organic embodiment of His kingdom was for a time usurped or destroyed. Ultimate Baptist continuity, therefore, is an historical fact.

It is easy enough to see that Baptist churches, as now constituted and governed, are identical with apostolic and post-apostolic churches, including the first and second centuries; but midway the second century the Anti-Christ, which had already begun to work in the days of the apostles, began to take definite shape (1) in the ascendancy of the congregational bishop over the inferior clergy and the laity, (2) in the doctrine of baptismal or ritualistic regeneration, and (3) in the invention of infant baptism to fit the latter and support the former innovation. Out of these usurpations grew diocesan episcopacy, the Romish papacy, the union of Church and State, and all the concomitant heresies and evils of Romanism which ultimately dominated the world with its superstitions and its despotism. The apostolic churches themselves lost their succession, as such, and were swallowed up in the general apostasy; and while there were isolated churches in various countries which, for a period, survived the wreck, it seems

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that almost every vestige of apostolic ecclesiasticism was either absorbed by innovation, or driven into obscurity or final extermination.

For the 1,000 years, from the second to the twelfth century, there developed numerous leaders and sects who organized and protested against the heresies and corruptions of Rome. Such were the Manichæans, Montanists, Novatians, Donatists, Paulicians, Paterines, Cathari, Albigenses and others. Through all these sects, in some of them more and in others less, there were traces of Baptist principles and polity; but much of their doctrine and practice would now be recognized by Baptists as disorderly and unorthodox. In the main, these sects held to the doctrine of believers' baptism as opposed to infant baptism; they opposed the union of Church and State, and they maintained the principle of a converted and pure church membership. The Baptist idea, if not the Baptist order, may be said to be traceable through the errors and vagaries of these sects, some of which had a more or less blended existence and had a weakened and shattered continuance up to and beyond the twelfth century. During this period these sects were immersionists; but immersion was the general rule then in the Church of Rome; and it was then, as now, the only form of baptism in the Greek Church.

One has only to consult ecclesiastical history,

with but little reference to original sources, to discover the many respects in which identity between these sects and the Baptists is wanting; and it is misleading to claim, without discrimination, an orderly and unbroken succession of Baptist churches through these sects. They were in revolt against Rome; they held to some cardinal Baptist principles and practices; they maintained, as a rule, church purity and independence; they rebaptized those who came to them from the Latin and the Greek Churches; they were Anabaptists; but, as already intimated, their errors and irregularities would exclude them from fellowship with the Baptist churches of to-day.

For instance, the Manichæans, whom Orchard and others claim as Anabaptists, held to the heresy of a dual theology; and in that same heresy the Paulicians, Cathari and Albigenses, however variant otherwise in teaching, were identical. The Paulicians, the most powerful and long-lived of all the earlier sects, evidently regarded baptism and the Lord's Supper as not of perpetual obligation in the churches, after the spiritual theory of the Quakers; and they rejected the Old Testament and part of the New as at variance with their notion of a Pauline creed. More than this, they waged the bloodiest and most revengeful wars when they were able to retaliate upon their enemies.

X The Novatians and Donatists were both schisms from the Church of Rome, were episcopal in government, and were never fundamentally distinguished from the doctrine and polity of Rome. Nevertheless, they were Anabaptists in that they rebaptized all who came to them from Rome, held to the doctrine of a converted and pure church membership, and doubtless rejected infant baptism. The Montanists (150 A.D.), the first to revolt from the incipient corruptions of the Church, were a body of ascetic fanatics who claimed the gift of tongues and of prophecy and of inspiration as continuous in the Church; who held the Scriptures as of inferior authority where they did not concur with their prophetic utterances. They could boast of a Tertullian and others of distinction, and they were evidently the first opposers of the hierarchy, infant baptism and of impurity in the churches. So of other sects, claimed as Baptists, too numerous here to mention.

Now these sects are entitled to all honor for their moral integrity, their manly protest against Romanism, their martyr defense of principles. The world is not worthy of them. They were Anabaptists; and the Baptists of this day are proud to claim kin with them in their spirit and character, and in some of the essential elements which go to make up our doctrine and polity. They planted the seeds in

the soil of the early centuries which, though long latent or hindered in development, were to come up at last in the production of a denomination of churches, called Baptists, whose principles and practices, long evolved and made permanent by sufferings and conflicts, are a restoration of New Testament doctrine and polity. It took all the ages to develop, by degrees, the Baptist denomination; and our evolution out from under the chaos of Romanism is the masterpiece of history. We are not a reformation, but a gradual development; and ever since we have taken the name Baptist and entered the open field of liberty and evangelization, we have continued to evolve in the process of perfection. Like the anaconda, we have shed off much of our past Arminianism here and Antinomianism there, our anti-missionism, foot washing, and other practices; and we are beginning to shed again our traditionalism and our mossbackism in methods of work.

Some remains of past errors and irregularities still cling to us; and we are not yet completely organized and in keeping with the apostolic churches, which had a plurality of elders, as well as of deacons, in them, and which knew nothing of once-a-month preaching without a single elder in their membership, and with only a missionary supply for their pulpit and pastorate. Open communionism, which began with

some of the early English Baptists, still clings in the same quarter of its origin, to the Baptist name; and this is not up to old-time Anabaptism. Progress, however, is what the word Baptist implies; and our evolution will continue the battles for Scriptural faith and practice until we shall reach the acme of ecclesiastical perfection. We must abandon traditionalism and hardshellism, or mossbackism, which defined, means that extreme conservatism, which thinks the way you do a thing as important as the reason for doing it. Let us defend our principles and doctrines according to the Scriptures, which are inflexible. So of the fixed practices of the gospel; but in methods of work and cooperation, guided by the Spirit and principles of the New Testament, let Baptists organize and educate and launch out into the conquest of the world for Christ.



CHAPTER II.

THE ANABAPTISTS FROM 1200 A. D., TO 1500 A. D.

BEFORE reaching the English period around which the Whitsitt contention chiefly centers, I desire to add another chapter which covers the period of Anabaptism from the 12th to the 16th century, onward.

About the beginning of the 12th century (1100 A. D.) Baptist history began to evolve with a more definite shape under the rise and revolt of such men as Peter de Bruys and the Petrobrusians. The blended and scattered remains of the preceding sects, heretofore mentioned, still existed in almost every country of Europe; and while it is hard to discover the fact, yet it may be true that the succeeding sects which sprang up in the 12th century and onward had some origin in the soil of preceding sects which had planted Anabaptist seed in every land of Christendom. Various forms of the Cathari, including the Albigenses, still remained in France, Italy and other countries, and with all their Baptistic traces and anti-Baptistic errors they must have laid and left some foundation upon which the Petrobrusians built far more perfect-

ly. Peter de Bruys (1104-1126), a converted priest, resolved upon the restoration of gospel Christianity, and the Petrobrusians were a thoroughly anti-Catholic sect and may be set down as Baptists in their principles. They held to the Scriptures as the only rule of faith and practice among Christians, believers' baptism, a converted church membership, and with the unqualified exclusion of infant baptism they immersed those who were received into their communion, for immersion was still the common practice at that time.

Contemporary with Peter de Bruys and the Petrobrusians were Henry of Lausanne (1116 to 1150) and Arnold of Brescia (1130-1154), who with their followers, the Henricians and Arnoldists, may be set down as Baptists in principle, and as nearly identical with the Petrobrusians. Arnold of Brescia was the first to proclaim soul liberty as a distinct doctrine; and like Peter and Henry he and his followers were condemned and destroyed for rejecting infant baptism, for baptism only to believers and for holding the doctrine of a pure and spiritual church as opposed to the corrupt and despotic hierarchy and sacerdotalism of Rome. They were essentially Baptists.

Another and a greater revolt from Rome in the 12th century was that of Peter Waldo (1150-1217); and the Waldenses, who were his

followers, made the profoundest and most permanent impression upon the religious world of any of the sects preceding the Reformation period. Upon the death of their founder the Waldenses were scattered over the whole of Europe; and they grew in number and prospered in power in spite of persecution. They grew up on the foundation chiefly, of the Petrobrusians; and at first they may be said to have been identical with them in teaching and practice. Professor Newman says that "the early Waldenses (1178 onward) were believers in transubstantiation, baptismal regeneration and infant baptism," and that "under the influence of some evangelical parties, most or all of them came to reject transubstantiation and consubstantiation alike, and some of them, probably a minority, became anti-Pedobaptists." Prof. Vedder, however, says that "the balance of evidence is in favor of the conclusion that the early followers of Waldo taught and practiced the baptism of believers only." Here Dr. Armitage is in great perplexity as to the early Waldenses; but all writers agree that before the Reformation of the 16th century the Waldenses in their dispersion and seclusion became divided as to pedobaptism and anti-pedobaptism and had forgotten, many of them, the Baptist doctrines of their forefathers. In 1350, A. D., they held to the New Testament alone as sufficient for salva-

tion; they rejected the Romish mass and other superstitions; they claimed to be the only true church; they rebaptized all who came from Rome; they held that infant baptism was "no profit," and that the Lord's Supper was merely symbolical of the sufferings of Christ. Even in 1532, A.D., when a Pedobaptist creed was adopted by the Waldenses, through the influence of the Swiss Reformers, there was a strong minority which adhered to their ancient belief. While it is clear that the early Waldenses taught and practiced believers' baptism only, nothing is said of their manner of baptizing; and it is reasonable to suppose that they followed the custom of the times in which they existed, from 1160 to the Reformation period. No doubt the Waldenses, along with their changes and defections, at first immersed and afterwards, like Rome and Geneva, many of them made immersion and affusion a matter of indifference.

The Bohemian Brethren and the Lollards of the 14th and 15th centuries, cited by Dr. Armitage in line with Baptist history, were reformers and respectively in Germany and England originated with Chelcicky, and Wycliffe. Chelcicky made the New Testament the sole standard of faith; opposed the union of Church and State; insisted on the freedom of the will; recognized the necessity of divine grace in regen-

eration; put faith before baptism; and yet he left it to the conscience of the parent as to the baptism of infants. The Bohemian Brethren, however, like the later Waldenses, were divided as to infant baptism, and there is no decisive evidence that the Lollards of England under the great evangelical movement of Wycliffe rejected infant baptism. It is almost certain that Wycliffe himself never abandoned infant baptism. Like other sects, however, they promoted some of our great Baptist principles prior to the Reformation, and they laid the foundation, with those before them, for the great Anabaptist movement of the 16th century. This brings us to note briefly:

1. The Swiss Anabaptists (1523-1530), who evidently existed before the Reformation and took their doctrines from their Waldensian ancestors. At the Reformation their churches were already organized, regular in polity, strict in discipline, sound in faith, and, according to the Schleithem Confession of 1527, they taught believers' baptism, rejected infant baptism, were "close communionists," maintained the spiritual theory of the Church, and denied the right of the magistrate to interfere in matters of faith. The confession seems to imply immersion, as Hubmeyer seemed to teach it in his catechism; but whether or not, immersion was practiced for a time at St. Gall, in the River Sit-

ter and in other waters of Switzerland about the year 1525. Prof. Newman says, however, that the common practice of the Swiss, as of the Austrian, Moravian and Dutch Anabaptists, was affusion. Grebel affused Blaurock, out of a "dipper," but afterwards immersed Ulimann in the Rhine. Pouring and sprinkling were then general in Western Europe; but there were some among the Anabaptists who immersed in spite of the innovation which had generally affected their practice as well as the practice of the Romanists and the Reformers.

2. The German Anabaptists, though they appear at Zwickau, 1521, had their origin far back of this period according to Dr. Kellar, who regards Anabaptism as at the foundation of the Reformation of the 16th century. With the exception of the Zwickau prophets and the fanatics who precipitated the Munster insurrection, 1534, the German Anabaptists were identical with the Swiss Anabaptists, and they were largely organized and developed under the influence of the Swiss leaders and their followers who fled from the destruction of Zwingle to be swallowed up in the persecutions of Luther. The creed of the German and Swiss Anabaptists was substantially the same, bating the Munster fanaticism and the mystic and chiliastic views of Hoffman and others; and while immersion was practiced at Augsburg, Strasburg,

and perhaps some other places, it is probable that affusion was then common among the German Anabaptists. The only sect of Anabaptists who practiced immersion exclusively was the Unitarian or Antitrinitarian Anabaptists of Poland at this period. With the exception of their Socinian heresy, the creed and practice of this sect were more in accord with the Baptists of to-day than the creed and practice of any other Anabaptist party of the Reformation period. (See Confession of Faith, Mosheim, Vol. III., pp. 233-234.)

3. The Dutch Anabaptists. After the fall of the Munster Kingdom, and when persecution threatened the destruction of the German Anabaptists, who disappeared from history fifty years afterwards, the Anabaptists of Holland (1537) were united under Menno; and this union resulted in the establishment of the sect ever since called Mennonites. They adopted the principles and practices of the Waldenses, with a clearer view of believers' baptism; but like other Anabaptists of the 16th century they regarded affusion as "sufficient" baptism. Prof. Vedder says that "while this is true of the bulk of Mennonites, some of them practiced immersion, and probably have practiced it from the first;" but Prof. Muller and de Hoop Scheffer of Amsterdam, are positive in denying that the Mennonites ever immersed. Robinson in his "History

of Baptism” (p. 547) says that the “Dutch Baptists rejected infant baptism and practiced believers’ baptism, but that they administered baptism by *pouring*.” The Mennonites, like most of the Anabaptists of the 16th century, were Arminian in theology; and toward the close of the 16th century they were deeply tainted with Socinianism, after the manner of the Polish and Italian Anabaptists. Pelagianism is the connecting link between Socinianism and Arminianism; and where Arminianism has a deep hold it is but a short step to Socinianism through the kindred link of Pelagianism.

The Collegiants of Holland were immersionists, but they were founded in 1619, and did not belong to the Anabaptist movement of the 16th century. They had no creed, no official ministry, communed only twice a year, and their assemblies were called colleges instead of churches. It was from this peculiar sect that the Particular Baptist churches of England, as we shall see, received immersion in 1641, and this was the only sect among the Dutch Baptists, at the time, who practiced immersion for believers’ baptism.

And now briefly, in conclusion, I will simply draw a summary of the distinctive principles which, up to this period, were held in common by the Anabaptist sects, as follows:

1. They agreed in restoring primitive Chris-

tianity by laying stress upon the practical teachings of Christ rather than the doctrinal creeds of the Romanists and Reformers, differing in some instances as to the human nature of Christ himself.

2. They agreed upon believers' baptism and the rejection of infant baptism.

3. They agreed upon a spiritual or converted church membership.

4. They agreed upon the separation of Church and State and the liberty of conscience.

5. They differed somewhat in church polity, but were generally independent, though sometimes hierarchical.

6. They varied according to the times and conditions with reference to the form of baptism.

7. They differed in doctrine; some varying from the more orthodox beliefs to Chiliasm, Mysticism, Unitarianism, Universalism, Arminianism and even, as the Italian Anabaptists, to grosser errors



CHAPTER III.

THE ANABAPTISTS OF ENGLAND.

WE are now brought to the next great step in Baptist evolution from under the chaos of Romanism, culminating in the organization of the English Baptist churches in the first half of the 17th century.

One of the questions suggested by Dr. Whittitt was this: What influence did the Anabaptists have upon this more distinct and clear-cut Baptist movement? So far as history shows, whatever the remote or indirect influence of Anabaptism in shaping the movement, it had but little or no direct or immediate connection with the organization and establishment of the General and Particular Baptist churches of England.

There is scarcely no period in English history, since the introduction of Christianity upon the island of Great Britain, in which there was not a trace of Baptist principles and influence. Up to the time of Austin's invasion, A.D. 596, it has been maintained that the ancient British Christians, especially the Welsh, were Baptists. Evans, one of the latest writers upon the his-

tory of early English Baptists, after a thorough investigation of the subject, doubts the assumption as a fact. It is not absolutely certain, according to Wall, Baxter, Murdock, and others that they did not practice infant baptism; but Evans, at least, demonstrates its improbability. Though independent of Rome, they seem to have been variant in doctrine, ceremonies and modes of worship; and as they kept Easter, Lent and other Catholic forms, though not in conformity with the customs of Rome, it would seem that their polity was Episcopal, after the manner of the early centuries. It was evidently conformity with Rome which Austin demanded with regard to Easter being kept "*at the due time,*" and baptism to be administered as a regenerating rite, "according to the custom of the Holy Roman Catholic Church;" and it was this uniformity which the Welsh resisted. There is no controversy about the mode of baptism. That was immersion, and trine immersion at that—universally practiced at that time—and so practiced by the Anglo-Saxon church, which was established upon the ruins of the ancient British churches. But for Fabian's addition to Bede's account of Austin's demand—namely, "*that ye give Christendom to children*"—the question as to whether or not these ancient British Christians practiced infant baptism would not be involved. Wall, Baxter and oth-

ers maintain that, in this particular, as in Easter and baptism itself, Austin simply demanded uniformity with the Roman manner of baptizing children, with white garments, milk and honey, etc. Against this view Ivimy, D'Anvers, Davye and others have contended that the demand referred exclusively to the baptism of children without reference to uniformity with the Roman custom. According to the evidence furnished by Bede (*Eccles. Hist. Lib. II., cap. 2*) the matter cannot be positively determined; and hence we can only conclude that it is probable that the ancient Britons did not practice infant baptism. It is probable also that they did not, because at this time infant baptism had not yet everywhere superseded believers' baptism, as it did in the succeeding centuries. In many elements the ancient British churches were strongly Baptist; but it is not certain that they were altogether Baptist.

The first traces of Baptist elements in England, after the establishment of the Anglo-Saxon church in 600 A.D., are discovered in the reign of Henry II., 1160, when thirty Hollanders were driven to extinction by persecution for opposing the dogmas of Rome, including both baptism and the Eucharist, and of course infant baptism. They were evidently Paulicians, always claimed as Baptists; but who, like the Friends, never regarded baptism and the Lord's

Supper as of perpetual obligation in the churches, as shown heretofore. Therefore they were anti-Pedobaptists, who did not baptize at all; but they held otherwise to the essential doctrines of the Baptists with reference to the authority of the Scriptures, the independence and purity of the churches and to the doctrine of soul liberty. (See Evans' *Early English Baptists*, Vol. I. pp. 10, 11.) This was the first real Anabaptist revolt, from Rome, in England.

Crosby does not begin what he regards as Baptist history in England until the time of Edward III., 1371 A.D. He commences with Wycliffe and his followers, whom he treats as Baptists in opposition to the dogmas of Rome and opposed to infant baptism. Evans makes the same claim for his followers, including the Lollards; but he says that there is no document which authorizes the conclusion that the great reformer himself rejected infant baptism. In a sermon on baptism Wycliffe held that it was immaterial whether infants were "dipped once or thrice, or water be poured upon their heads;" and he thus made the first concession, according to Dr. Whitsitt, in England to sprinkling or pouring for baptism. It is scarcely possible that the Wycliffites or Lollards advanced beyond their leader; and from what I can gather from Fox, Crosby and others, it seems to be a

question as to whether or not the Lollards only repudiated the sacramental or Romish idea of infant baptism, just as they did of baptism itself, and so seemed to treat the ordinance as a matter of indifference as charged by their enemies. Nothing is said distinctively as to the mode of baptism; but if they followed Wycliffe, their great leader, the mode must have been a matter of indifference long before the advent of the 16th century. The English nation became widely affected with the principles of the Lollards by the end of the 14th century; but in 1400 A.D., during the reign of Henry IV., both Church and State combined to crush out the Lollards. Sawtry, the first martyr burned in England, was committed to the stake. Cobham and others followed a like fate. By 1420 the Lollards were driven from the open field; and although still influential in secret for many years, they were hunted and persecuted unto death in considerable numbers, and were practically extinct by the 16th century. A strong and vigorous evangelical party, they were the forerunners of the Reformation in England. They were Baptists in many essential points. They were accused of Anabaptism and defended from the charge; but it has been asserted by such scholars as Vedder, Newman, Whitsitt and others, after most accurate research from original sources, that there was no Anabaptist movement

in England prior to the Reformation times of the 16th century.

Both Crosby and Evans really start at the reign of Henry VIII., 1511 A.D., for the history of the Anabaptists of England, where a "clearer and steadier light is thrown upon the subject," and where "their principles about baptism were found more fairly stated." During the reigns of Edward VI., Mary, Elizabeth, down to the reign of James I., 1602 A.D., we trace the history of a people stigmatized as Anabaptists, persecuted in every conceivable way—by imprisonment, banishment and death—for holding doctrines essentially Baptist and intensely anti-Pedobaptistic. A few of them were burned at the stake in the reign of Henry VIII.; two were burned by Edward VI.; Queen Mary, who burned every class of nonconformists, burned ten Anabaptists in the year 1555, and others at different times and places; Queen Elizabeth burned only two; James I. burned two and otherwise cruelly persecuted them.

The Anabaptists of England during the 16th century were foreigners, with but little exception, who fled from Holland to escape persecution, only to be persecuted and driven back from England with merciless cruelty at the hands of Papist and Protestant alike. Thomas Fuller makes 1538 as the date in which the name Anabaptist appears first in the Chronicles

of England in the reign of Henry VIII.; and referring to these Dutch Anabaptists of that period, he alliteratively describes them, "for the main," as "Donatists new dipt," without intending, perhaps, to declare their mode of baptism so much as to identify them with an ancient sect which, while it held to believers' immersion and opposed to infant baptism, still retained the church polity of Rome from which it revolted. Fox is cited as saying in 1563 that "there were *some* Anabaptists at that time in England, who came over from Germany. Of these there were two sects: The first only objected to the baptizing of children, and to the manner of it, by sprinkling instead of dipping." The statement is found in Fox's Book of Martyrs, *Alden Edition*, page 338; also in *Worthington's Edition*, page 338.

It has never been traced to the original Fox's Book of Martyrs, which is otherwise known as the Acts and Monuments of the Christian Church, London, 1563. Until it shall be traced to the original, it cannot claim the authority of Fox. The Alden and Worthington editions are held to be a more or less irresponsible compilation.

Again, John Penry, of Wales, 1586, is cited as an Anabaptist preacher by Thomas as possibly the first who preached believers' baptism openly and publicly after the Reformation. Thomas

says: "I am strongly inclined to think that he was the first that administered the ordinance, by immersion upon a profession of faith, in and about Olchon." The truth is that John Penry was one of the "*martyrs of early Congregationalism*;" and that he should be claimed as an Anabaptist is a deep reproach to Baptist learning. The men who make such an assertion thereby proclaim their incompetency to speak on the topic of Baptist History. (See Dexter: *Congregationalism as Seen in its Literature*, N. Y., 1880., pp. 246-252, wherein an account of Penry is fully given.) Moreover, in the year 1551, William Turner is cited as calling the Anabaptists "*Catabaptists*;" and by an elaborate technical display of lexicographical and other forms of definition, it is declared that *Catabaptist* means a dipper or immersionist. I think it has now been decided by the best scholarship in historical research that the word means one who is opposed to baptism—that is, one who despised and contemned the baptism of the Church (not because it was administered by sprinkling, but because it was administered to infants). This is Dr. Whitsitt's later view, after a more thorough investigation of the subject. Prof. Newman also claims that, from usage, "*Catabaptist*" means "a perverter or destroyer of infant baptism." "The early anti-Pedobaptists," says he, "were with zeal against

infant baptism, declaring it to be the invention of the Pope or of the devil. From this point of view they were stigmatized as Catabaptists.” (See IV., p. 184 Prof. Newman’s articles in this volume.)

These are about the only citations having any direct reference to the baptism of the Anabaptists of the 16th century; and they are so few and far between, and so indefinite in some particulars, that it would be impossible to draw any inference as to what was their common practice. The most that can be concluded from these references, even if they were true, is the probability that “some” of them immersed and some of them did not; though all of them were opposed to infant baptism and to all the dogmas and corruptions both of the Roman and of the English Church.

There were several different classes of Anabaptists in England according to doctrinal shades of belief. They were at best Arminians, some were Pelagians, others were Socinians; and all of them held, so far as I can learn, that the humanity of Christ was not derived from the substance of Mary’s body. They rigidly adhered to the word of God as the sole rule of authority among God’s people, to the doctrine of believers’ baptism and a pure church membership; and to the lofty claim of soul liberty, for which they plead and lived and died. They

made but few converts among the English people, who adhered to other forms of dissent where they departed from Romanism, or Episcopacy; and in the celebrated letter of John Fox to Queen Elizabeth, pleading against the burning of two Anabaptists and for toleration of their so-called heresy, he said: "We have great reason to thank God on this account, that I hear of not an *Englishman* that is inclined to this madness." (Crosby, Vol. I., pp. 70, 71.)

Traces of these foreign Anabaptists continue through the reign of Elizabeth; but it has been well said by Prof. Vedder and others that "with the decline of persecution on the Continent, their numbers dwindled until they disappeared, without any permanent impression upon the English people." The great and predominating party of dissent, or nonconformity, in England at the close of Elizabeth's reign was the Puritan; and as shown by Crosby, in the earlier part of the 17th century there were probably Anabaptists mixed among them.

Private conventicles of the Dutch Anabaptists held in London are mentioned by Collier; and in 1587 the fact is said to have been admitted by Dr. Some that "there were several Anabaptistical conventicles in London and other places." Evans adds to this testimony that they were not "exclusively" Dutchmen; for, according to Dr. Some, there were "some persons of these

sentiments” who had “been bred at our universities.” It is probable that these irregular Dutch conventicles, with which a few Englishmen were connected, remained hidden in the great city of London to the close of the 16th century; and it is possible that some of these conventicles continued to exist on into the 17th century. It cannot be possible, however, that it was of such conventicles Hanserd Knollys spoke in 1645, though led by ministers “driven out of other countries”—of whom he had “experience” and with whom he “walked”—and to whose evangelicalness he testifies in highly Baptist terms, as the ministry and churches of God. He was an Episcopal clergyman until 1636, when he resigned his ministry, no doubt, from Anabaptist convictions. In the same year he was arrested by order of the High Commission Court, but escaped and reached Boston in 1638. He became a member of the Congregational church at Dover, in New Hampshire, where his Anabaptistic sentiments led to a controversy in the church in 1640; and in 1641 he removed to Long Island, and thence in the same year to New Jersey. At some period after his settlement in New Jersey, he returned to England, and in 1645 he was formally ordained pastor of a Baptist church which he had gathered in London. The “churches of God,” of which he had “experience” and with which he

“walked” in London, and of whose order and orthodoxy he speaks in reply to Dr. Bastwick, must have come under his observation and into his association somewhere between 1641 and 1645; and if so, they were evidently among the Baptist churches of the period, so-called for the first time in 1645. He could not have been associated with such churches when he was a clergyman of the Church of England up to 1636; and it is certain he could not have “walked” with them after that time until he returned from America. The very fact that Knollys declares of the ministry of those churches that they “preached publicly and from house to house,” gathering and baptizing converts in London, points to a period after the abolition of the High Commission Court in 1641. (See Cathcart’s Baptist Cyclopædia, “Knollys.” See also article by Dr. J. Newton Brown on “Hanserd Knollys,” Baptist Quarterly, 1858.)

Great antiquity is claimed for some few of the Baptist churches of England, some of them dating back into and beyond the 16th century. Prof. Vedder, who has examined closely all their records, well says: “The traditions of a remote origin cherished by a few Baptist churches rest on no documentary or archæological proofs, and are probably of comparatively recent origin. Nothing is more common than a claim of vast antiquity for institutions that are demonstrably

only a few centuries old. The sole thing that we are entitled to affirm with regard to the Baptists of England is that traces of them appear in historical documents early in the 16th century." It may be possible that Hill Cliffe, Eythorne, Bocking-Braintree, and other Baptist churches have had a descent from early Anabaptist conventicles—that all their traditions may be history—but these remote and isolated instances do not affect the question: Did the General and Particular Baptists of England dip before 1641? We may yield the whole question as to baptism in the Church of England, or in the Westminster Assembly, or as to "some" of the Anabaptists early in the 16th century—"Donatists new dipt;" but the question at issue depends upon the historical proof with which it is immediately, not remotely connected in the light of documentary evidence. To that question I shall now more fully address myself, without reference to traditional or sporadic cases of immersion here and there, and now and then, or of churches which might possibly and finally have developed from conventicles, or fragments of communities, which might have remained hidden in a few isolated localities in England through the first half of the 17th century.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ENGLISH GENERAL BAPTISTS.

WE are brought now to a consideration of the history of the first English Baptist churches on record; and to the "Question of History" propounded by Dr. Whitsitt: Did they immerse before the year 1641? It is from these churches that Baptist history in England actually begins, as Baptist history, and not from the traces and traditions of Baptist history found among the ancient British Christians before 600 A.D., or among the Paulicians 1160, or among the Lollards and Wycliffites, from 1371 to 1500, or among the Anabaptists from 1538 to 1600. We claim all that is Baptistic in persons, principles and practices in every period of British history, whether by trace or tradition, whether in fragment or element; but when it comes to the history of organized and orderly Baptist churches in England, so-called and recognized, we begin with the General and Particular Baptist churches in the first half of the 17th century.

The first General Baptist church, afterwards so-called, was founded in London, 1611, by

Thomas Helwys, John Murton and others who had been baptized in Holland by John Smyth, who had baptized himself, so to speak, by *affusion*. According to Prof. Vedder, in 1626 there were eleven, and in 1644, forty-seven General Baptist churches in England, by the admission of Dr. Featley. It is highly probable that six of the eleven in 1626, however, were mythical.

These General Baptist churches were Arminian in creed, after the doctrine of the Mennonites with whom Helwys and his party had affiliated in Holland, and with whom they continued to affiliate until 1641, according to Prof. Muller and de Hoop Scheffer; and as they retained their Mennonite theology and affiliation, so it is probable they retained Mennonite affusion for baptism, since, according to Newman, Vedder, Burrage, Whitsitt, Muller, de Hoop Scheffer and others, it is now determined that the Mennonites, who have been called the Dutch Baptists, originally sprinkled or poured for baptism, and have so continued to practice until this day. These churches were composed of English people, and not foreigners, or Dutch, who had previously constituted the Anabaptist element in England; and they seem to be the first of the Anglo-Saxon race who moved distinctly in the direction of Baptist principles and practices—although large numbers of Englishmen had already become the Puritan or Inde-

pendent party in the Kingdom. It was out of this Separatist element that the first Baptist material was drawn; and John Smyth and his party having fled to Holland from persecution, separated from the Separatists and organized a church after the Baptist idea or model. Though John Smyth, having become dissatisfied with his baptismal order, and seeking orderly succession through the Mennonites, had separated from his English church, nevertheless, Helwys and his party disregarded the succession views of Smyth and stood by the original idea of their "new baptism" and organization; and so came back to London in 1611, and established and perpetuated the first General Baptist church upon which a whole denomination was modeled and which continues to exist until this day.

That John Smyth baptized himself by affusion and so baptized his followers some of whom became the first General Baptist church of England—and that the General Baptist churches of England retained this form of believers' baptism until 1641—is clearly probable in spite of all controversy on this point. Dr. Armitage, so far as he goes, I take it, is good authority on the subject. He says: "The case of John Smyth, who baptized himself in 1608, may be conceded to have been affusion;" and if so then Helwys and the first General Baptist church were affused

for baptism. Not only so, but Dr. Armitage goes on further to say: "There is less clear and decisive evidence of the practice of immersion among the English Baptists from 1600 to 1641 than might be desired." (Armitage Bap. Hist. p. 439.) He argues that the passage quoted from Leonard Busher and other proof render it certain that they did not first practice immersion in 1641; but he says again: "It is clear that some of them practiced affusion up to that time, while some immersed, but after that date affusion seems to have ceased among them and only immersion prevailed." This concedes half the question at issue by Dr. Armitage who, like many other Baptist historians, finds Baptists where there are none; and we may conclude that in surrendering half the question in controversy he leaves ground to suspect that the other half will yield before the light of scholarly research and accurate historical method.

Ivimy, though (as Gould observes) his history abounds in "blunders and contradictions" which "rob it of all value as an independent authority," says (Vol. I. p. 139): "It must be admitted that there is some obscurity respecting the manner in which ancient immersion of adults, which *appears to have been discontinued, was restored, when after the long night of anti-Christian apostasy* persons were at *first baptized on a profession of faith.* The very circumstance,

however, of their being called Anabaptists as early as the period of the Reformation proves that they did, in the opinion of the Pedobaptists, *re-baptize*, which is not *likely* they would do by pouring and sprinkling, immersion being incontrovertibly the usual practice in the Church of England at the time." Like Armitage, Ivimy conjectures too much upon possibilities which have been swept away latterly by Robinson, Evans, Gould, Muller, de Hoop Scheffer and others, and which did not exist, a hundred years before, in the mind of Crosby who was in possession of the fresh and original materials which prove that, in the times of Kiffin, the Baptists of England restored immersion about the year 1641. The fact is that though Ivimy in the main follows Crosby, yet he does not seem to know what to do with this period of Baptist history which Crosby in his ingenuous and straightforward manner makes plain, without attempting to dodge the issue that immersion was restored in England in the times of Kiffin. In alluding to the testimony of Hutchinson, Collins and Kiffin—especially Kiffin—with reference to Blunt's introduction of immersion into England, Ivimy (p. 144) suggests the incompatibility of the statement with Baptist history and tries to show (p. 138) that Crosby confirms an error respecting the origin of Baptist churches in England; and he gets

out of his difficulty by another conjecture that while Blunt did bring immersion from Holland to certain Baptists in England, yet "if there were at the same time so many persons in it (England) who had been baptized in the same manner, *might not one* of them have been the administrator?" And all this without any proof that there were any such persons so baptized before Blunt brought immersion from Holland; and after having said that the Baptists had almost all been driven from England by persecution, and that probably a minister could not be found to immerse them, at this time.

That John Symth baptized himself and his followers, by affusion, scarcely now admits of serious controversy. Such a story could not have originated and gained currency—it could not have been so early and vigorously charged by such competent authority without foundation and without contemporary denial in the writings of Smyth himself and his friends. The fact seems conclusive, according to Evans, when Smyth and his faction, separated from Helwys and the English Church at Amsterdam on account of the contention about "succession," applied to the Mennonite Waterlanders for membership upon confession and repentance of "their error," that they had undertaken "to baptize themselves." (Evans, Vol. I. p. 209). After they had been "questioned about their doctrine

of salvation, and the ground or form (mode) of their baptism," the Waterlanders who were af-fusionists and Arminians (Evans, Vol. I. p. 208), said: "No difference was found between them and us." Robinson, (Hist. Baptism, Edition 1790, p. 547), says: "The Dutch Baptists reject infant baptism, and administer the ordinance only to such as profess faith and repentance; but they baptize by *pouring*." Helwys and his church protested against the recognition of Smyth and his party by the Mennonites; and they lay down the broad bold position that "succession" either in baptism, or ordination, or in church organization, was the "chief hold of Anti-Christ," and that it was "Jewish and ceremonial, an ordinance of the Old Testament and not of the New." (Evans, Vol. I. pp. 208-218). Dr. Evans again, (Vol. II. pp. 51, 52,) referring to the mode of baptism as practiced by the Netherland and English Baptists, who were in close affiliation with each other in 1631, deals with the subject in the spirit of history not of controversy. He quotes the editor of Robinson's works who says: "Nothing," referring to Smyth and Helwys, "appears in their controversial writings to warrant the supposition that they regarded immersion as the proper and only mode of administering the ordinance;" and he (Evans) asks: "But was it so? We cannot pronounce positively, but are bound to confess that

the probabilities are greatly in its favor." This conclusion was reached by Evans after having placed before his readers a series of documents from Prof. Muller and others from the ancient records of the Amsterdam church which leaves the subject almost without doubt that Smyth and Helwys and their followers, the General English Baptists, practiced affusion for baptism and were in close relations with their Netherland brethren of pretty much the same faith and order. For a fuller development of the question in this connection I refer the reader to the unanswerable argument of Dr. Whitsitt in his *Question in Baptist History*, pages 49-67.

I wish now to go back and view this part of the subject from the standpoint of Crosby and others who wrote at an earlier date, but who, of course, had not the documentary evidence which has been placed before the world by Evans, Muller, Scheffer and others who throw a clearer light upon the history of Smyth and Helwys and the General Baptists of England, between 1611 and 1641. Crosby cites the controversy about Smyth's self-baptism and the charge against the Anabaptists, now called Baptists, that they had begun their ecclesiastical existence through self-baptism which left them without a proper administration and without baptismal succession; and when, as Crosby says, they "*were for reviving the ancient prac-*

tice of immersion they had several difficulties thrown in their way about a proper administrator, *to begin that method of baptizing.*" "Those who rejected the baptism of infants," says he again, "at the *beginning of the Reformation in England*, had the same objection made against them," namely, that if infant baptism was nothing, when the whole world was baptized in infancy, then there was none truly baptized, and how could the Anabaptists begin believers' baptism when the first heads of that sect were not baptized themselves? So reasoned Bishop Burnet; and now Crosby says: "In like manner did they now *argue against the reviving of the practice of immersion which had for sometime been disused;*" for the Pedobaptist argument was: "If immersion be the essential form of baptism then there is now none truly baptized." Their puzzling question to the Baptists was substantially this: "How can an unbaptized (that is, an unimmersed) person among you be a proper administrator and give to others what he has not himself." Crosby says that this problem "did not a little perplex" the Baptists of England in knowing how to answer and act in the matter of beginning immersion anew without a proper administrator and of unbaptizing everybody else.

Some Baptists says Crosby, were of opinion that the first administrator should baptize him-

self and then proceed to baptize others, in order to restore immersion; others were for sending abroad to those who did immerse that the ordinance might be restored by succession and a proper administrator be secured in that way; others held that while in an extraordinary case the administrator of baptism should himself be baptized, yet whoever saw a reformation necessary, such as the present restoration of immersion, "might, from the authority of the Scriptures lawfully begin it." Crosby says: "I do not find any Englishman *among the first restorers of immersion in this latter age* accused of baptizing himself but only the said John Smyth;" and he thinks there was reason to question the truth of that also. He again, however, goes on to say: "If he were guilty of what they charge him with, 'tis no blemish on English Baptists who neither approved of any such method nor did they receive their baptism from him." Of course, Crosby, in this latter assumption is contradicted by later historians and he claims himself, not to have been in possession of Smyth's writings; but says he, (Vol. I. p. 100): "*The two other methods that I mentioned were indeed both taken by the Baptists, at the revival of immersion in England as I find acknowledged and justified in their writings.*"

He here cites, first, the sending over to the "foreign Anabaptists," some thinking this the

“best way,” and “acting accordingly,” in order to get immersion and secure a proper administrator; and he cites Hutchinson and the ancient manuscript of Kiffin in confirmation of the then accepted historical fact of sending Richard Blunt to Holland, where he received immersion at the hands of John Batte which I shall discuss hereafter. This was the second method of securing immersion and a proper administrator put into practice; but the third, or last, method is mentioned on page 103 upon which Crosby says: “The greatest number of English Baptists, and the more judicious, looked upon all this *as needless trouble*, (that is sending to Holland for immersion) *and what proceeded from the old Popish doctrine of right to administer sacraments by an uninterrupted succession*, which neither the Church of Rome, nor the Church of England, much less the modern Dissenters, could prove to be with them. *They affirmed therefore* (that is, the greatest number, and the more judicious Baptists) *and practiced accordingly, that after a general corruption of baptism, an unbaptized person might warrantably baptize and so begin a reformation.*” In this connection, Crosby quotes at some length three learned and distinguished writers, Spillsbury, Tombes and Laurence as authority for this third method of reviving immersion in England and so beginning a reformation after the general corruption

of baptism, which is acknowledged to have taken place; and he emphasizes this authority in Henry Laurence by saying: "*He was a learned Baptist, who has excellently defended the true baptism and the manner of reviving it in these later times.*" "In these *later times!*"

Spillsbury asserted that no succession of baptism could be found except through Popery which had universally corrupted the ordinance; and he took John the Baptist as an illustration of beginning baptism—and like whom God's people could begin it anew, when lost, without a baptized administrator. Tombes argued that if no continuance of adult baptism can be proved—and after a "universal corruption"—the necessity of beginning anew, justifies those who reform to baptize without being baptized; and he cites instances of such practice in the history of the first reformers. Laurence held that it was not necessary to the validity of the ordinance that the administrator be baptized; and that the validity of baptism consists not in the personal baptism of him that administers, but in the due commission that the administrator has for baptizing. Hence Crosby concludes by saying: "*By the excellent reasonings of these and other learned men, we see their (the Baptists') beginning well defended, upon the same principles on which all other Protestants build their reformation.*"

While Crosby denies that the English Baptists took their baptism from Smyth's method of rebaptism—he supposing that Smyth's baptism was by immersion—he does claim that the “*two other methods*” he mentions, “*were indeed both taken by the Baptists, at their revival of immersion in England,*” as he found it “*acknowledged and justified in their writings.*” He tells us distinctly how the second method of getting immersion from Holland was carried out; and we have contemporary documents from Jessey, Kiffin and others to show that this second method was adopted in 1641, as we shall see hereafter. As to exactly how and when the third method of restoring immersion by the Baptists of England was put into practice we are not distinctly informed. It would seem that when the subject first began to be discussed—most likely after the Particular Baptists had adopted the second method—the General Baptists who were in the majority and in the lead, adopted the third method as most consistent with their views of restoration. It must have been the General Baptists of whom Crosby spoke when he said: “But the greatest number of the English Baptists, and the more judicious, looked upon all this (*i.e.*, sending to Holland for immersion) as needless trouble and what proceeded from the old Popish doctrine of right to administer sacraments by an uninter-

rupted succession, etc.;" and then he concluded by saying of these Baptists, thus distinguished: "They affirmed therefore and practiced accordingly, that after a general corruption of baptism an unbaptized person might warrantably baptize and so begin a reformation." "*They affirmed and practiced accordingly.*" From this I gather that this class of Baptists adopted the third method of restoring baptism, in opposition to and after the second method of sending to Holland for it, which they pronounced "needless trouble" and after the manner of Popish succession. This third method is the doctrine of the General Baptists even unto this day; and Crosby shows that it started in opposition to the "proper administrator," or "succession," theory of the Particular Baptists, at that time. At all events it must have originated with the General Baptists at the time of restoration of immersion, as believers' baptism, in England by the Particular Baptists in the year 1641; and if Crosby is a reliable historian of the early English Baptists, we shall bring to a demonstration the fact that, in 1641, the Baptists revived immersion, as believers' baptism in England.

It is evident, however, that up to this date both the General and Particular Baptists of England were affusionists in the practice of believers' baptism; and whatever might be the

date of "reviving immersion" in England, Crosby shows beyond doubt that there was a period in the history of the English Baptists in which they did not practice immersion and in which, in view of the "general corruption of baptism," they revived the ordinance and began a reformation of their own. If this is not what Crosby means, then he cannot be understood; and I think this is one of the strongest confirmations of Dr. Whitsitt's position. Crosby approximately fixes the date of this immersion revival by reference to such writers as Spillsbury, Tombes, Laurence and others; but it remains for other documentary evidence to settle the date precisely. It is true that Crosby, without the advantage of proper documentary evidence, denies connection of the English Baptists with John Smyth's se-baptism; but this mistake has been corrected by later historians. The General Baptists date back to Helwys and Murton who received their affusion from Smyth; and they always held the same doctrine of Helwys against succession in baptism, ordinance or organization, and in favor of the Arminian view of salvation. The Particular Baptists were Calvinists and, in all probability took their baptism after the form of their Independent ancestors from whom they split; and just like their General brethren, they were affusionists in the practice of believers' baptism. According to "To

Sions Virgins," 1644, it is certain that sprinkling was the mode of baptism in the church of Jacob and Lathrop from which the first Calvinistic Baptist church seceded, 1633, of which Spillsbury was the pastor. So both denominations continued until the year 1641. We have now no earlier date at which it appears they restored immersion in England as "believers' baptism;" but of this again, when we shall consider, by way of application to time, Crosby's declaration of the restoration of "*the true baptism and the manner of reviving it,*" as he says, "*in these later times.*" I refer the reader, on the whole subject, to Crosby, (Vol. I. pp. 90-107), History of Baptists, Edition, 1738, which will be found as a chapter in this volume



CHAPTER V.

THE PARTICULAR BAPTISTS OF ENGLAND.

WE have seen that the first General Baptist churches of England, while fundamentally Baptist in principle and polity, were not immersionists—occupying in this latter respect, the position of the Mennonites, with whom they kept fraternal relations in spite of some differences; and there is no evidence that they became immersionists until 1641. Like Helwys, their founder, they repudiated the doctrine of “succession,” and maintained the right of introducing “baptism anew” without regard to the “baptizedness of the administrator,” the same as of setting up the “church anew” and of beginning a reformation as other Protestants had done. All this is discovered in the controversy of Helwys with the Mennonite brethren and in the discussions of the General Baptists, recorded by Crosby, about the year 1641. The General Baptists of England have no organic or baptismal succession of any character from the apostolic, or even from the Anabaptist churches. Smyth, Helwys and followers were a body of

English Separatists, not Anabaptists, who fled from England to Holland to escape persecution, and there organized a church on the Baptist model, which afterward became the first General Baptist church in London.

This brings us to consider the Particular Baptist churches of England, the first of which was organized as a succession, or secession from one of the ancient Independent churches of London, of which Mr. Henry Jacob and Mr. John Lathrop were the first pastors. The division took place in 1633, upon the ground of disbelief in infant baptism; and as they looked upon the baptism they had received in infancy as invalid, most or all of them received a new baptism. Mr. John Spillsbury, by one account, is said to have been their minister at the division in 1633; but whether or not this is true, he was their minister in 1638. According to Crosby he was himself unbaptized, and he maintained that "baptizedness was not essential to the administrator" of baptism, holding that "where there is a beginning, some one must be first" to begin. In the year 1639, another Particular Baptist church was formed, and in 1644 the Calvinistic churches numbered seven, in addition to a French church of the same faith and order. In the year 1640 the Particular Baptist church in London, the first organized, and having in all probability inherited affusion from its Independ-

ent ancestor, came to the conclusion that true baptism had been lost. According to Crosby, Hutchinson, Ivimy, Evans and other historians, the church sent Richard Blunt to Holland, where he was immersed by the Collegiants at the hands of their teacher, Mr. John Batte. Upon his return he immersed Samuel Blacklock, and the two immersed the rest in 1641. This step, according to the account of Hutchinson and Kiffin, was deliberately taken, after much conference and prayer, upon the ground that "none had then so practiced in England to professed believers;" and the conclusion seems to have been reached contrary to the views of Mr. Spillsbury as to a baptized administrator, by Mr. Blunt, who based his convictions upon Rom. vi: 4 and Col. ii: 12 which represent baptism as a burial and a resurrection. This makes the inference all the clearer that the baptism of Helwys and Spillsbury, the respective founders of the General and Particular Baptists of England, was affusion, and that this latter form of baptism had prevailed among both denominations of Baptists up to 1641. Surely the Baptists of England, up to this time, had known their own practice, in England, from 1611 to 1641; and the discussions of the Baptists about this time, according to Crosby, with reference to the several methods of restoring immersion in England by the Baptists go to show that they must have

known that "none had so practiced to professed believers in England."

I have already alluded to the concessions of Armitage and Evans upon this point; but I wish to return to the view of Evans in addition to what he expressed with reference to the probability,—nay the "conclusion more than warranted,"—that the baptism of Smyth, Helwys, and followers was affusion. (Vol. II. 52, 53.) He alludes to the first Particular Baptist church sending Blunt to Holland to receive immersion and get a proper administrator; and he says: "This could not arise from there being no Baptists in the country. We have seen that the very opposite is the fact. Other churches, too, (which may be regarded now as mythical or, at any rate, not proven to be Baptist churches), it will be seen presently, existed in this country. Only from one of two causes could this conduct arise: dislike of the Arminian doctrines, or dissatisfaction with the mode of baptism. Which of these operated it is hard to say. Probably both had an influence in determining their course." Evans cites us to a time later still, 1646, as positive proof that there were communities in existence then who conformed entirely to the mode of baptism by affusion adopted by the Dutch brethren. He refers to Chelmsford (quoting from Mercurius Rusticus, pp. 25, 26), wherein it is said: "They have among them two

sorts of Anabaptists: the one they call Old Men, or *Aspersi*, because they were but sprinkled, the other they call New Men, or *The Immersi*, because they were overwhelmed in their rebaptization." Even at this time it was a fact, as Evans says, that "both modes were practiced," that is, among the Anabaptists, or Baptists; and it is probable that among the churches, after 1641, there were divisions among the members still as to the mode of baptism, of which there is no such account before that time. Those who had adopted immersion since 1641, were called *New Men* or *Immersi*; those who held on to the former practice of affusion were called *Old Men*, or *Aspersi*. (See Dr. Whitsitt's Book, VII, 95, 96.)

Referring again to the deputation to Holland of Blunt by the first Particular Baptist church in London, and to the cause of his deputation, Evans, (Vol. II, p. 79), says again: "Most will now see that the practice of the Mennonite brethren (that is affusion) was common in this country (England). These 'New Men' (or *Immersi*) soon cast them into the shade, and their practice (that is, of the Old men, or *Aspersi*), speedily became obsolete. Immersion, as the mode of baptism, became the rule with both sections of the Baptist community. Indeed, from this time, beyond the fact already given, (that is at Chelmsford, 1646) we know of not a

solitary instance"—that is, among Baptists. He says again (same page): "As in times long anterior to these, 'a pool, a river, a lake,' was selected as place for the administration of the ordinance; so *now*, the brethren about London had no baptistery, and the flowing stream was chosen for the purpose." Incidentally this fact is stated by one of the journalists of the time: "And the river Lee, which runs by Bow, wherein the *new* elect rebaptize themselves, and call it by the name of Jordan." (Mercurius Aulicus, March, 1643). Evans is acknowledged to be one of the most acute and accurate of English Baptist historians. He wrote at a time when such new data, or documentary evidence, was before him, especially that of Prof. Muller with regard to the Amsterdam church. Since then this documentary evidence has been extended by de Hoop Scheffer; but Evans, with the newer lights before him, goes very far to establish what Crosby, Kiffin, Hutchinson and others implied, namely, that, before the year 1641, the English Baptists must have practiced affusion instead of immersion; and that both sections of the Baptist brotherhood adopted immersion about that time.

The only objection to this view which, from an exclusively Baptist standpoint, can be urged upon documentary evidence at the time, is based upon the position of Leonard Busher in favor of immersion, published in his "Religious Peace,"

1614. He must have been a Baptist in principle, whatever his practice, or howsoever connected with other people, of which we know nothing; but his position on baptism and religious liberty at that time in no way contradicts the historical evidence that the General and Particular Baptists of England were affusionists, from 1611 to 1641. His utterance was like a flash of lightning on the midnight sky so far as the "immersion of believers," at that time, was concerned. All England, with the exception of Helwys' little church in London, was in the embrace of infant baptism. Believers' baptism, in any form, was almost a "lost art;" and in the form of immersion it seems unknown in England until 1641, about which time, according to Crosby, it was revived or restored by the two methods heretofore mentioned and resorted to, respectively, by the Particular and General Baptists, and as more clearly shown by Evans. Similar flashes of light to that of Busher had flashed along the dark skies before; but it was always worth a man's life, so long as the world was in the Church through infant baptism and guarded by the sword, to practice believers' baptism even by affusion, to say nothing of immersion. Believers' baptism was the crime of the centuries which lighted the torch of martyrdom in every country from the 3rd to the 17th century, and even afterwards.

It seems that Richard Blunt came to the same conclusion that Leonard Busher did twenty-six years before him—whether or not with the knowledge of Busher's position we have no means of knowing; but while there is no evidence that Busher pushed or practiced his view of baptism, it is in evidence that Blunt put his conviction into practice upon the ground that it was Scriptural and that, heretofore, in England, immersion had not been the practice so far as believers' baptism was concerned. It is not necessary to be dogmatic; but it is inferentially clear enough from authentic Baptist history that whatever the views of isolated individuals, or sporadic practices of any, here and there, and now and then, the General and Particular Baptists of England never practiced immersion until about the year 1641. It might be argued that even if the Particular Baptist church in London so began immersion at that time, it does not prove that the General Baptists, or even the other Particular Baptist churches, did likewise. Or it may be maintained that Blunt was deputed to Holland under the idea simply of securing a baptismal succession, or a proper administration of baptism, in view of the fact that he could not get such succession or administration from the General or Arminian Baptists. Evans, as we have seen, considers this conjectural objection; but the conclusion is that the immersion of the

Particular and General Baptists began “anew” at the same time and by two different “methods” heretofore mentioned; and the plea of Blunt and the Particular Baptist church in London is not based simply upon succession, or a proper administrator, but upon the fact that immersion had not then been practiced upon believers in England.

Ivimy (Vol. I, pp. 144–146) recognizes the incompatibility of sending Blunt to Holland for baptism with the existence of immersion in England at the time; and he deals in several conjectures by which he tries to reconcile the difficulty—one of which is referred to on page 42 of this volume. In addition to this he suggests that, at that time, persecution had driven “*almost all the Baptists*” out of the Kingdom and it “*would have been difficult to find a minister who had been baptized by immersion.*” Again he cites to us the conjecture of Crosby (who did not so conjecture), that if such a minister “could have been found” those persons desiring immersion were so affected by the old Popish doctrine of “uninterrupted succession” that they would have been prevented from applying to any but a regularly ordained minister, who had been baptized by a person himself baptized, and hence they applied to the Netherlands where such ministers were to be found. In answer to the question that might be asked, How was it that

they did not apply for immersion from the church of Helwys, or his successors? he replies that they (the General Baptists) were Arminians, whereas those applying for immersion (the Particular Baptists) were Calvinists, "between which denominations there was not much fellowship" at that time. And yet "*almost all the Baptists*" were out of the Kingdom! If anybody can reconcile these contradictory conjectures he can do more than I; and it all goes to show how inexact and untrustworthy Ivimy is—how unlike Crosby and Evans in their unpartisan treatment of this subject. Crosby makes no conjecture about the matter, but plainly states the facts, as he had them fresh at hand and close to the events related; and Evans not only declares that there were Baptists and Baptist churches in England at the time, but holds it clearly probable that both the General and Particular Baptists were affusionists, and not immersionists, when Blunt was deputed to Holland; while Crosby clearly implies that, at that time, whatever the date, immersion, having been lost, was restored in England by the Baptists.

In concluding this section it must be remembered that we are now treating of English and not Dutch Baptists, or Anabaptists. Anti-Pedobaptism was a matter of slow growth among the English. While the Wycliffite and Lollard movement, before the 16th century, was

vigorously evangelical it never clearly gave up infant baptism, although it gave to infant baptism no sacramental significance. About the best that can be said of Lollardism, or Wycliffism, is that it put faith before baptism and held that baptism was not essential to salvation; but it maintained that the faith of the godly parent was sufficient for his children, and left the baptism of children to the conscience of the parent. This is about as far as the English got towards the Baptists before the 16th century; and during the 16th century the Baptist element in England was almost exclusively Dutch or German. The English did not take to Anabaptism. In their dissent from Papacy and Episcopacy they turned to Independency and Presbyterianism; and among them, perhaps, were mingled a few Anabaptists at the beginning and after the introduction of the 17th century. The Anabaptists who were foreigners, at this time, in the main had returned to the Continent upon the cessation of persecution in Holland and other countries; and it must be remembered that the Baptists of England, however remotely affected by the Anabaptists of Holland, originated by dissent from the Separatists or Independents of England. They begin Baptist history by an independent development of their own, baptism, church organization and all; and they inherited affusion (1) among the Gen-

eral Baptists from the Mennonite brethren with whom they were associated in Holland—not by succession but by adopting their mode of baptism; and (2) among the Particular Baptists from their Independent ancestors who had begun to sprinkle and pour for Baptism after the Calvinistic style of the Continent.

If there were Anabaptists or Anabaptist conventicles hid in London or other places in England, during the earlier part of the 17th century, they were either mixed with the Independent churches, as Crosby suggests; or else if there were any Anabaptist conventicles concealed, here and there, which might have succeeded from Lollard or Dutch elements to Baptist churches, as claimed for Hill Cliffe, Eythorne, Bocking-Braintree and the like, they had no immediate connection with the development of these General and Particular Baptist churches from which English Baptist history dates its origin and perpetuity. These churches of traditional origin and continuity, if they existed at all, simply fell into line with the General and Particular Baptist movement after 1641; and we have no means of knowing, before that period, what their mode of baptism was; but from the standpoint of the *Old Men* or *Aspersi*, or the *New Men* or *Immersi*, brought to light in 1646, it is reasonable to suppose that all Anabaptists, however divided among the membership of the

churches, after 1641 and up to 1646, must have belonged to the *Old Men* or *Aspersi* before 1641, in England. The only hope of the baptismal succession theory, historically speaking, lies in the baptism of Blunt and the Particular Baptists, derived from the Collegiants of Holland in 1641; and this will depend upon tracing the baptism of the Collegiants back to Poland, and probably from Poland to Switzerland, and from Switzerland to the Waldenses, and so on back to the apostles—the future task of the historian and the archæologist to make complete, if possible. This form of succession, however, would only be baptismal, and not organic, since the organizations of both the General and Particular Baptists of England, from whom the American Baptists succeeded, originated with their own independent movement.



CHAPTER VI.

THE JESSEY RECORDS.

THE controversy over Dr. Whitsitt's position seems to turn upon the authority of the Jessey Church Records and the Kiffin Manuscript; but from the standpoint of the Crosby argument it does not altogether turn upon those documents. Crosby's argument may be briefly stated in these words:

1. Immersion, or "*true baptism*," was "*re-vived*" by the Baptists "*in these later times*," referring to the period when Spillsbury, Tombes, Laurence and others discussed the "*methods*" of its restoration, in view of the "*general corruption*" of the ordinance before that period.

2. The methods by which the restoration of immersion "*in these later times*" was claimed were three: (1) By the se-baptism of John Smyth and which was charged by the Pedobaptists and defended as a proper method by some Baptists, but which Crosby disclaims; (2) by the imported immersion from Holland through Richard Blunt, but which was considered "*needless*" and based upon the Romish doctrine of "*succession*;" (3) by beginning baptism through

an unbaptized administrator, as held by Spillsbury, Tombes, Laurence and others and by the "greatest number of the English Baptists, and the more judicious," at that time.

3. Crosby affirms that the two latter methods "*were taken by the Baptists at the revival of immersion in England, as,*" says he, "*I find it acknowledged and justified in their writings,*" that is, at the time of the revival; for, says he of the third method adopted by the leading majority of English Baptists: "*They affirmed, therefore, and practiced accordingly, that after a general corruption of baptism, an unbaptized person might warrantably baptize and so begin a reformation.*" After giving the views of Spillsbury, Tombes and Laurence in defence of the third method, Crosby concludes the subject by saying: "By the excellent reasonings of these and other learned men, we see *their (Baptists') beginning* well defended upon the same principles on which all other Protestants built *their reformation.*"

4. The order in which Crosby gives the adoption of the "two methods" by which the Baptists restored immersion in England (after repudiating the self-baptism theory of John Smyth) makes the adoption of the Blunt method *first* and the Spillsbury method *last*. Hence, we conclude that after immersion was brought from Holland upon the theory of the "proper

administrator," then immersion began (about the same time) upon the theory that "baptizedness is not essential to the administrator." This is the logic of priority of arrangement according to Crosby.

Now the value of the Jessey Records and the Kiffin Manuscript consists in confirming Crosby's argument and in fixing the date of reviving baptism by the English Baptists, as set by Dr. Whitsitt. Evans takes substantially the same view as Crosby with respect to the fact that immersion was restored about the period of Blunt's deputation to Holland; but neither of them gives the exact date. If we can find out when Blunt went to Holland and when he brought "true baptism" to England, then we discover the date at which the English Baptists revived immersion after its general corruption in England. The Jessey Records and the Kiffin Manuscript as given by Gould, and as put in parallel columns in Dr. Whitsitt's *Question in Baptist History*, (pp. 81-83), give the date and settle the question. The date was fixed by Neal and other early writers, long ago; but the matter was in dispute until Gould discovered the Jessey Records and other ancient manuscripts which were in a form sufficiently explicit and clear to lead Dr. Whitsitt to a satisfactory conclusion amounting to a "discovery" that immersion had been restored in England

by the Baptists in the year 1641. This supplements the defect as to the precise date in Crosby's argument and makes the record complete. Of course, Crosby, Hutchinson, Ivimy, Evans and others could fix no precise date, because the documentary evidence, as presented in the fuller form from Kiffin's Manuscript and the Jessey Records discovered since by Gould, was not known to them; and if anywhere any of these writers have doubted or disputed this date, their own writings now coupled with the discovery of these documents would contradict their own adverse opinions on the subject at issue.

Much has been said about the authority of the Jessey Records and the Kiffin Manuscript, and as to Dr. Whitsitt's alleged error in writing into the Jessey Records the second, or 1640 and 1641, part, from the Kiffin Manuscript. Even Prof. Newman disagrees with Dr. Whitsitt on this point, and Prof. Vedder is not absolutely certain of the Doctor's correctness. Recently the entire Jessey Records with the Kiffin Manuscript, as had by Gould, have been brought to light and published in the *Western Recorder* of Louisville, Ky. Prof. Newman also seems to have had these Records entire before him when he wrote his articles on "The Whitsitt Controversy" for the *Christian Index* of Atlanta, Ga. Whatever be the truth as to the authenticity

of the second, or 1640 and 1641, part of what Dr. Whitsitt classifies as the Jessey Records—whether it belong to the original Manuscript of Kiffin, or of some other author, only the substance of which Crosby and Hutchinson give—it is clearly and identically one and the same document with the first part, (1) as shown by its similar style and phraseology; (2) by its fashion and succession of dates; and (3) by its unity and connection of subject matter—all corresponding to the first, or 1633 and 1638, part. Whatever the difficulties of the case it is clear that while the Kiffin Manuscript and the Jessey Records, as paralleled and classified by Dr. Whitsitt, are not identical, they are substantially the same document, as a whole, and mutually and irrefragably support each other. If the second part of the Jessey Records, as Dr. Whitsitt arranges them, is a part of the original Manuscript of Kiffin, or other author as Prof. Newman thinks, then it must have been copied from the Jessey Records, or other records, which make up the details of the continued and connected history of the Jessey church from 1633 to 1641.

To demonstrate the unity and identity of both parts of the Jessey Records, as claimed by Dr. Whitsitt, we have only to examine Gould's quotation as a whole with his comments which relate the first with the second part. After

giving the first part (1633-1638) as "entries" from the "MSS. of Mr. H. Jessey," he infers further from an examination of these "minutes," the whole of which were before him, that about 1638 there was some controversy with Mr. Spillsbury with reference to the "administrator" of baptism. About this time he had baptized "Sam Eaton with some others," under the assumption "that baptizedness is not essential to the administrator," about which he had "no difficultie." "Some persons," says Gould, "scrupled the correctness of Mr Spillsbury's conduct;" and it is evident that though Spillsbury baptized others, he himself never had received believers' baptism. Gould here cites Crosby's quotation of Spillsbury's vindication of his own course; and his argument is that "some would shut up the ordinance of God in such a strait that none can come by it but through the authority of the Popedom of Rome," rather than have a "man baptize others, who is himself unbaptized." By way of example he cites John the Baptist, who though unbaptized, baptized others; and thus, like Smyth and Helwys before him, he claims the right to begin baptism anew, as well as the Church anew, without succession through Rome. He regarded, contrary to his opponents, the Church as superior to baptism. They looked only to the Scriptures for church succession; but when it

came to baptism "they must have that successively from the apostles, though it came through the hands of Pope Joan." Spillsbury, on the contrary, repudiated the succession theory of baptism, which he claimed could be traced through Rome only; and his logic is that if you can set up the Church anew, as his opponents held, which is the greater, then you can begin baptism anew, which is the less. This was the theory of the General Baptists from the beginning, and still obtains among them.

Now this contention in the first Particular Baptist church, from 1638 onward, continued, according to Hutchinson and Crosby, until it ended in sending messengers to Holland in order to secure a valid administration of baptism to believers. The question, at first, was not about the mode of baptism, but the administration of baptism; but evidently, as the controversy continued, the mode became involved.

Now Gould goes on to supply the record (1640-1641) which explains the contention that began 1638 and which likely split the church in 1640, one half being with Barebone and the other half with Jessey. The controversy did not simply end upon a true "administrator" of baptism, but in determining what was true baptism. Richard Blunt maintained (Rom. vi:4; Col. ii:12) that baptism "ought to be by dipping the whole body in the water, resem-

bling burial and resurrection;" and after much conference and prayer, not only were others convinced with Blunt, but they were confronted with the fact of "none having so practiced in England to professed believers."

In view of this twofold conclusion, they sent Blunt to Holland, where he received immersion at the hands of John Batte of the Collegiants; and in 1641, after Blunt's return, he baptized Mr. Blacklock, and he and Blacklock immersed the rest that were persuaded of the true baptism by dipping, then composed of two companies. This was evidently the end of Spillsbury's contention among the Particular Baptists; and the succession theory of baptism through a valid administrator was set up, at least, to the satisfaction of the Particular brethren; and whatever the apparent confusion in the records about Barebone and Jessey, or about the Jessey church as distinguished from Spillsbury's church, the fact remains the same that Blunt in 1641 restored immersion which had not then been practiced as believers' baptism in England, to the Particular Baptists.

Now with this inseparable connection and identity of the two parts of the Jessey Records as arranged by Dr. Whitsitt, the document stands out as one and the same; and the Kiffin Manuscript right by the side of it, though not identical in style, phraseology or subject matter,

is evidently a substantial version of it. Both documents tell the same story, namely, that in 1641, immersion was revived by the Baptists of England through Richard Blunt in the first Particular Baptist church; and if Dr. Whitsitt has erroneously read the second part from the Kiffin Manuscript into the Jessey Records, he has stumbled upon the most remarkable piece of logic, by accident, which has ever occurred in chronological arrangement, or archæological restoration. The first part is definitely divided and dated 1633-1638, and the second part is more definitely divided and dated, in relation to the first part, 1640 3rd Mo., 1641. The two parts naturally agree with and explain each other as to the contention which connects the two; and hence the two parts taken together logically and chronologically constitute one and the same document—no matter where the second part comes from—even according to Gould's comments. Spillsbury's contention ended in the conviction of some in Jessey's church that baptism was immersion and not affusion which was then practiced upon professed believers among the Anabaptists; and it ended in the confession that, up to that time immersion, in England, had not been so practiced—whatever might have been the practice of infant baptism. Hence the evident relation and identity of the two parts of Kiffin's Manuscript and of the

Jessey Records as classified by Dr. Whitsitt.

Not only has Dr. Whitsitt been charged with error in reading into the Jessey Records the second part from the Kiffin Manuscript, but these Records have subsequently been pronounced a forgery and a fraud. Without going into the details of the hypothetical and inferential arguments by which it has been sought to demonstrate all these documents as spurious, I refer the reader to the articles of Prof. Newman on the subject of the Jessey Records and the Kiffin Manuscript embodied in this volume (V. pp. 185-197)—also to his article in review of Dr. Christian's book, "Did they Dip?" (VIII. p. 216.) In view of the argument I make from Crosby and Evans, in regard to the restoration of immersion in England by the Baptists, I agree with Prof. Newman that "these documents are all thoroughly consistent with each other and with what is otherwise known of the history of the time in general and of the Congregational and the Baptist history in particular." He says: "We can conceive of no motive for forgery of such documents and those ascribed to Jessey and that not ascribed to Jessey were old papers in 1710." "It would be difficult," he says, "to find much historical material on which we can rely more implicitly;" but I beg the reader to examine closely the Professor's articles—re-

membering that he is an expert and not a novice in church history.

An argument against the authenticity and authority of these documents is drawn from an expression found in Kiffin's Brief Remonstrance, p. 11, as follows: "It is well known to many, especially to ourselves, that our Congregations were erected and framed according to the rule of Christ before we heard of any reformation."

I think Dr. Whitsitt has truly stated (pp. 73, 84-85, *Question in Baptist History*) that Kiffin joined the Baptists in 1641, having joined, in all probability, the church of Mr. Jessey in 1638, and not the church of Mr. Spillsbury, as has been said, having, at that time, according to Ivimy, (Vol. II, p. 304,) "united with an Independent congregation." Gould, (*Open Communion and the Baptists of Norwich*, pp. cxxvii cxxviii, cxxix), says, (p. cxxvii): "From Spillsbury and Collins, I naturally turn to the Patriarch of strict Communion Baptists and proceed with as much brevity as possible to sketch the history of *William Kiffin*. This will enable me to show his true relation to this (p. cxxviii) suit, and at the same time to correct some errors to be found in Ivimy. Kiffin in 1638, when 'about twenty-two years of age,' (Ivimy's *History*, Vol. II. p. 304. Kiffin was born, 1616; *ibid.*, p. 297. Also *Life of William Kiffin* [Autobiography with *addenda*], by Joseph

Ivimy, 1833, p. 2) joined the Independent church to which allusion has been made, [This Independent church was Mr. Jessey's church and not Spillsbury's, and here is the blunder of the Kiffin Manuscript as Dr. Whitsitt shows in his Question in Baptist History, p. 84], and in which Henry Jessey had recently become pastor. Soon after his admission as a member, he married a suitable yokefellow who was with [him] in judgment and who was joined to the same congregation (Life of Kiffin, etc., p. 15). At the invitation of the church he began to preach amongst them (*ibid.*, p. 16), and his attention was necessarily directed to the question of baptism by the dissensions which arose in the church, and the secessions which 'now and then' occurred, of persons who embraced the 'opinions of the Baptists.' In his Autobiography, however, he gives no account of his becoming a Baptist; but in a treatise which he wrote against open communion, and entitled, 'A Sober Discourse of Right to Church Communion' * * * London, 1681, he says: [Epistle to the Christian Reader, pp. 1, 2.] 'I used all endeavor * * * that 'I might be directed in a right way to worship; 'and after sometime, concluded that the safest 'way was to follow the footsteps of the flock, 'namely, that order laid down by Christ and His 'apostles, and practiced by the primitive Chris- 'tians in their times, which I found to be that,

‘after conversion, they were baptized, added to the Church, and continued in the apostles’ doctrine, fellowship, and breaking of bread, and prayers; according to which I thought myself bound to be conformable, and have continued in the profession of the same for these forty years.’

“This would point to the year 1641 as the date of his baptism; and we have already seen that in that year, as Crosby says, ‘a much greater number’ than before withdrew from Mr. Jessey’s church and were baptized by Richard Blunt and Samuel Blacklock. Mr. Kiffin’s name, however, is not found amongst the fifty-three persons baptized [p. cxxix] by them and recorded in the ‘MS.’ said to be written by him. His baptism therefore, must have taken place *after* ‘11th month [January] 1641–2.’ How soon after this date he was baptized cannot be ascertained, but in the following October [October 17, 1642] he appeared with some others in a disputation with Dr. Featley at Southwark.” Hence the claim that Kiffin was immersed prior to 1641 will not stand against the above showing from his “Sober Discourse of Right to Church Communion.” Crosby (Vol. I. p. 101), in quoting Kiffin’s account of Blunt’s deputation to Holland for baptism, says that Kiffin “*lived in those times, and was a leader among those of that persuasion*”—that is, of Blunt’s persuasion; and

this settles the fact that Kiffin was among those baptized, in 1641, by either Blunt or Blacklock in the latter part of the year.

With regard to the use of Kiffin by the critics of Dr. Whitsitt, as a witness for immersion by the Baptists of England before 1641, from the passage in his "Brief Remonstrance," (p. 11), and noted above, it is proper to say that, in this quotation, he is not on the witness stand with regard to the question of baptism. If, as is evident, he was baptized in the latter part of 1641—if the "MS.," said to be his, tells the truth as to the time of restoring immersion by the Baptists of England, asserted by Crosby—he knew all about the change of the Baptists from affusion to immersion in 1641, whether he ever mentions it or not; but in this quotation from his "Remonstrance" he was contending simply for the Scriptural constitution, or organization, of Baptist churches; and he was right when he contended for the principle that they "were erected and framed according to the rule of Christ" before any reformation was heard of. Kiffin was here asserting, according to the theory which, "after a time," he resolved to follow, namely, the "order laid down by Christ and His apostles, and practiced by the primitive Christians, that after conversion, they were baptized, added to the Church and continued in the apostles' doctrine, etc.," without reference to the

mode of baptism. The expression, “before we heard of any reformation” must, in the light of English Baptist history, refer simply to the Independent order of churches, composed of baptized believers, maintained before the Reformation, and with whom the Baptists, then as now, claimed connection, without regard to the *mode* of baptism; or else Kiffin meant that the Baptist churches of his time were generically the same with the apostolic churches, which “were erected and framed according to the rule of Christ” before any reformation was heard of. In any case his proposition is without reference to the *mode* of baptism; for, before 1641, the Baptist churches of the Dutch and English Baptists, according to Robinson’s History of Baptism, Prof. Muller, Evans, de Hoop Scheffer, Gould, Whitsitt, Vedder, Newman, Burrage, and others, were composed of believers baptized by *affusion* though opposed to infant baptism.

Not far from the period in which Kiffin wrote—and after 1641—there were still among Baptists, inside their churches, the Old Men, or *Aspersi*, and the New Men, or *Immersi*, and this mixed principle still obtains among some of the English Baptists until this day. John Bunyan belonged to a church of this order at Bedford; and according to Evans, (Vol. II. p. 267), Bunyan, when pastor of that church, would not grant a letter of dismissal to any of his mem-

bers to join a restricted communion Baptist church. Nevertheless the Baptists are proud to claim the "Immortal Dreamer" as a Baptist. Again, it is not certain that Bunyan's daughter, Elizabeth, in 1654, was not sprinkled in the Parish church of Elstow, after Bunyan became a Baptist; and although Dr. Armitage combats the Parish Records most strenuously, Rev. John Brown, of Bedford, makes a strong case in favor of the fact that Bunyan treated infant baptism as a "weakness" in others, though a Baptist himself, and that his child was sprinkled in the Parish church at Elstow, in 1654. (Armitage, *History of Baptists*, pp. 482-492.)

The citation of Kiffin to prove immersion among the Baptists before 1641, is like the citation of Knollys, for the same purpose, by Dr. Whitsitt's critics, to which I refer in another chapter. Neither can prove anything in favor of the inferential hypothesis that Baptists must have practiced immersion before 1641, without proof. Knollys left the English Church in 1636 and was in America from that year until 1641; and he could have had no experiences with any "ministry" or "churches of God," after the Scriptural idea, in London, except somewhere between 1641 and 1645, when he wrote, and in which latter year he was ordained a Baptist minister. In 1640 he was a member of the Congregational church at Dover, N. H.—in 1641 he

was in New Jersey—after which he returned to England; and there is no record of the time when he became a Baptist by immersion. It was certainly after 1641. The same is true of John Canne, who, according to Stovel, was at Bristol, April 25, 1641, as a baptized man; as he was well acquainted, according to Dr. Whitsitt, (*Question in Baptist History*, p. 77), at Southwark, he must have received Blunt's immersion before January 9, of the same year, the month and date fixed in the Jessey or other records as published by Dr. Newman in the *Christian Index* (V. p. 192). If so he had ample time to be at Bristol, April 25, 1641, nearly four months, afterwards as a thoroughly dipped Baptist; and thus falls heavily to the ground the acceptance of the challenge of one of Dr. Whitsitt's critics, to prove that there were three men, at least, immersed before 1641. Kiffin, Knollys and Canne were the three men selected; and if anything is probable, in the light of early English Baptist history, it is that these three men were baptized, two of them in 1641, and the other after that date. Crosby says (Vol. III. p. 42) he knew not whether Mr. John Canne was a Baptist or not, though his name is in a manuscript list among the gentlemen who left the established church to join the Baptists.

CHAPTER VII.

DR. WHITSITT'S CRITICS.

DR. WHITSITT has been subjected to the fire of a great many critics, *major and minor*, but mostly minor; and the more minor they have been, the more severe and dogmatic. The most scholarly and acute criticism of the Whitsitt "Question" I have read is that of Dr. J. B. Thomas; but like a fair-minded scholar he does not claim "infallibility" in dealing with the subject of the Jessey Records, or the Kiffin Manuscript, and only proposes a "modified conception" of the significance of the main "paragraph in question." He admits that even his modified conception "may be vulnerable, for the problem is a perplexing one." While he thinks he has the advantage of Dr. Whitsitt in interpretation he closes by saying: "Perhaps no safe solution has been reached by anybody, or is possible. In that case the testimony remains ambiguous and its force is neutralized." The Doctor's learned *critique* seems to be rather hypercritical in dealing so minutely with the main paragraph in question in the light of some of the somewhat confused details of the general document, rather

than in the relation that that paragraph sustains to the document as a whole, and to the corroborative testimony which Dr. Whitsitt brings to bear in correspondence with the significance of the main paragraph at issue. If the argument based upon Crosby and others confirms the truth that that main paragraph is explained by such correspondence, according to Dr. Whitsitt, then the minor details of the Jessey Records or the Kiffin Manuscript must be explained in some other way; and whether explained or not, they do not discredit the main paragraph at issue, nor the documents themselves as a whole. At all events, Dr. Thomas is not certain that he or Dr. Whitsitt is right; and this is the sum of the best criticism I have seen on the subject. In the light of corroborative facts, I think Dr. Thomas is wrong and Dr. Whitsitt is right; and the reader is left to judge, in the light of the corresponding testimony adduced, as to whether or not the Baptists of England restored immersion, as believers' baptism, in 1641, according to the "main paragraph" of the Jessey Records, or the Kiffin Manuscript, which declares, at that time, that none had been so baptized in England.

The other critics of Dr. Whitsitt have, with some force, attacked some of his corroborative testimony, and handled roughly a few of his quotations from Dexter; but his position based upon the Jessey and Kiffin documents is sub-

stantiated by a mass of corresponding proof which, outside of these quotations, stands unshaken. In assailing the Jessey Records and the Kiffin Manuscript, most of the critics have either tried to throw discredit upon their value, or else, granting Dr. Whitsitt's views of these Records, have assumed that the foundation was too narrow and uncertain to build upon it the structure of the Doctor's conclusions; and this latter assumption was based upon the probable ignorance and obscurity of the Baptists in England, at the time, wherein Blunt's baptism might have applied alone to some of the Jessey church, while, unknown to them, immersion may have been practiced in other places and by other churches. Upon this ground was based also the "negative" argument of some of the critics whereby Dr. Whitsitt's universal denial of immersion in England, at or before 1641, would be overthrown by the testimony of a single case of immersion, as believers' baptism, during the period he claimed. In reply to all of which, let me say (1), that no critic has proven that the Jessey Records or the Kiffin Manuscript is even a probable forgery or fraud, according to any legitimate theory of interpretation; (2), that the frequent controversies and conferences of the Jessey church over the matter of "true baptism," as not having been practiced in England up to the year 1640, could not have been in the nature

of "an obscure cross-roads debate," unknown to the other churches, as shown by Crosby and the writers who discussed the matter at the time. Baptist churches in and about London must have been in conference with each other; and (3), besides all this, the Jessey Records, or the Kiffin Manuscript, is Baptist testimony, and cannot be the fabrication of an enemy; and while it was possible for Baptists to fabricate the Crowle and Epworth fraud of Smyth's baptism in the River Don, in their own favor, it is impossible to suppose that they concocted the Jessey or the Kiffin documents against themselves. If these are true documents, therefore, the "negative" argument of the critics falls, at least, so far as the General and Particular Baptists of England are concerned; and if Crosby and Evans are reliable historians of the English Baptists, then it is true that, with the Jessey Records and the Kiffin Manuscript, it is proven that the English Baptists "*revived immersion*" after its "*universal corruption*" in England, and began a "*reformation*" of their own "*ancw.*" about the year 1641—that is, as to immersion as "believers' baptism."

Even if we should go back to 1611, thirty years before Dr. Whitsitt's date, when the first Baptist church of England was organized, so far as Baptist history is concerned, and should prove that Smyth, Helwys, and companions

were self-immersed, and that this was the date to which Crosby alluded—it would still be in proof that the Baptists of England, according to Crosby's own confession, restored immersion as believers' baptism, in view of a general corruption of the ordinance, and began a reformation of their own anew. This, however, cannot be the "*later times*" of which Crosby speaks, in view of the Kiffin Manuscript and the Hutchinson document which he quotes as the beginning of this reformation by the restoration of immersion; and since the discovery of the Jersey Records, and the original Kiffin and other documents by Gould, it is clear that, whatever date Crosby might have conceived, 1641 is the date as set by Dr. Whitsitt, when Blunt was deputed to Holland for true baptism.

Some of the critics have gone so far as to try to make Blunt a mythical character, or to disconnect him from the Baptists, but Edwards in his *Gangræna* (Pt. 3rd, p. 112), 1646, discovers Blunt's church, associated with him Emmes and Wrighters as ministers, and calls it "one of the first and prime churches of the Anabaptists now in these later times." It is claimed that Wilson, Calamy, Brook, nor Neal, knows anything about Blunt or Blacklock beyond what is stated by Kiffin; but Crosby, Ivimy, and Evans clearly accept Kiffin's statement as authentic and authoritative; and Edwards confirms these

authorities by his mention of Blunt and his church in 1646.

Hence, the corroborating testimony to the same fact, as cited by Dr. Whitsitt, under the head of his "Eight Monuments," "Praisegod Barebone," "Seven Baptist Witnesses," "Outside Witnesses," "For Good Measure," and the like, all goes to confirm his position.

All these witnesses have been assailed by the critics most vigorously; but if Crosby, Evans, and others, with the Jessey Records and the Kiffin Manuscript, are historically correct, then these witnesses are surely confirmations of the Doctor's position that 1641 is the probable date at which the immersion reformation, in England, began with the Baptists. The promulgation of the first Baptist Confession of Faith, in 1644, prescribing immersion as baptism and the *manner* of administering it; the fact that the name Baptist, instead of Anabaptist, was assumed after 1641; the fact that the baptismal controversy sprang up between Baptists and Pedobaptists soon after 1641; the fact that not till after 1641 were Baptists divided in their churches by the distinction of New Men, or *Immersi*, from the Old Men, or *Aspersi*; the fact that, in England, no claim was publicly expressed and sought to be made a matter of legislation, with regard to the health of the people, said to be endangered by immersion until after 1641; the fact

that *rhautize* became a favorite expression for *sprinkle* by way of distinguishing it from *baptize*, to *dip*, after 1641, in order to show more clearly from the Greek that sprinkling could not mean baptism—all these facts, and others, are monumental evidence of the change from aspersion to immersion after 1641, in view of Crosby, Evans and others, with the Jessey Records and the Kiffin Documents, as now understood.

The testimony of Praisegod Barebone, 1642, in which he characterizes Baptists as having been baptized the “*third time* after the true way and manner they have found out” which was “dipping” and which he calls a “*very new way*”—his charge that these Baptists “lacked a dipper that had authority from heaven”—is a clear evidence of three things: (1) That the Baptists began immersion after 1641; (2) Barebone’s contention refers, evidently, to Crosby’s citation of that controversy in the time of Spillsbury, Kiffin, and others when Baptists were stigmatized as having baptism without a proper administrator, and who satisfied themselves with the adoption of the “two methods” which Crosby mentions; and (3) Barebone shows by his allusion to their “third baptism” that the Baptists had had three baptisms, the first in infancy when they were the children of their Independent ancestors, the second when they renounced infant baptism and became Anabaptists by aspersion be-

fore the year 1641, and third when they adopted immersion, as full-fledged Baptists, after 1641, as signified by Crosby and Evans and as confirmed by the Kiffin Manuscript and the Jessey Records. If Dr. Whitsitt ever made out a clear case of testimony in favor of his position, he has made it out in the case of Barebone; and his critics, so far as I can see, have assailed his Monuments and Barebone in vain. He calls Baptist baptism in 1642, a "third baptism," "a very new way," "very lately" adopted, a "new discovery;" and he charges them with making a "nullity" of all other baptism, the offense to the Pedobaptists of which Crosby speaks when the controversy began in the time of Spillsbury, and when "immersion" was "restored" under the "two methods" mentioned.

Dr. Whitsitt's "Seven Baptist Witnesses," in spite of all the critics say, fall gallantly into line by way of testimony to the truth of his main proposition from the documents: "None having so practiced in England to professed believers." Although Prof. Newman seems, with the critics, to disagree with Dr. Whitsitt in regard to Edward Barber as a witness, who wrote the first treatise on Baptism ever written by a Baptist, in 1641 or 1642, yet from my reading of that document I cannot help believing that Dr. Whitsitt is right. Barber was one of the controversialists at the time of Spills-

bury, Tombes, Laurence, Barebone and others on both sides of the question of the "new baptism" and its "restoration" by the Baptists, in England, pointed out by Crosby, especially as he is in conflict with Barebone on the very question at issue. Barber claims in reply to P. B. that the "ordinance" had been "lost," that it had been "destroyed and raced out both for matter and form;" but he argues that "believers having Christ, the Word and the Spirit" had the right to "raise" up again what had been "raced out;" and he claimed that in the midst of the general ignorance on the subject of "true baptism," especially among the ministry, the Lord had raised him up, "a poor tradesman, to divulge this glorious truth to the world's censuring." This language falls in line with the exact significance of Crosby's citation of the prevailing controversy of Spillsbury's time when Baptists "revived immersion" in view of the "general corruption" of the ordinance and were defending its restoration upon the very plea of Barber that "believers having Christ, the Word and the Spirit" had the right to "raise" again baptism that had been "raced out" and "lost." So of Spillsbury himself, and of Henry Denne, John Tombes, Henry Laurence and others cited by Dr. Whitsitt, who wrote after 1641 and at the time of the controversy immediately subsequent to that date, as re-

corded by Crosby, in which Baptists against Pedobaptists, defended their right to begin "baptism anew" and "begin a reformation" without a baptized administrator, in accord with the view of the greatest and most judicious number of the Baptists of that period.

These were learned men of the time whom Crosby himself mentions in connection with the controversy; and in addition to these Dr. Whittitt cites a number of other witnesses such as A. R., 1642; Kilcop, 1644; Robert Baillie, 1646; Ephraim Pagitt, 1645; William Cooke, 1644; "Loyall Convert," 1644; Knutton and John Mabbatt, 1645; Saltmarsh, 1645; Hanserd Knollys, 1646; Eachard, 1645; N. Stephens, 1650; John Goodwin, 1653; J. Parnell, 1655; J. Watts, 1656—all these belong to the period of controversy above mentioned in which they join with the witnesses already mentioned in the selfsame testimony that immersion, as believers' baptism, at this time was something "new," a "new baptism," "new distemper," a "new mode," a "new business," a "very novelty," a "new crotchet" a "yesterday conceit," a "sparkle of new light," "taken up only the other year," a "new invention," a "new and upstart opinion;" and while the Baptists, such men as Blunt, Kilcop, Knollys, Daniel King, Barber and others admitted that it was "new" in England, as applied to believers, they invariably

defended it upon the ground that the ordinance had been "corrupted," "buried," "raced out," and "lost in the apostasy," and that the Baptists had the right to restore it as Christ's ordinance. Even in 1690 Hercules Collins answers the calumny of Wall concerning Baptist immersion as the result of Smyth's se-baptism and hence the want of a proper administrator; and he asks the question: "Could not the ordinance which was lost in the apostasy be revived?" evidently concurring with the writers between 1641 and 1656 that Baptists had restored immersion by the "two methods" mentioned by Crosby.

Some of these witnesses have been attacked by Dr. Whitsitt's critics—especially those who are quoted from Dexter; but with all the defection, if any, discovered in the use of these witnesses attacked, there is substantially a marvelous concurrence of what they are alleged to have written with the facts of history in the case, as certified to by eye witnesses who lived at the period of the Baptist reformation spoken of by Crosby. Grant all the critics say of some of these witnesses; and yet the vast array of testimony, at the hands of undoubted authority, is sufficient to establish Dr. Whitsitt's position of clear probability, if not unquestionable fact, that in 1641 immersion was restored by the English Baptists, none having so practiced to professed believers up to that time in England. Whatever

the criticism of the critics, I must confess that it is impossible to read carefully and impartially Dexter's "True Story of John Smyth, the Se-Baptist," without the conclusion that Smyth baptized himself, and that by affusion, and so baptized Helwys, Murton and the rest of his followers. His work is also a strong and convincing proof of the probability that the Baptists restored immersion in England in 1641; and it seems to me that he irrefragably overthrows the historical value of the "Ancient Records" of the Epworth, Crowle and Butterwick church as a forgery.

One of the chief points of criticism is the position of Dr. Whitsitt with reference to Dr. Featley's "Dippers Dipt," 1644, which is construed to imply that the Baptists had been dipping near his place "for more than twenty years." If the restoration of baptism by the Baptists at the time suggested by Crosby be true—if the Jessey Records and the Kiffin Manuscript fix the date of that event at 1641—then Dr. Whitsitt's geographical and critical argument accords with Featley's location and language. He could not have meant, by what he wrote in 1644, that the Anabaptists had been dipping near his place for more than twenty years—although he does say of them, under the figure of a venomous serpent which he calls "Solifuga," that they had showed their head

and thrust out their sting" near his place "for more than twenty years." It would have been worth their life to have been publicly dipping near his place before 1640; and besides this there is a space of three pages between Featley's fulmination against the Baptists for their "dippings," and "defilement of the rivers," and his "Solifuga" sentence which has no connection whatever with their baptism.

The critics object also that the phrase "*new leaven*" by which Featley characterizes Baptist practice, at this time, does not refer simply to their dipping but to the practice of immersion to the exclusion of sprinkling and pouring contrary to the practice of the ancient Anabaptists; but the full quotation from Dr. Featley shows that it was immersion that offended him and which he regarded as not essential to baptism at all; that as "our Anabaptists *now* practice" was their crime in his sight; and that their "*now practice*" of dipping over head and ears and the like was the "*new leaven*" charged. His reference to the "Anabaptist fire" in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James applies in general to their errors and schisms with which he here stigmatizes the Baptists whose baptism he brands as a "*new leaven*;" and he argues against them that even the ancient Anabaptists never maintained that immersion alone was essential to baptism.

Featley, like all the rest of the Pedobaptists of the period at which Baptists had restored immersion and the controversy began which Crosby chronicles, deals in the common stigma, "NEW LEAVEN," applied to immersion as believers' baptism; and if Baptists had been publicly dipping people in his presence for twenty years before 1644, that is, sixteen years before 1641, when the "temporal power" would have severely punished them, we may be sure that the Baptists would have heard* from Dr. Featley, in a severer form than controversy, long before 1644, or 1641, either.

The Epworth and Crowle Records, the Broadmead Records and Tradition of Baptist Mills, Leonard Busher and other subjects have been fully handled by the critics; but their hypothetical inferences have availed nothing against the facts and arguments of Dr. Whittsitt for an examination of which I refer the reader to his book, *A Question in Baptist History*, (pp. 62-79). If Crosby, Evans, Gould and other accredited Baptist historians are right as to the restoration of immersion in England at the time set by the Jessey Records and the Kiffin and other manuscripts, then the whole of the criticism of the critics falls to the ground.

CHAPTER VIII.

ROGER WILLIAMS.

ROGER WILLIAMS became an Anabaptist in 1639, having renounced infant baptism and having been rebaptized by Ezekiel Holliman, whom, with eleven others, Williams baptized in turn, and set up a church after the order of the Anabaptists of every country in Christendom up to that time. Like Peter de Bruys, Henry of Lausanne, Arnold of Brescia, Peter Waldo, and others who revolted from Rome and set up anew, Roger Williams revolted from the theocracy of New England, which was one of the modifications of Rome and which had the mark of the beast, infant baptism, on its forehead. Williams was a Baptist in all the leading essentials of the spiritual and independent church which we claim; and he gave birth in more recent times to that religious and political liberty, under a governmental polity, which organically separated Church and State, and which had been heralded by Arnold of Brescia, Leonard Busher, and the Anabaptists of Switzerland, Germany, Holland, and England. Although in a few months he abandoned his church and baptism

and became a "seeker," yet in principle he was a Baptist; and he put in operation the great tenets of liberty and the right of conscience which have revolutionized the world in favor of the Baptist position and principles. He did precisely what John Smyth did, except as to self-baptism; and for the same reason he abandoned his baptism and church upon the succession theory.

The question of Baptist history now under discussion is this: Was Roger Williams immersed or aspersed, when he was rebaptized? Dr. Whittitt argues only the probability that he was sprinkled. It makes but little difference with the successionists, since they do not claim any connection with Williams' church, anyway; and Drs. Graves and Adlam years ago renounced Roger Williams as no Baptist at all. Unquestionably, the Providence church is a myth as the first Baptist church in America, and as founded by Roger Williams, since it went to pieces and was afterwards reorganized.

John Clarke's church at Newport, they claimed, was the first Baptist church in America; and, though perhaps mistaken as to the date of its organization, it now seems probable that that church received true baptism from the Particular Baptists of England through Mark Lucar, who got it from the Dutch Collegiants, who got it from Poland or Hungary, who, for aught we know, may have got it from the

apostles through the succession of the Swiss Anabaptists.

But was Williams immersed? I had never thought of anything else until Dr. Whitsitt sprung the question; but since reading up again on the subject I am struck with the fact that Backus, Benedict, Cramp, Burrage, Crosby, and others, mention Williams' rebaptism without saying that he was ever immersed. As Dr. Whitsitt says, Armitage and Newman are positive that contemporaneous history is unanimous in favor of the view that Williams practiced immersion; but it seems that Coddington, who wrote thirty-eight years after the event, is the only witness of the time who distinctly implies that such was the case, and he cites no authority. He may have followed a report or a tradition that gained currency from Baptist practice at the time he wrote; or he may have drawn his inference from the language of Williams whose utterances seem to imply his belief in immersion, written long after his baptism. At all events, these utterances are nearly all upon which Coddington, or anyone else, can base an opinion.

Quite a number of authorities have been recently cited to prove the probability that Roger Williams was immersed; but there is not a positive statement by a single eye witness, nor from Williams himself, to that effect. It has been said by some that Coddington "appears"

or "seems" to have been an eye witness of the ceremony; but there is nothing in what Coddington says that implies the fact. There is not a positive statement by a single author who has written on the subject as to the fact of Williams' immersion, except as based upon the current presumption of the fact derived from the probable inference of the same; and all that Gammell, Winthrop, Guild, Coddington, Newman, Vedder, Scott, Callender, Fisher, Dexter, the *Watchman*, Schaff, or any other man, affirms in the case is from the uncertain utterances of Williams, or from the tradition of his rebaptism by immersion. The facts in the case as cited by Dr. Whitsitt are as follows:

1. In 1645, after a visit to England, and where he had an opportunity to know something of the immersion practiced since 1641 by the English Baptists, he wrote a treatise entitled "Christenings make not Christians." Speaking of the manner of converting the Indians, he alludes to "baptism (or washing) though it were in the rivers (as the first Christians and the Lord Jesus himself did)." In the same connection he shows that disciples properly made are to be baptized, or washed, "into the name or profession of the Holy Trinity." The expression, "though it were in the rivers," seems to indicate that immersion, though conceded as Scriptural, was to him something "unusual in 1645," as Dr. Whitsitt sug-

gests; and the use of the word *washing* is after the manner of the Pedobaptists who at that time sprinkled, but who represented baptism as a "washing with water" in the name of the Trinity. According to Governor Bradford against Mr. Chauncy, "all the churches of Christ, for the most part," at that day sprinkled; and the churches and ministry of New England were solidly against Chauncy's dipping of infants. At Scituate Chauncy did as he pleased, because, in 1640, Providence had liberty, and hence, according to Felt, "the coast was most meet for his opinions and practice;" but even there we have account only that he baptized two of his own children by dipping—besides of a woman who would have had her child dipped but for fear of fright to the child.

2. Again in 1649 he wrote to Gov. Winthrop: "At Seekonk a great many have lately concurred with Mr. John Clarke and our Providence men about the point of a new baptism and the manner of dipping, and Mr. John Clarke hath been there lately (and Mr. Lucar) and hath dipped them. I believe this practice comes nearer the practice of our great founder, Christ Jesus, than other practices of religion do, and yet I have not satisfaction, neither in the authority by which it is done, nor in the manner." Here Williams characterizes "dipping" as a "new baptism," and as "their practice," contradis-

tinguished from his own; and he expresses himself as not satisfied with the authority by which it was done, nor with the manner of this new baptism, although it was "nearer" the practice of Christ than any other. This language can scarcely be made to accord with what must have been the practice of Williams himself in 1639. Prof. Newman explains the language of Williams as to the "new baptism" and his dissatisfaction at the manner of its administration by Clarke and Lucar as probably contrary to his "strict adherence to the primitive practice of trine immersion, or the kneeling of the candidate and immersion by pressing the head forward;" but this is evidently a strained interpretation of the language of Williams, who confessed that this "new baptism" by "dipping" was "nearer" the practice of Christ than any other, and who could not have looked for any authority in the Scriptures for "trine immersion," or the kneeling of a candidate to have his head pressed forward into the water of baptism, as the "manner" to which he alluded. If Williams understood and desired to practice immersion from a Scriptural standpoint, he would not have stickled about the Greek or Romish custom of "trine immersion," nor the "manner" of administering it by bending forward the head of the kneeling candidate. The fact is that "Anabaptistry" never followed trine immersion

or any other fashion of Rome; and since sprinkling was the universal practice, with but little exception, it is not likely that Chauncy's baby dipping was after the heart of Williams. "Other practices of religion" to which he refers also, as compared with that of Christ, must have implied the sprinkling and pouring generally in vogue; but like others who recognized immersion as not only "nearer" the practice of Christ than others, but who held that it was altogether the practice of the Scriptures, Williams implied that he was not satisfied with the manner of this new baptism by dipping and still clung to his aspersion in 1639, as sufficient for all purposes.

Dr. Whitsitt cites the earliest contemporary record of the baptism of Williams by Gov. Winthrop and Hugh Peters, both 1639, whose only censure of Roger Williams was that of rebaptism, or Anabaptistery; but no reference is made by these authorities to the mode of baptism, which at that time was sprinkling or pouring and which if it had been changed to immersion, it is likely these authors would have also alluded to a censure for the innovation. To be sure, Dr. Chauncy 1638, had taught that infants ought to be "dipped and not sprinkled;" but there is no evidence that Williams or anybody else, as already noticed, favored the idea; and it is likely when in 1639 he rejected

infant baptism, whether by sprinkling or immersion, he simply adopted the prevailing method of aspersion as sufficient for believers' baptism. Dr. Whitsitt cites a long list of authorities besides Winthrop and Peters, such as William Hubbard, 1680; Cotton Mather, 1702; John Callender, 1739; Isaac Backus, 1777; John Stanford, 1775; Benedict, 1813; J. D. Knowles, 1834; William Hague, 1839; J. M. Cramp, 1868; H. M. Dexter, 1876; H. C. Vedder, 1892; Oscar S. Straus, 1894; H. S. Burrage, 1895, as all in accord with the tradition which uses the word "baptize" and which avoids the word dip or immerse with reference to Williams' baptism. Only Dr. Armitage and Prof. Newman take the contrary position that contemporary testimony is unanimous in favor of immersion as the mode of Williams' baptism. Dr. Whitsitt admits that Knowles follows the tradition in using the word baptize, but that expressions are found in other portions of his volumes which go to show that he understood the word to mean immerse. Dr. S. H. Ford takes issue with Dr. Whitsitt as to Dr. Hague; but Hague expressed only an inferential opinion rather than made any direct historical reference to Williams' baptism as immersion. He could only express an inferential opinion, because the *mode* of Williams' baptism can only be inferentially conceived.

Upon the whole, Dr. Whitsitt takes no posi-

tive position, but the probability he suggests of affusion as the mode of Williams' baptism has much plausibility. The Anabaptists, the English Baptist churches, had not as yet begun to immerse; and it is probable that Williams, with his knowledge of their practice and utterances, had not gotten ahead of them—especially since he had just come out of Pedobaptism and adopted Anabaptism. In all probability, Williams, like Helwys, Murton, Spillsbury and others who separated from their independent and Calvinistic ancestors, inherited affusion when he separated from the Separatists, and became an Anabaptist—that is, a Baptist, at that time, in everything but the *mode* of baptism. In all other respects he maintained the New Testament model of the Church; rejected infant baptism; held the Scriptures as the sole rule of faith and practice; and exalted the doctrine of religious and political liberty—based upon the voluntary principle. Nevertheless, it is only a probability; and it makes but little difference with the Baptists of this day and generation whether Williams was immersed or not. As already suggested the successionists have long ago rejected Williams as a Baptist altogether; and those who do not regard baptismal or church succession, as of any value to the Baptists, have no particular concern in the matter except to know the facts in the case. Both

the Newport and the Providence people fell in with Clarke and Lucar as to “dipping;” and whatever the mode of baptism with the Newport church, at the start, we believe that they probably received immersion from the Particular Baptists of England through Lucar, after 1641 and possibly in 1644. In 1649 Williams alludes to “dipping” as the “new baptism” of both the Newport and Providence people; and in alluding to it as “their practice” which was not satisfactory to himself as to “manner,” he seems to yield the honor of being the first genuine Baptist in America, and accords it to Clarke and Lucar, as suggested by Dr. Whittsitt. Let the matter be as it may, it is clear that the American Baptist churches which sprang from the Rhode Island churches came from the Newport church or from the reorganized Providence church—not from the original Williams’ church.



CHAPTER IX.

THE EFFECT OF THE CONTROVERSY.

I WANT to have a word in conclusion, and in general, bearing upon the whole matter of the Whitsitt Contention; and I wish to make a few observations upon the character of the controversy as to its personalities, and as to its consequences upon the Baptist position:

1. The contention cannot hurt the Baptist position, as many apprehend, although it terminates in favor of Dr. Whitsitt's view. If he is right as to the first English Baptist churches, or as to Roger Williams, he only goes to prove what, in my humble opinion, is true, namely, that Baptist history is a gradual evolution back to the apostolic churches through the chaos of Romanism—not through Romanism itself. The apostolic churches themselves were lost in the "great apostasy" of the "Man of Sin." Not one of them exists to-day; and what was true of them was true of their immediate successors. The Anabaptist sects sprang up from time to time, here and there, and sometimes everywhere; but successively these sects shared the same fate as the apostolic churches, save as they planted

the seed from which other sects originated, and rose and lived on until the Reformation of the 16th century. Out of the long conflict with Rome and her daughters, the Baptists came at last full-fledged and immortal in the 17th century; and, to-day, the Baptist denomination is simply Israel returned from captivity with the ark of God and the temple restored, and the organized government of Christ set up as in the days of the apostles.

In the awful conflict of the 16th century the Anabaptists lost sight of the mode of baptism in their contention for believers' baptism—in their fight against infant baptism; but when light and liberty dawned upon the English Baptists, in 1640–1641, they restored what the 16th century Baptists had temporarily lost—that is, immersion, as “believers' baptism.” It does not hurt the argument of the Baptists in favor of immersion, according to the Scriptures; and nobody but a fool or a villain would throw up to a man, after he had quit a temporary sin, that he was still a sinner because he was once a sinner. In 1641 the Baptists simply went back to their ancient practice, temporarily discontinued, for the most part, during the 16th and first part of the 17th centuries.

Gospel people and principles were never lost at any time, although the organic succession of gospel churches cannot be historically traced;

and while there seems to be some sort of baptismal succession from Poland to Holland, and from Holland to England, and from England to America, in the line of the Baptists, it cannot be definitely traced back to the apostles—although the line may be unbroken all the way back. Most of the Anabaptist sects adopted affusion for believers' baptism at the Reformation; Hubmeyer suspended baptism for a time altogether; long before the Reformation the Cathari adopted the *Consolamentum* for baptism, and did not baptize at all; and the Paulicians were Quaker Anabaptists who held that baptism and the Lord's Supper were not of perpetual obligation in the churches. The English Baptist churches from whom we succeeded were aspersionists and not immersionists from 1611 to 1641, when they received immersion, through Blunt, from Holland and transmitted it to us.

Many of those English churches, even now, are not in good order and are on the "down grade," with the exception of the orthodox Separatists who split from them some years ago. American Baptists, to-day, could not fellowship with their ancestors as orderly Baptist churches. They are mixed in membership and open communion in practice; and their affusion for baptism, before 1641, is but a small error beside many of their present and past errors and irregularities. During the 18th century like the

Mennonites, the Arminian or General Baptists, became Socinian in tendency; and the Particular Baptists, though Calvinistic, have always been more or less mixed in membership with Pedobaptists. Nevertheless, like our Anabaptist kinsmen of old, we claim denominational succession through our English brethren; and in our evolution through the chaos of Romanism we are still going on to ecclesiastical perfection as Baptists in this country.

Now what of all this? Did Christ's word or people ever fail? Did the gates of hell ever prevail against His Church? Never in the personal and spiritual sense. If Christ had meant His Church, in the organic or baptismal sense, then Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Philippi, and Corinth would have been standing to-day. The Master never meant the Romish idea of apostolic, organic, or baptismal succession. The organic, the ceremonial, and the official are but the external accidents of religion. These are not essential to salvation as Rome holds, and may be lost and restored while God's truth and people live—as in the case of old Jerusalem, so with the New Jerusalem. The Anabaptists scorned this idea of succession as a "mark of the beast;" and they claimed that God's people with God's truth and Spirit, when the organization and baptism of the Church had been lost, had the right to restore organism and ordinance "anew" without

any succession; and they did it time and again in history, as in the case of the first English Baptist churches. Baptists are not traditionalists and ritualists; and organic, baptismal, or official succession of any kind, whether we have it or not, is not essential to the spiritual perpetuity of Christ's Churches.

The theory of external succession may do for Romanism and Episcopacy, but not for Baptists who have a personal and doctrinal succession from the days of the apostles, until now, through their Anabaptist ancestors; and who through the truth and the Spirit, have the right, at any time, to restore organism, or ordinance, or office, in God's house—or improve their administration—when needed.

The claim that Dr. Whitsitt's position antagonizes the Scriptures such as Matt. xvi: 18; Eph. iii: 21; Dan. ii: 44 is absurd. Christ said truly that the gates of hell shall never prevail against His "Church;" but He never declared that His Church would always and everywhere remain orthodox, orderly, and unbroken in its local and organized continuity. Even in the days of the apostles, as already said, many of the churches became unorthodox and disorderly; and in less than a century after the apostles they were all swallowed up in the great apostasy. Local churches by the thousand, have been destroyed, in every age, by the devil;

and if, for a time, he were to destroy them all, God's Spirit, truth and people would remain to restore them, as in the case of the English and other Anabaptist or Baptist churches in history. There can be "witnesses" for Christ without churches, just as there can be brick without houses; but since the "witnesses" are always to exist, just so the churches are always reproduced through God's Spirit and truth. The kingdom or reign of Christ has never ended and will never end; and the glory of God will ever remain, by Jesus Christ, in the "Church," throughout all ages, world without end, although here and there in the ages the local Church, for a time, may be marred in its purity or broken in its continuity. Christ did not refer to any given local church, or churches. He spoke of the local "church" generically which, like the family, is God's ordination; and though, like the family, it has often been marred and broken up in its external form and in its internal purity, yet, like the family, it generically survives to-day, and will survive, if need be by revival, in its local sovereignty and independence to the end of time. Drs. Broaddus, Strong, and all the scholars, so far as I know, refer the word "church" in Matt. xvi: 18 to the "ideal" or "general" body of Christ; but I believe it means the generic local church—exalted to the glory of final, if not unbroken, perpetuity.

2. The spirit of this controversy with Dr. Whitsitt has developed the effect, in some of our brethren, of traditionalism and ritualism on the mind and character of those who plant themselves upon the "High Church" theory. Some of us display the spirit of the Romanist, the Episcopalian, the Pedobaptist; and it comes from the external "succession" theory which engenders Judaistic or Pharisaic pride—the spirit of caste and distinction above other people. I fear that there are some Baptists who have no charity for other Christians; who feel that they would be unclean if they touched a Pedobaptist in the market place. The traditional or ritualistic theory of succession has generated among us the spirit of boasting and controversy—the cold and flinty pride of orthodoxy and order—without love or practical efficiency in many. Thousands of true Baptist hearts are dried up with the discussion of our denominational peculiarities and in the assertion of our denominational caste and quality to the exclusion of missions and benevolence; and more than half our people are sitting down upon the stool of do-nothing, give-nothing and pray-nothing, under the delusive assumption that, because we are God's people above all others, he will take care of His Bride and His Truth, whether his people do anything or not. The greatest excitement which can be aroused is to get up a

debate between two professional controversialists about our distinctive peculiarities; but we cry in vain, except to the few, about missions, benevolence, education, methods of work and the spiritual and practical progress of the churches. One of the most obstructive factors in the way of Baptist progress, often, is that sort of demagoguery which seeks leadership and notoriety by wrapping itself up in the banner of a few denominational peculiarities, and setting itself to fighting the organization and enterprises of the denomination; and occasionally, under the cry of reformation, this Diotrophesian monster reads everybody out of Baptist ranks who does not follow in the literalistic path of traditionalism. Liberalism may be the bloated curse of Baptists in some quarters; but literalism is the withering blight which turns many of our churches into a valley of dry bones.

3. Again, wherever you find the traditional or the ritualistic spirit—the “High Church” theory among any people, you find the animus of bigotry, intolerance and persecution. The doctrine of “succession” wherever held long enough has made persecutors. With regard to Dr. Whitsitt himself this spirit has been displayed by some, if not many, of our brethren. Although a Christian gentleman and scholar—although a sound Baptist in every particular of our Confession of Faith—yet for a “question”

of difference in "Baptist History," I fear that I have heard some talk who, under other conditions, would have delivered him to the stake. He has been pronounced a "Judas," a "traitor," who sold his people for the price of an editorial in a newspaper; and when he wrote a book in which to explain his position, he was charged with mercenary motives in setting its price! I heard a number say that they would not read his book if it were given to them! Others declared that, if he was right, he should have kept the secret of his discovery to himself! Associations, conventions and churches with furious and hasty zeal, as of Pope and council, pronounced, so to speak, anathemas upon him and his book; and it seemed as if a few desired, for his sake, the destruction of the Seminary. I do not blame Baptists for vigilance and zeal in watching the gates of Zion—in keeping out heresy and in preserving purity—but I hate to see the spirit of persecution, especially born of ignorance, which not only refuses to investigate a matter of history, but proposes, without knowing why, to martyr a man for his opinions. How the newspapers have teemed with criticism and denunciation and epithet, at the hands of brethren many of whom knew nothing about the subject under discussion, and whose opinions were formed only by following other men no wiser nor better than Dr. Whitsitt! The

boast of Baptists in all the ages is freedom of conscience and fearlessness of investigation; but the traditional spirit has wrought among us the animus of denominational pride, intolerance and persecution. Well did our old Anabaptist brethren hold that "succession" was the "mark of the beast!" How true it is that the theory inwrought with the life and character of a people will make them exclusive, dogmatic and impatient of the opinion of others! Thank God for so many Baptists who have not caught this spirit; and for those who, while they have disagreed with Dr. Whitsitt, have tolerated his views and accorded to him the liberty of his conscience and opinions. He has made some mistakes as to the manner of introducing his "Question in Baptist History," which he has acknowledged; but Jacob, and David, and Peter made mistakes for which neither God nor their brethren cast them off. The main question at issue is this: Is Dr. Whitsitt's book true?

Above all, we learn the great lesson that the book of the Baptists is the Bible, even if we had no history at all. One of Dr. Whitsitt's critics wrote that if you take away baptismal succession, he had as soon join any of the Protestant denominations as to belong to the Baptists. Alas! my brother, traditionalism hath ruined thee! God's people, with His Spirit and truth, are above the external forms of religion;

and I belong to God's people who have witnessed for Christ in every age, and I hold to God's truth that has never been lost to the world. In the language of Prof. Vedder in a letter not long since, "I would be a Baptist if there was not another in the world; and if there are any who want to read me out of the denomination, and do not want to keep my company, they will have to get out themselves, for I am in to stay." Whatever the variations, irregularities, or breaks in the external forms of our people in the past, Baptists have the truth, the organization, ordinances and offices of Christ, in full force and operation now; and all our boast is in God who has kept us, and in His truth by which we have been fully restored to the order of the New Testament. We have long since returned from the captivity of Rome, like Judah from Babylon; and let us boast in the spirit and truth of the gospel, rather than in the externalism of the temple, or the church, which may be lost and restored at any time God may see fit. The Church in the wilderness was typified by Jerusalem in captivity; and Rome was typified by Babylon.

Dr. Whitsitt's discovery brings a needed revolution from the blight of traditionalism and mossbackism to the newer and greater advance of our denomination all along the line of Bible and missionary progress; in sound doctrine,

spiritual development and practical methods of work. Let us educate! educate! educate! in the direction of the spirit, truth and work of our religion; and let us rise up from the lethargy of hardshellism which, in spite of a hundred years of missionary effort, still holds our great body like a giant asleep and flat of his back, wriggling with only his head, his hands and his feet, but every now and then kicking with his legs, like a mule, against every enterprise of progress. Let us take care of our young people and put them to work; encourage our women in their great labor of love; extend our missionary and benevolent activities; build up our denominational schools and colleges; organize and keep in operation a Sunday school in every church; insist upon the New Testament plan of an elder or pastor in every church in town or country; maintain worship and preaching in every congregation on every Lord's Day; and then we shall be New Testament Baptists indeed, taking the world for Christ. The thing which Baptists need above everything else I know, at this time, is *prayer* and *hard work* everywhere. Let us take care of God's truth, and keep God's house clean by discipline; but *pray* and *work*.

As to our relation with other denominations, let us, in love and kindness, hold them to the Bible, not only for doctrine, but for practice; and in whatsoever we do not agree with them

let us not walk with them. Our "strict communion" is the bulwark of our New Testament ecclesiasticism; and the first great apostle of the doctrine was William Kiffin who, no doubt, was among the restorers of immersion among the English Baptists, in 1641. I agree with Kiffin; and so long as unscriptural forms of church government, or infant baptism, or baptismal regeneration, or sprinkling and pouring, or false doctrine, remains in any or all of these other denominations, let us hold them from our church fellowship and communion—however, we may fellowship or co-operate with them on the outside of church relations. Let us beware of alien immersion, alien ordination, as we would of alien communion, lest we fall into the snare and condemnation of our English brethren; for Baptists can never take the world except upon Bible principles and practices, conserved and perpetuated through a Scriptural church, without compromise with any other ecclesiastical relations or affiliations. We do not need baptismal succession in order to hold ecclesiastical nonfellowship with any form of error or heresy. It is enough to stand on the Bible and demand that the world shall come to us; and, like our brethren in all ages, we dare not, in anything, symbolize with Romanism or with any modification of it.

CHAPTER X.

CROSBY'S ACCOUNT OF THE RESTORATION OF IMMERSION BY THE BAPTISTS OF ENGLAND.

(From History of the Baptists, Edition 1738, Vol. I. pp. 96-107.)

“**T**HIS certain, that when some of the English Protestants (Baptists) were for reviving the ancient practice of *immersion*, they had several difficulties thrown in their way about a proper administrator, to *begin that method of baptizing*.

“Those who rejected the baptism of infants, at the beginning of the Reformation in England, had the same objection made against them; as Bishop Burnet observes:

‘One thing,’ says he, ‘was observed, that the ‘whole world, in that age, having been baptized ‘in infancy, if that baptism was nothing, then ‘there was now none truly baptized in being, but ‘all were in the state of nature. Now it did not ‘seem reasonable, that men who were not baptized themselves, should go and baptize others; ‘and therefore the first heads of that sect, not ‘being rightly baptized themselves, seemed not ‘to act with any authority, when they went to ‘baptize others.’

“In the like manner did they now argue against *the reviving of the practice of immersion which had for sometime been disused*: If immersion be the essential form of that ordinance, then there is none truly baptized; and can an *unbaptized* person be a proper *administrator*; or can a man be supposed to give that to another, which he has not first received himself?

“This difficulty did not a little perplex them; and they (the English Baptists) were divided in their opinion how to act in this matter, so as not to be guilty of any disorder or self-contradiction. Some, indeed, were of opinion, that the *first administrator* should baptize himself, and then proceed to the baptizing of others. Others were for sending to those foreign Protestants (Colle-giants) that had used *immersion for some time*, that so they might receive it from them. And others again thought it necessary to *baptism*, that the administrator be himself baptized, at least in an extraordinary case; but that whoever saw such a reformation necessary, might from the authority of Scripture lawfully *begin it*.

“I do not find any Englishman among the *first restorers of immersion in this latter age* accused of baptizing himself, but only the said John Smith; and there is ground to question the truth of that also.

“Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Jessop, and some others do indeed charge him with it; but they write, as

has been already observed, with so much passion and resentment, that it is not unlikely such men might take up such a report against him upon slender evidence, and after one had published it, the others might take it from him without any inquiry into the truth of it.

“The defenses which he wrote for himself are not to be met with; and in large quotations that his adversaries take out of them, I do not find one passage, wherein he acknowledges himself to have done any such thing; or attempts to justify any such practice; which, surely, had there been any such, would not have escaped their notice.

“There is one passage indeed which Mr. Clifton quotes from a treatise of Mr. Smith’s, which some would make a proof out of his own mouth, that he baptized himself; but being examined, it rather confirms the contrary. He is justifying, to the Brownists, his authority *to begin a new form of baptizing*, from the same principles by which they justified their beginning of *new churches*. And his words, according to their quotation, are these:

‘There is as good warrant for a man churching himself; for two men singly are no church, jointly they are a church; so two men *may put baptism on themselves*. Again faith, Mr. Smith, a man cannot baptize others into a church, himself being out of the church, or being no member.’

“Here are two principles laid down by Mr. Smith, which contradict the account they give of him: That upon the supposition of the *true baptism's being lost for sometime through the disuse of it*, 'tis necessary there should be two persons who must unite in the *revival* of it, in order to begin the administration thereof; and that the first administrator be a member of some church, who shall call and empower him to administer it to the members thereof.

“Now it is reasonable to conclude, that his practice was conformable to this. And I find mention made of one Mr. Helwisse, and Mr. John Morton, that were of Mr. Smith's opinion, and joined with him in this *reformation* of baptism; and according to the rules he lays down, their method must be this: That first they formed a church of their opinion in the point of baptism; then the church appoints two of these ministers to begin the administration of it, by baptizing each other; after this, one, or both of these baptize the rest of the congregation.

“But enough of this. If he were guilty of what they charge him with, 'tis no blemish on English Baptists; who neither approved of any such method, nor did they receive their baptism from him.

“*The two other methods that I mentioned, were indeed both taken by the Baptists, at their revival of immersion in England; as I find it acknowledged and justified in their writings.*

“The former of these (methods) was, to send over to the foreign Anabaptists, who descended from the ancient Waldenses, in France or Germany, that so one or more, receiving baptism from them, might become proper administrators of it to others. Some thought this the best way; and acted accordingly; as appears from Mr. Hutchinson’s account, in the epistle of his treatise of the Covenant and Baptism, where he says:

‘When the professors of these nations had
‘been a long time wearied with the yoke of su-
‘perstitions, ceremonies, traditions of men, and
‘corrupt mixtures in the worship and service of
‘God; it pleased the Lord to break these yokes,
‘and by a very strong impulse of His Spirit
‘upon the hearts of His people, to convince them
‘of the necessity of reformation. Divers pious
‘and very gracious people, having often sought
‘the Lord by fasting and prayer, that he would
‘show them the pattern of his house, the goings
‘out and the comings in thereof, etc., resolved,
‘by the grace of God, not to receive or prac-
‘tice any piece of positive worship, which
‘had not precept or example from the Word of
‘God. Infant baptism coming, of course, under
‘consideration, after long search and many de-
‘bates, it was found to have no footing in the
‘Scriptures, the only rule and standard to try
‘doctrines by; but on the contrary a mere inno-

'vation, yea, the profanation of the ordinance of
'God. And though it was purposed to be laid
'aside, yet what fears, tremblings, and tempta-
'tions did attend them, lest they should be mis-
'taken, considering how many learned and godly
'men were of an opposite opinion! How gladly
'would they have had the rest of their brethren
'gone along with them! But when there was
'no hope, they concluded, that a Christian's
'faith must not stand in the wisdom of men; and
'that every one must give an account of himself
'to God; and so resolved to practice according to
'their light. The great objection was, the want
'of an *administrator*; which, as I have heard,
'says he, was removed, by sending certain mes-
'sengers to Holland, whence they were supplied.'

"This agrees with an account given of the
matter in an ancient manuscript, said to be
written by Mr. William Kiffin, *who lived in
those times, and was a leader among those times,
and was a leader among those of that (Blunt's)
persuasion.*

"This relates, that several sober and pious
persons belonging to the congregation of the
Dissenters (Baptists) about London, were con-
vinced that believers were the only proper sub-
jects of baptism, and that it ought to be admin-
istered by *immersion*, or dipping the whole
body, in resemblance of a burial and resurrec-
tion, according to Colos. ii:12 and Rom. vi:4.

That they often met together to pray and confer about this matter, and consult what methods they should take to enjoy this ordinance in its primitive purity: That they could not be satisfied about any administrator in England to begin this practice; *because tho' some in this nation rejected the baptism of infants, yet they had not, as they knew of, revived the ancient custom of immersion:* But hearing that *some* in the Netherlands practiced it, they agreed to send over one Mr. Richard Blunt, who understood the Dutch language: That he went accordingly, carrying letters of recommendation with him, and was kindly received both by the church there and Mr. John Batte, the teacher: That upon his return, he baptized Mr. Samuel Blacklock, a minister, and these two baptized the rest of the company, whose names are in the manuscript, to the number of fifty-three.

“So that those who followed this scheme did not derive their baptism from the aforesaid Mr. Smith, or his congregation at Amsterdam, it being an ancient congregation of foreign Baptists (Collegiants) in the Low Countries to whom they sent.

“But the greatest number of the English Baptists, and the more judicious, looked upon all this as needless trouble, and what proceeded from the old Popish Doctrine of right to administer sacraments by an uninterrupted succession, which

neither the Church of Rome nor the Church of England, much less the modern Dissenters, could prove to be with them. They affirmed, therefore, and practiced accordingly, that after a general corruption of baptism, an unbaptized person might warrantably baptize, and so begin a reformation.

“Mr. Spillsbury, who was falsely reported to have gone over to Holland to receive baptism of Mr. John Smith, declares expressly against a man’s baptizing himself, and judges it to be far from any rule in the gospel so to do; but observes, that when there is a beginning, some one must be first. ‘And because,’ says he, ‘some make it such an error, and so far from any rule or example, for a man to baptize others, who is himself unbaptized, and so think thereby to shut up the ordinance of God in such a strait, that none can come by it, but through the authority of the Popedom of Rome: let the reader consider who baptized John the Baptist before he baptized others: and if no man did, then whether he did not baptize others, he himself being unbaptized. We are taught by this what to do on like occasions.’

‘Further,’ says he, ‘I fear men put more than is of right due to it, that so prefer it, above the church, and all other ordinances besides; for they can assume and erect a church, take in and cast out members, elect and ordain offi-

‘cers, and administer the Supper, and all anew, without looking after *succession*, any further than the Scriptures: But as for *baptism*, they must have that successively from the Apostles, though it come through the hands of Pope *Joan*. What is the cause of this, that men can do all from the Word but only baptism?’

“Now is it probable that this man should go over the sea to find an administrator of baptism, or receive it from the hands of one who baptized himself?

“The *learned* Mr. Tombes does excellently defend this last method of *restoring the true* baptism. ‘If,’ says he, ‘*no continuance of adult baptism can be proved*, and baptism by such persons is wanting, yet I can conceive what many Protestant writers do yield, when they are pressed by the Papists to shew the calling of the first reformers; *that after an universal corruption*, the necessity of the thing doth justify the persons that reform, though wanting an ordinary regular calling, will justify in such a case, both the lawfulness of the minister baptizing, that hath not been rightly baptized himself, and the sufficiency of that baptism to the person so baptized. And this very thing,’ says he, ‘that in a case where a baptized minister cannot be had, it is lawful for an unbaptized person to baptize, and his baptism is valid, is both the resolution of

'Aquinas, and of Zanchius, an eminent Protestant. *Queritur an is possit baptizare eos, quos ad Christum convertit, ut ipse ab alio ex illis a se conversis baptizetur. Ratio est, quia minister est verbi, a Christo extraordinem excitatus, eoque ut talis minister potest cum illius ecclesiolæ consensu symmistam constituere, et ab eo, ut baptizetur curare. Whereby,*' says Mr. Tombes, 'you may perceive that this is no new truth; that an unbaptized person may in some case baptize another, and he baptize him, being baptized of him.'

"I will only add farther what is said on this head by the honorable Henry Laurence, Esq.; another learned Baptist, who has excellently defended the true baptism and the manner of reviving it in these later times:

'It cannot be reasonably objected,' says he, 'that he that baptizeth should necessarily be himself a baptized person: For tho' ordinarily it will be so, yet it is not necessary to the ordinance; for not the personal baptism of him that administers, but the due commission he hath for baptizing, is alone considerable to make him a true minister of baptism. And here that expression holds not, *One cannot give what he hath not*, as a man cannot teach me, that wants knowledge himself; because no man gives his own baptism, but conveys, as a public person, that which is given us by Christ.

‘A poor man that hath nothing of his own, may give me gold, that is, the money of another man, by virtue of being sent for that purpose. So if a man can show his commission, the writing and seal of him that sent it, it is enough here. Else what would become of the great baptizer, John the Baptist, who had a fair commission to baptize, but was not himself baptized that we read of: Or if he should be, which cannot be affirmed; yet the first baptizer, whoever he was, must at the time of his first administration of that ordinance be unbaptized.’

“Tho’ these things were published at different times, I have put them together, to end the matter at once. It was a point much disputed for some years. The Baptists were not a little uneasy about it at first; and the Pedobaptists thought to render all the baptizings among these invalid, for want of a proper administrator to begin their practice: *But by the excellent reasonings of these and other learned men, we see their (the Baptists’) beginning was well defended, upon the same principles on which all other Protestants built their reformation.*”

This extract is a copy from a volume of the oldest edition of Crosby’s History of the Baptists in the world. Its date is, London, 1738, the year in which the history was first published—printed and sold by the editor; and it is possible

I have the oldest copy of Crosby in this country—certainly as old as any one in the world can have. This extract, thus published, speaks for itself. It shows beyond question that immersion was revived by the English Baptists in the time of Kiffin—“*who lived in those times, and was a leader among those times, and was a leader among those of that persuasion*”—that is, of the Blunt persuasion which sent to Holland for immersion instead of restoring it by an unbaptized administrator, as the leading majority of English Baptists did, in the same “times.” Crosby is evidently with the latter class who adopted the third method; and he unqualifiedly settles the question of restoring baptism, at the time of Kiffin, by the writings of other Baptists who record the fact and discuss the methods of baptismal restoration. Crosby repudiates baptism from John Smyth, whatever his mode; and he evidently has no sympathy with the methods of sending to Holland for immersion; but he is clearly in favor of the method of restoring it by an unbaptized administrator, and he is equally clear in showing that both methods were adopted in the time of Kiffin and those who wrote about the controversy with the Pedobaptists about the administrator of baptism.

The italics are mine—also the parentheses—except where marginal readings are included.

DR. WHITSITT'S NEW BOOK,

—BY—

PROF. HENRY C. VEDDER.

DR. WHITSITT'S NEW BOOK.

READERS of *The Examiner* have probably forgotten the stir made some months ago over certain conclusions reached regarding Baptist history by Rev. William H. Whitsitt, D.D., President of the Southern Theological Seminary, at Louisville. A few weeks ago he made a more complete exposition of his views in a volume entitled, *A Question in Baptist History*. This has been the signal for a new onslaught upon him by his critics, not quite so fierce as the first, for the critics have found the book a pretty tough morsel. Having access to most of the Baptist papers of the United States, I have carefully read everything of any consequence that has been printed on the subject, and have also studied the whole matter afresh, using all available light. Certain conclusions have been reached that are likely to be final, until new and important evidence shall be produced as the result of further investigations.

Dr. Whitsitt seems to have shown that immersion was introduced among the English Baptists about the year 1641, if any reliance is to be placed on human testimony. We have a definite narrative of the fact of the introduction; we

have testimonies by the dozen, from Baptists and their opponents alike, that immersion was an innovation among them; and lastly, nobody has been able to produce a single authenticated case of immersion among English Baptists before 1641. The proof of Dr. Whitsitt's thesis, both positive and negative, is complete; unless further evidence can be produced the conclusion of those who study the facts, without having a theory to support, will be that the case is closed.

The credibility of the narrative is indeed questioned by the critics of Dr. Whitsitt, and he has been accused of making a grievous error regarding this matter; and as this is the only really vital question that has been raised regarding his book, it may be well to state the case. Crosby in his *History of the Baptists* gives in his own words, not in exact quotation, the story of the introduction of immersion, saying that he took it from "an ancient manuscript, said to be written by Mr. William Kiffin." In his *St. Mary's Chapel Case*, Mr. George Gould prints extracts from the MSS. of Mr. H. Jessey, who, in 1637, became pastor of that ancient church of Dissenters in London, from which many of the Independent and Baptist churches took their rise. He was the successor of Henry Jacob and John Lathrop, and an eminent Baptist. Mr. Gould, after giving certain extracts, proceeds to speak of Crosby and the so-called

Kiffin MS., and then says: "As I have the same document now lying before me, I shall allow the writer to tell his own tale." He then gives the very words that Crosby had paraphrased. Now this second quotation so resembles the first as to lead Dr. Whitsitt to draw the conclusion that Mr. Gould is still quoting from the MSS. of the Jessey and the early records of this ancient church of Dissenters. Mr. Gould does not explicitly say this, but it is a fair inference from what he does say. And the inference is greatly strengthened by comparison of the two sets of quotations, which in spelling, form of making entries, and the like, certainly appear to be taken from the same document. Dr. Whitsitt's inference is probably correct; and at any rate, his critics are not warranted in charging him with having made here an egregious blunder or an unwarranted use of his documentary authorities.

The narrative, in this double version, seems authentic beyond reasonable question; and if so, it establishes that immersion was first introduced among Particular Baptists in England, in or about the year 1641. This conclusion Dr. Whitsitt strengthens by quoting testimonies from Baptists and their opponents that immersion was regarded by both alike as an innovation about this time. So far as these testimonies are drawn from his own researches, his

critics have failed to point out in them any flaw. But he has also quoted freely from the researches of the late Dr. Henry M. Dexter. Here there may be more room for cavil; some of the quotations may require modification or abandonment. For myself, after my experience of what Dr. Dexter was capable of doing with documents that I can examine, I would not take his uncorroborated testimony about the contents of any document relating to Baptists that I had not seen. It is more than likely that some of these quotations are garbled and unfair; one of them has already been shown to be of that nature, and Dr. Whitsitt or the printer made the matter worse by turning Dexter's brackets, in which he had inclosed his misleading comment, into parentheses, thus making the inclosed matter appear to be part of the original. But allowing for all possible cases of this sort, there is still enough and more than enough to support the testimony of the Jessey documents or the Kiffin MS., whichever name one chooses to give it.

I have heretofore held that probably immersion was practiced by some of the General Baptists before 1641. My chief reason for so believing was the well known passage in Leonard Busher's *Religious Peace*, in which he describes those baptized as "dipped for dead in the water." But even if it be granted that Busher

and his congregation in Holland practiced what he thus avowed (of which there is no proof), he cannot be shown to have had any connection with Baptists in England. I had also somewhat relied on the saying of Featley that he had known Baptists near his residence, of whom he complained that they defiled the rivers with their impure washings, "for more than twenty years." But the Jessey church was in Southwark, London, which was Featley's parish; and if they did not know any in England who immersed, it is in the highest degree unlikely that Featley did. He probably did not intend his "twenty years" to cover all the particulars of Baptist practice that he mentioned, but only their continued existence as pestilent heretics; especially as he elsewhere speaks of the article on baptism in the Confession of 1644 as "wholly soured with the new leaven of anabaptism." This geographical connection of Featley and the Jessey church Dr. Whitsitt points out on page seventy-three of his book; it is a consideration that I had entirely overlooked, and slight as it is, from one point of view, I believe that it turns the scale in the matter of Featley's evidence, and that he cannot be fairly quoted as testifying to immersion before 1641. I have reluctantly come to this conclusion because I see no escape from it.

To put the thing in a nutshell, I find myself

in entire agreement with Dr. Whitsitt on every matter of the least consequence relating to the case of immersion among the English Baptists; so far as the facts are known, any other conclusion than his seems impossible. Further research may necessitate other conclusions, but there is slight possibility of this. As to his introductory matter on the Continental Anabaptists, I am inclined to think that further research will show a greater prevalence of immersion among them than he is disposed to allow. As to the case of Roger Williams, which Dr. Whitsitt relegates to an appendix, I fully accept the conclusion that "in the present state of information it would be unwise to pronounce with certainty any conclusion regarding this question." Dr. Whitsitt is still inclined to the belief that the baptism of Williams was an affusion. I am still inclined to regard it as an immersion, but I do not care sixpence which it was.

THE WHITSITT CONTROVERSY

—BY—

PROF. ALBERT H. NEWMAN, D.D., LL.D.

CHAPTER I.

THE WHITSITT CONTROVERSY.

I FEEL myself highly honored in being requested by the editors of so old and influential a journal as the *Christian Index* to review a controversy that has deeply interested my brethren of the South and that seems to be threatening the harmony of the denomination. That the subject-matter of the controversy is a matter of apparently slight importance, detracts nothing from the seriousness of the actual situation. The President of one of our noblest Baptist educational institutions in the world, the glory of the Baptists of the South—made sacred by the heroic sacrifices and the splendid services of Boyce, and Broaddus, and Manly—has become so obnoxious to a considerable proportion of his brethren that many of our delegated bodies, (associations, etc.) are insisting upon his removal, while those who, whether they agree with the honored President or not on the historical questions that underlie the controversy, are determined that he shall not be thrust from his position on such an issue, have doubtless, on some occasions, shown more of

impatience than was meet toward those who regard Dr. Whitsitt's views as heretical, and feel conscience-bound to oppose him with all their might.

While the task assigned to me is honorable, I cannot but feel that it is ungrateful. I have studied history enough, and have had sufficient experience to know that no dispute on an historical or a doctrinal question can stir the life of a great body of Christian people as this has done, if it have not two sides to it. It is easy to attribute the agitation to a few prejudiced and determined brethren with selfish and unworthy purposes to subserve; but it seems impossible to me that the personal influence of a few men, however ill-disposed and energetic, should make such a commotion in a great religious body. There must be an antecedent preparedness among the masses of our people for the work of the agitators. The alarm that has been so widely manifested is a genuine alarm, and, I dare say, is shared by many of our best people. My convictions, which I feel bound to express, that the piety, the honesty, and the learning of the denomination are not all on one side, will tend to make me obnoxious to both parties. But to be of service to the cause of truth and peace is of vastly more importance than to be popular, and while I do not hope to influence perceptibly extreme men on either side and am not over san-

guine as to any favorable results from my efforts, I cannot but feel that a large majority of the great brotherhood will give a patient hearing to an impartial review of the situation, and will welcome any honest attempt at conciliation.

My only qualifications for this undertaking are: 1. The fact that I am a Southern Baptist and feel a deep interest in the welfare of the churches and institutions of the Southern Baptist Convention. 2. That years of residence outside of the limits of the Convention have supposedly made me free from local prejudices and prepossessions. 3. That I have devoted my life, so far, largely to the study of church history and am somewhat practiced in the interpretation of historical documents.

I am of the opinion that back of Dr. Whitsitt's published statements bearing on the history of doctrine and practice regarding believers' baptism, and of the antagonism that has been aroused thereby, there is a radical difference of view between Dr. Whitsitt and his critics touching our Lord's words: "On this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it."

DR. WHITSITT'S VIEWS OF CHURCH PERPETUITY.

Now, I have no formulated statement of Dr. Whitsitt's view of the interpretation of this text.

I have reason to believe that he accepts, with all his heart, our Lord's promise as having been made by one who knew the purport of what he was saying and is abundantly able to secure its fulfillment. He no doubt believes that the promise or prophecy has been fulfilled and will assuredly be fulfilled to the end. That he would agree with his great predecessor in office in understanding by "church" as used in this passage, "the spiritual Israel, never actually assembled," "all real Christians * * * conceived of as an ideal congregation or assembly," may be taken for granted. Such being the case, he would consider the tracing of an unbroken succession of regular Baptist (apostolic) churches a matter of far less importance than that of tracing the continuity of evangelical life. From Dr. Whitsitt's published writings I feel sure that he would accept this statement of his position. If so, he is in accord with the great majority of the Baptists of the present and the past and with the teaching that has from the beginning had the support of all the theological seminaries of this Continent.

THE OPPOSING VIEW OF CHURCH PERPETUITY.

Some, if not all, of Dr. Whitsitt's opponents have committed themselves to the theory that the fulfillment of Christ's promise involves an unbroken succession of organized Baptist churches.

“If the gates of hell have not prevailed against the Church,” writes Dr. Jarrell; “If God’s glory (referring to Eph. iii: 21) is in the true church ‘throughout all ages,’ as sprinkling and pouring make a false church, to say the question before us is of no Scriptural or fundamental importance is, in effect, to say it matters not whether Christ’s promise is here true or false. * * * If immersion was ‘lost,’ and unbaptized, non-church members have, without any commission from heaven, done all this, surely they can do so now. * * * Convince me that Dr. Whitsitt’s position is sustained by the Bible and history, and, to say the least, I will not hesitate to change from one denomination to another at my convenience.”

It is not likely that many of those who believe in a perpetuity of Baptist churches would go so far as to stake their ecclesiastical all on a single set of historical facts. Probably the great majority, if convinced that a succession of Baptist churches cannot be proved, would examine anew Christ’s promise with a view to reaching an interpretation of it in accordance with the facts of history, and having reached the conviction that the promise may involve only a perpetuity of Christian life, would still see enough advantage in the Baptist position to command their allegiance. Christ’s command to baptize and to be baptized is just as obligatory on the Christians

of to-day as his command to evangelize. We are not responsible for the perversions of the ordinances in the past; but we are responsible for a right use of them in the present.

This I believe to be the true position and the historical Baptist position.*

The anti-Pedobaptists of the Reformation time had no hesitation about introducing believers' baptism anew. John Smyth and Thomas Helwys in 1609 introduced believers' baptism (or what they considered baptism) anew. The latter adhered to the belief that the restoration of baptism was justifiable, and was the founder of the English General Baptists. The former reached the conviction that what he had done was unjustifiable, and sought membership in a Mennonite church. The English Particular Baptists (1633 onward) were at first content to

*In a note to Dr. Eaton who denies that the succession theory obtains in the South, Prof. Newman, who had supposed the theory somewhat general, says:

"MY DEAR DR. EATON: It is reassuring to be informed that there are no Baptist 'Successionists' in the South in the objectionable sense of that term. For myself, I am anxious to find as many Baptists as possible in every land and in every age. What I object to is the determination to prove an unbroken succession by hook or by crook, and the seeming implication that such succession is essential to the validity of present day baptism. If in supposing that certain Southern Baptists held to this highly objectionable view, I have been laboring under a delusion, I am ready to beg pardon of any that may feel themselves to have been misrepresented, and to rejoice to find my Southern brethren more uniformly sound than I suspected."

It is but just to say, however, that there is a very considerable number of Southern Baptists who are "Successionists." Dr. J. R. Graves was the father of the theory. Ray, Jarrell and others have written books to prove the fiction, and thousands believe the doctrine. L.

introduce believers' baptism (or what they supposed to be baptism) afresh. John Spillsbury, the leader of the party, puts the matter thus: "And because some make it such an error, and so far from any rule or example for a man to baptize others, who is himself unbaptized, and so think thereby to shut up the ordinance of God in such a strait, that none can come by it, but through the authority of the Popedom of Rome; let the reader consider who baptized John the Baptist, before he baptized others, and if no man did, then whether he did not baptize others, he himself being unbaptized. We are taught by this what to do upon the like occasions." He is further quoted as saying: "I fear men put more than is of right due to it (baptism) that so prefer it above the Church, and all other ordinances besides; for they (referring no doubt to the English Separatists of the time) take in and cast out members, elect and ordain officers, and administer the Supper, and all anew, without any looking after succession, any further than the Scriptures. But, as for baptism, they must have that successively from the Apostles, though it comes through the hands of Pope Joan. What is the cause of this, that men can do all from the Word but only baptism?" (Quoted by Crosby, I. 103, 4.)

Roger Williams, at Providence, introduced baptism anew (1639), but soon grew dissatisfied

with what he had done and left the church he had founded. Believing that the ordinances had been lost in the mediæval apostasy, he denied the right of any one to restore them without a special divine commission.

So much will suffice regarding the points of view of the two parties in the present controversy.



CHAPTER II.

THE WHITSITT CONTROVERSY.

IT MAY be useful at this stage of our review to state as clearly as may be the charges that are made against Dr. Whitsitt and the grounds upon which these charges are based.

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA ARTICLE.

The occasion of the attacks to which he has been subjected was the publication in Johnson's Encyclopedia of an article on the "Baptists," in which certain statements were made regarding the date and the circumstances of the introduction of immersion among Baptists in England and in America. In his account of the rise of the English General Baptists in Amsterdam, Holland (1608 or 1609), and of the introduction of a new baptism by John Smyth, he writes: "The mode of this baptism, it is believed, was sprinkling, since that had now become the general mode in England, and the Brownists do not appear to have used any other. Certainly there was no other mode among the Mennonites, and sprinkling had by this time become almost universal in every section in Holland and Ger-

many." Referring to the rise of the Particular Baptists in London (1633), he says: "They all submitted to adult baptism, apparently by sprinkling. * * * Soon after the organization of this first church, a discussion was raised concerning the proper mode of administering baptism, and the conviction was at length established that immersion was the only Scriptural mode. Much embarrassment resulted when they began to consult as to the proper course of procedure. Mr. Spillsbury and most of the members of his church held the opinion that, since the circumstances were extraordinary, it was admissible for any minister to administer immersion, even though he himself had not received the rite. * * * Others were discontented, and insisted upon obtaining succession. * * * No succession could be obtained in England; they were aware of the existence of the General Baptists, but as these were in the practice of sprinkling, Mr. Richard Blunt * * * cited attention to the Collegiants, who, in the year 1619, had established the practice of immersion at Rhynsburg, and proposed to send thither and obtain succession from them. He was deputed to go abroad for that purpose, and * * * was courteously received by Mr. John Batte. * * * In due time Batte consented to immerse him, and returning to England he administered the rite to

the rest of his company." He calls attention to the supposition of de Hoop Scheffer that the Rhynsburgers derived immersion from the Polish Anabaptists, who in turn may have derived it from such Swiss Anabaptists as practiced immersion. He refers also to the continuance of the controversy as to succession between Spillsbury and Kiffin.

"As soon as they perceived this change, the General Baptists almost immediately adopted it; one of their ministers, Mr. Edward Barber, has the honor to have written the initial treatise in the long controversy in favor of immersion."

Referring to the introduction of believers' baptism by Ezekiel Holliman and Roger Williams at Providence in 1639, he writes: "The ceremony was most likely performed by sprinkling." Immersion, he thinks, was introduced into this community about 1644 by Mark Lucar, who had been among those immersed in London in 1641 and was a member of Spillsbury's church from 1633.

THE INDEPENDENT EDITORIAL.

In response to his critics and to vindicate himself against the charge that he had followed in this matter the leadership of the late Dr. Henry M. Dexter, who was well known to have been strongly prejudiced against the Baptists, Dr. Whitsitt published an article in the *Religious*

Herald, also an article in the *Examiner* in answer to Dr. King's criticism of the Encyclopedia article in which he claimed that he had been a pioneer in the investigation of this question and that in 1880 some time before Dr. Dexter had published anything in this line, he had announced his discovery editorially in the *New York Independent*. He also claimed to have made very extensive researches in the Mennonite collection in Amsterdam and in the great collection in the British Museum. The *Independent* editorial now became an object of attack. It was charged that the article was conceived in a spirit hostile to the Baptists and their claims and that the publication of such an article in such a way was an act of disloyalty to his own denomination. The editorial begins by criticising the *Congregationalist*, (Dr. Dexter's paper), for speaking of "the well known immersion of Roger Williams by the unimmersed Ezekiel Holliman." "To be sure," it continues, "all the Baptists of America so assume; but the editor of the *Congregationalist* is more accurately acquainted with the origin of Baptist history than any of the Baptists themselves, and we expected that its statement would be more accurate. As we understand it, Roger Williams was never a Baptist in the modern sense—that is, never was immersed; and the ceremony referred to was anabaptism, rebap-

tism by sprinkling, and not 'catabaptism,' or baptism by immersion. * * * Up to the year 1641 all the Baptists employed sprinkling and pouring as the modes of baptism. Now is it reasonable to suppose that Mr. Williams, in joining the Baptists, should have made use of a form of baptism which they had never practiced or thought of? To us it seems an historical anachronism."

In reply to continued attacks Dr. Whitsitt has recently issued a volume in which he formally withdraws nothing that he has written and seeks by an elaborate array of authorities to substantiate the position that immersion was first introduced among English Baptists in 1641 and among American Baptists probably about 1644.

As regards the English Baptists, Dr. Whitsitt in the recent volume referred to, states the issue as follows: "Whether the immersion of adult believers was practiced in England by the Anabaptists before the year 1641? Whether these English people first adopted immersion for baptism and thus became Baptists in or about the year 1641?"

The situation may be summed up as follows:

1. The article in Johnson's Encyclopedia is not unduly dogmatic with respect either to the nature of John Smyth's baptism, or to the date of the introduction of immersion among the Par-

ticular Baptists of England, or to the baptism received and administered by Roger Williams. In each case he carefully abstained from expressing certainty, contenting himself with the claim of a high degree of probability for the positions taken. He evidently had due consideration for the sensibilities of his brethren who lay stress on apostolic succession in relation to the administration of right baptism and sought to conciliate them by pointing out the possibility of establishing a line of succession up to the early Reformation time through the Collegiants and the Polish Socinian Anabaptists. His statement that the "earliest organized Baptist church" belongs to the year 1610 or 1611 is, of course, inconsistent with his claim that the English Anabaptists first became Baptists in or about the year 1641. If the followers of Smyth and Helwys (1610 onward) were only Anabaptists, why should Dr. Whitsitt speak of them as constituting the "earliest organized Baptist church?" Multitudes of anti-Pedobaptist churches had existed from 1524 onward, to say nothing of such as are known to have existed in the Middle Ages, etc. In the two writings it is evident that the author has employed the term "Baptist" in different senses: in the one he uses it to designate the party of English Separatists that about 1609 organized a church on an anti-Pedobaptist basis and whose deriva-

tive congregations, to be known later as General Baptists, adopted immersion about 1641; in the other he restricts the term to such as would now be recognized as Regular Baptists. This inconsistency, while real, is not necessarily misleading.

2. The *Independent* editorial is a far more serious matter. It is understood that Dr. Whitsitt and his supporters feel free to acknowledge that in publishing such an article in such a way he committed an impropriety and that the spirit displayed was not that of thoroughgoing loyalty to his denomination. No critic to the end of time would ever on internal grounds have attributed the article to a Baptist. He virtually distinguishes himself from the Baptists by stating that "all the Baptists of America" assume what he takes to be contrary to the facts. Were it not that he claims the authorship of the article, one would be inclined to suspect that he had simply furnished the materials and that the editor had wrought them over in such a way as to make them as stinging as possible to the Baptists. It is exceedingly unfortunate that having committed such an indiscretion Dr. Whitsitt should have proclaimed himself the author of a performance so little to his credit as a denominational leader. This he did in the interest of his reputation as an original investigator and as a discoverer of

important historical facts. In this article he is far more dogmatic than in those published more recently over his own name. He asserts without qualification that "up to the year 1641 all Baptists employed sprinkling and pouring as the mode of baptism." According to his recent statement, there were no Baptists before this date, and if by Baptists he means anti-Pedobaptists the statement is incorrect according to his own showing. He speaks of Roger Williams as "joining the Baptists," which is not a proper way of putting it. Williams formed a new Baptist party and was simply carrying out the dictates of his own conscience without the slightest reference, so far as appears, to what had been done by English anti-Pedobaptists. When Dr. Whitsitt claims that in 1639 immersion "had never been practiced or thought of" (presumably among the English anti-Pedobaptists) he goes much farther than the facts warrant. Immersion must have been perfectly well known to Williams and to all the anti-Pedobaptists of the time as a mode of baptism, and with the Bible in their hands it is not difficult to account for its introduction. The wonder is that it was not uniformly practiced.

It may be felt by some that I should have confined myself in this review to the recently published book; but it is these earlier statements, rather than the book, that have led to the

present irritation, and in an attempt impartially to review the controversy fairness requires that full weight should be given to all the facts.

3. I think it may fairly be said that Dr. Whitsitt has so given ground for a suspicion that he glories in considering himself the discoverer of facts disparaging to the anti-Pedobaptist parties of the earlier time. He has such a horror of the view that the validity of our church organization and ordinances depends upon an unbroken succession of Baptist churches, that he has apparently, felt far more interest in bringing to light the non-Baptist than the Baptist features of the evangelical parties that form the chief reliance of the successionists. This attitude, while under the circumstances it is not greatly to be wondered at, is none the less unfortunate in a church historian. The historian should seek to rise above partisanship of every kind and should make it his business to discover and to bring forward the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, without reference to the polemical use that may be made of the result of his investigations. He should rejoice to find in the religious parties of the past as close a conformity to the apostolic life and practice as a sympathetic interpretation of the materials will bear. The fact that sources are at best meager and in large measure hostile in their purpose, and that long continued persecution

tended to prevent the rounded development of these Christians in doctrine and practice, should lead him to view sympathetically their failures to attain in every particular to the apostolic standard. That in their desperate struggle for existence and the greatly increased danger that the ordinary practice of immersion would have involved the anti-Pedobaptists of the 16th century focused their thought on the evils of infant baptism and that they were for the most part content with sprinkling or pouring as the form of believers' baptism, is to be deplored, but was not unnatural. But they were so absolutely loyal to the New Testament as they understood it and their views of the ordinances were otherwise so completely apostolic and Baptist, that I feel like recognizing them as essentially on our own platform and to thank God for their noble testimony to so much of the truth. Now this may be precisely Dr. Whitt's view and I should be far from charging him with the opposite; but it seems certain that an impression has been made that he is willing to score a point against the successionists at the expense of the Christian heroes of the past centuries.

CHAPTER III.

THE WHITSITT CONTROVERSY.

NO RESTATEMENT and review every point that has been brought forward in opposition to Dr. Whitsitt's published views on the historical questions under discussion would be tedious and would subserve no useful end. It will be my purpose in this and succeeding chapters to limit myself as closely as possible to what may seem essential to the argument. It seems convenient to follow the order of Dr. Whitsitt's discussion in "A Question in Baptist History."

BAPTISM IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

I venture to think that Dr. Whitsitt and his critics alike have laid more stress on the practice of the Church of England than it deserves. That the mode of baptism prescribed in the Prayer Book of Edward VI, for healthy infants (trine immersion) was commonly disused long before 1640 seems evident. The mode allowed for sickly infants (pouring) seems to have been generally preferred by parents and allowed by the officiating clergy. That immersion in the Church of England was as rare about 1640, as Dr. Whitsitt would

have us believe, has been rendered highly improbable by his opponents who have brought to light a considerable body of facts with which we may suppose he was previously unacquainted. That some of the clergy attached importance to immersion as the primitive form of baptism and as the only form that properly sets forth the symbolism of the ordinance is evident from the work of "D. R." (Daniel Rogers), entitled "A Treatise of the Two Sacraments of the Gospel, Baptism and the Lord's Supper," and a third edition of which was published in London in 1635. (See article by Dr. W. H. King, in the *Western Recorder* for November 5th, and article in the *Freeman*, London, October 23d.) The argument of this writer for dipping is from a Baptist point of view eminently satisfactory. That the work should have reached a third edition would seem to indicate that a considerable number of people were at that time interested in the question as to the proper mode of baptism. Many other notices have been collected that tend to show that immersion was still a live issue in the Church of England and that it was still occasionally practiced about 1640. If Dr. Whitsitt had been acquainted with this work, he would hardly have been so positive in giving priority in the assertion of the sole validity of immersion to Edward Barber. (See pp. 112 and 115 of Dr. Whitsitt's book.) But sticklers

for the exact observance of the form prescribed in the Prayer Book were doubtless, for the most part, High Churchmen, as was John Wesley when he insisted on the trine immersion of infants a century later, and it is not likely that English anti-Pedobaptists were attracted by the arguments or the practices of their bitter enemies.

PURITANISM.

English Puritanism, from whose ranks the Baptists of England came forth, followed the Reformed churches of the Continent in regarding baptism as a ceremonial washing with water, symbolical of inner cleansing, and in supposing the amount of water employed and the manner of its application matters of indifference.

The practice of the Established Church about 1640 is irrelevant, unless it be intended to show on the one hand that immersion, as a mode of baptism, was so nearly extinct that the English anti-Pedobaptists could not have been expected to know it had ever been practiced, or on the other hand that its use in the Church of England, supposing it to have been common, would have necessarily predisposed them in its favor. It may be asserted with all confidence that no one at that time need have been ignorant that immersion was baptism, and that the anti-Pedobaptists would have been more likely to be re-

pelled than attracted by High Church insistence on conformity to the prescribed ritual.

BAPTISM AMONG THE ANABAPTISTS.

A few cases of immersion among the anti-Pedobaptists of the Reformation time might be added to those mentioned by Dr. Whitsitt (following de Hoop Scheffer). The reason given by the latter for calling in question the practice of immersion at St. Gall in 1525, is insufficient, and Dr. Whitsitt might safely have gone further than to speak of the practice of immersion at this time as possible. The flocking of the people for baptism to the River Sitter, at a considerable distance from the town, can be satisfactorily explained only on the supposition that the baptism administered was immersion. That immersion was practiced to some extent for a time in Augsburg, Dr. Whitsitt admits. A recent German writer (Gerbert, *Geschichte der Strassburger Sectenbewegung*, p. 93) supposes that immersion was practiced to some extent in Strasburg, about 1529. He seems to base his supposition on the confession of two prisoners that were baptized "before the Butcher's Gate." He thinks that an "arm of the Rhine" was used for this purpose. One would need to know something of the locality of the Butcher's Gate, in order to judge intelligently as to the correctness of Gerbert's surmise. Others, examined at

the same time, confessed to having been baptized in private houses. It is not likely that immersion was extensively practiced in Strasburg at this time. A case of immersion at Munich is also on record; but we have few details. It may be safely asserted that many instances occurring here and there over the wide field covered by the anti-Pedobaptist movement have not been recorded.

The case of Hubmaier is worthy of special consideration. There is no man living from whose opinion on a matter of language or history I should with greater reluctance dissent than from that of Dr. Howard Osgood; and yet I cannot accept the rendering of a passage from Hubmaier's tract on the "Form of Baptism," attributed to this admirable scholar by Dr. Jarrell. Uebergiesen can only mean to "pour upon," and from the beginning to the end of his career as an Anabaptist, Hubmaier consistently recommended and practiced this mode. The clearly recorded facts are not set aside by Hubmaier's use of the phrase "baptize in the water," or his use of New Testament expressions that involve a recognition of immersion as symbolical of burial and resurrection. The great Moravian anti-Pedobaptist party that came to number from 40,000 to 70,000 prescribed and practiced the pouring of water upon the kneeling candidate. This practice is set forth

as clearly as possible in Peter Reidmann's "Account of our Faith," a full exposition of the teachings and practices of the great Moravian body, which from about 1547 enjoyed the highest authority throughout the brotherhood.

We have abundant evidence that pouring (in some cases the mere touching or crossing of the head with the moistened finger) was constantly practiced in connection with the enthusiastic propaganda of Hans Hut in Austria, Bavaria, Swabia, Franconia etc., in 1526-27.

The anti-Pedobaptists of the Canton of Berne that have shown extraordinary persistency in adhering to their primitive practices, and that survive to the present time, seem from the beginning to have been content with pouring as baptism.

It is almost certain that Melchior Hofmann practiced affusion at Emden, and that this practice alone prevailed among his followers; though the vessel "out of" which he is said to have baptized three hundred in the sacristy of the great church may have been anything from a large cask to a small pail. The word used corresponds etymologically with the English "vat." The expression "out of" seems inconsistent with the supposition that immersion was practiced.

Dr. Whitsitt (following de Hoop Scheffer) has correctly represented the position of Rothmann and his associates at Munster in relation to the

form of baptism. The "Confession of the Two Sacraments" is reprinted in full by Bouterwek. "Water sprinkling" has in this confession full recognition, side by side with immersion as valid baptism. The actual practice of Munster Anabaptists is correctly given as a pouring of three handfuls of water upon the kneeling candidate. The testimony of eyewitnesses preserved in authentic form is clear and ample upon this point. Dr. Whitsitt has given an impossible date (1537) to Rothmann's Confession, but the error is probably typographical.

The case of Menno Symons demands careful consideration. A critical examination of the passages referred to and quoted by Dr. Whitsitt and Dr. Jarrell, enables me to assert with full confidence that in both passages Dr. Whitsitt (following Dr. Burrage in the one and de Hoop Scheffer in the other) has given the correct translation and the correct interpretation. The passage from Menno's treatise on Christian Baptism (p. 409 in the folio edition of 1681; not p. 419 as in Dr. Whitsitt's book), can by no possibility be made to mean what Morgan Edwards supposed it to mean. Dr. Burrage's translation is strictly accurate, and the context shows as clearly as possible that believers' baptism is here given exclusive validity against infant baptism, the mode of administration not being even hinted at. The other passage from page 22

(Foundation Book) is also given with entire correctness by Dr. Whitsitt (following de Hoop Scheffer). Menno's identification of "receiving a handful of water" with Christian baptism is unquestionable.

And yet in the long treatise on Christian baptism, Menno speaks again and again of baptism as a "water bath," frequently uses the expression "baptizing in the water," speaks of believers as "buried with Christ" in baptism, etc. On page 419 he repudiates the identification (attributed to Pedobaptists) of "the new birth" with "dipping (duycken) in the water."

In a Latin address to the reader at the end of the treatise, he writes: "Here most pious reader, by the most bountiful gift of God you have the due mode of baptism in the Church of God restored, which (the due mode of baptism) by the very long obliteration of the times had perished." Again he speaks of "this celestial truth of Christ, believers' baptism, for many ages lost," as now at last "rediscovered."

By "mode of baptism" he can only mean believers' baptism as contrasted with infant baptism; for the entire long treatise is taken up with arguments against infant baptism and for believers' baptism, and nothing whatever is said as to the superiority of one mode of applying the water over the other.

It seems evident that, while Menno was per-

fectly aware that primitive baptism was immersion, and freely used such Scriptural language as involves the recognition of immersion as baptism, he yet regarded a handful of water poured on the head of the candidate as valid baptism, and was content to receive and administer the ordinance in this manner. It is clear, moreover, that he had no knowledge of a succession of immersed churches from the apostolic time to his own, but freely admitted that believers' baptism had been lost for ages and had been restored in his own day. That the practice of the Mennonites in Holland about 1608 was pouring, and not immersion, is, I think, indisputable.

The Dutch anti-Pedobaptists that from time to time appeared in England (1534 onward) were in the earlier time Hofmannites, and in the latter time Mennonites. Nothing is said in the accounts of their doctrines and practices that have come down to us regarding their mode of administering baptism, but it is highly probable that, as in other matters, they were content with the form of baptism practiced by Hofmann and Menno.

A careful study of the literature of the anti-Pedobaptist movements of the 16th century, extending over most of my manhood years, has convinced me that immersion commanded a very small share of the attention of these devoted people. It was practiced sporadically here and

there, but it seems never to have been insisted upon as having exclusive validity, except among the Unitarian anti-Pedobaptists of Poland (about 1574 onward). All the bodies of anti-Pedobaptists (with the exception just mentioned) were content with the mode of baptism practiced by the Reformed churches. Their consuming zeal against infant baptism led them to ignore the importance of immersion as the act of baptism. I am not aware that up to 1574 the mode of administering baptism was ever a matter of discussion among the anti-Pedobaptists. Certainly there is no evidence of cleavage along this line. This is not a little remarkable, as a disposition to divide on matters that seem to us of less importance was all too manifest among these intensely earnest people. It is hard for Baptists of this age to understand how these noble confessors of Christ, who had so clear an apprehension of the purpose and the subjects of baptism, and endured suffering so frightful for their anti-Pedobaptist faith, could have failed to grasp the importance of immersion as the form of baptism received by Christ and committed to his disciples. I can assure the reader that it is a matter of deep regret to myself that the facts are as they are. I have the greatest admiration for many of the anti-Pedobaptist leaders of the 16th century, and it would be in the highest degree gratifying to me to be able to prove that

they were thoroughgoing Baptists. But the facts are inexorable, and we must be content to take these Christians as we find them, to glory in all that is heroic and true in their lives and teachings, while we cast a mantle of charity over their shortcomings. They were not regular Baptists, but they were thoroughly imbued with Baptist principles, and were, in a very important sense, the forerunners of all that was best in Puritanism and in the great modern Baptist movement.

It is admitted by all that immersion was not only practiced but insisted upon as the only valid baptism by the Unitarian anti-Pedobaptists of Poland (1574 onward).



CHAPTER IV.

THE WHITSITT CONTROVERSY.

THE rigorous execution of inquisitorial methods under Elizabeth during the last quarter of the 16th century seems to have driven most of the anti-Pedobaptists, Dutch and native, to the Netherlands. Toleration and prosperity prevailed in that goodly land, and nonconformists of every type, in large numbers, took refuge there. A few conventicles, that may have been anti-Pedobaptist, were discovered in 1586 and 1588, and there were no doubt congregations and individuals who escaped detection. But there is no reason to think that the number was large. The reign of James I. and that of Charles II. were equally unfavorable for anti-Pedobaptists. Multitudes of English dissenters fled to the Netherlands at this time and it is natural to suppose that the anti-Pedobaptist ranks, in England, were still further depleted at this time. Very few nonconformist congregations are known to have existed in England from 1606 to 1640. The church of Henry Jacob that returned from Zealand in 1616, and that became the mother of Particular Baptist churches

(1633 onward), was one of a small number, if not for a time alone. Some of the participants in this controversy seem to assume that the anti-Pedobaptist life in England was far more abundant at this time than any facts within my knowledge seem to warrant. It is claimed that many were in hiding and were ready to reappear when persecution ceased. This may be true; but we have little to build upon but conjecture. It is not likely that the anti-Pedobaptists, in England, even in the early years of Elizabeth were ever relatively numerous, and the emigration of a large proportion of them seems certain. They were more likely to survive in Norwich and its surroundings than elsewhere; but indications of their continued existence there are very slight. I know of no instances in which it can be proved that individuals or churches of the older Anabaptist type passed over into Baptist churches of the more modern type, though such cases may, of course, have occurred. Of the anti-Pedobaptist life that may have existed apart from the followers of Smyth and Helwys we know almost nothing; but there is no reason to suppose that such as may have persisted had adopted a mode of administering the ordinance of baptism different from that practiced by the Mennonites of the time.

The English Baptist churches that claim to have existed in the latter part of the 16th and

the early years of the 17th centuries, invariably depend upon tradition for the support of their claim, no record having been preserved. It is, of course, possible that some of these may have grown out of Lollard or Anabaptist churches of the earlier time, and have later, under the impulse of the Baptist movement, become Baptist. As they must have materially changed their views in many respects (regarding oaths, magistracy, warfare, the incarnation of Christ, etc.), there is no reason to suppose that their mode of administering baptism has remained unchanged. As regards the Lollards, I have seen no documentary proof that any of them rejected infant baptism.

If anyone wishes, without documentary proof, to believe that there were multitudes of immersed believers in England during the first forty years of the 17th century, he is welcome to do so, as far as I am concerned, and I will not positively assert that none such existed; but it scarcely seems allowable to construct upon such a supposition a theory of church perpetuity, or to find serious fault with those who positively deny the existence of baptized churches unknown to authentic history.

BAPTISM AMONG THE FOLLOWERS OF JOHN
SMYTH AND THOMAS HELWYS.

In 1851, Robert Ashton wrote, in an appendix to his edition of the works of John Robinson,

Vol. III. p. 461: "It is a rather singular fact that zealous as were Mr. Smyth and his friends for believers' baptism, and earnest as were their opponents in behalf of infant baptism, the question of the mode of baptism was never mooted by either party. Immersion baptism does not appear to have been practiced or pleaded for by either Smyth or Helwys, the alleged founders of the General Baptist denomination in England. Nothing appears in their controversial writings to warrant the supposition that they regarded immersion as the proper and only mode of administering that ordinance. Incidental allusions there are, in their own works and in the replies of Robinson, that the baptism which Mr. Smyth performed on himself must have been rather by affusion or pouring. Nor is this supposition improbable, from the fact that the Dutch Baptists, by whom they were surrounded, uniformly administered baptism by affusion."

A few years later Dr. B. Evans (*Early English Baptists*, 1864), having, with the help of Dutch scholars, (especially Dr. Mueller), investigated the history of the English Baptist movement that arose in Holland under Smyth and Helwys more thoroughly than any previous English writer, virtually accepted the same conclusion. "We cannot pronounce positively," he writes in reference to this matter, "but are bound to confess that the probabilities are

greatly in its favor. The harmony of opinion, and the anxiety for agreement, which their Dutch brethren manifested in the documents laid before our readers, would more than warrant this conclusion," namely, that the followers of Smyth and Helwys agreed with the Menonites in practicing affusion. The later researches of de Hoop Scheffer, an historical scholar of high rank who has possessed unrivaled facilities for exhaustively investigating the matter, has strongly confirmed the conclusions reached by his predecessors. While it must be admitted that de Hoop Scheffer has had a certain polemical interest in showing that early English Baptists practiced affusion, his reputation as a scholar and a Christian are too high to admit of his testimony being cast aside as worthless. More recently Drs. Dexter and Whitsitt have examined the sources with more or less care and have reached the same result.

The practice of affusion by these anti-Pedobaptists has been thus rendered so highly probable that in my opinion specific proof of a contrary practice must be adduced in order to set aside the conclusion reached by the above named scholars. It is idle to cite the opinions of scholars, however eminent, who have not specially investigated this particular question with the use of the original sources. The opinion of one honest and competent man who has really mas-

tered the materials is worth more than the united testimony of a hundred of the most distinguished scholars who have depended on secondary authorities.

The correspondence between the followers of Helwys, who returned to England, and the Mennonites shows that while differences of opinion existed which the English were anxious to remove in the interest of closer union, the question as to the mode of administering baptism was never raised.

In an apologetical work set forth in 1615 by the party of Helwys, after their return to England, baptism is repeatedly described as a "washing with water," a terminology in constant use at the time among the Reformed churches and the English Puritans and Separatists. The statement of Leonard Busher, in his "Plea for Liberty of Conscience," supposed to have been written in Holland and published first in 1614, shows that he had a right understanding of apostolic baptism.

"And such as shall willingly and gladly receive it (the word of salvation), he hath commanded to be baptized in the water—that is, dipped for dead in the water." But little is known about Busher's relation to the anti-Pedobaptist churches of the time, and it would certainly be unwarranted to base upon this definition of baptism a theory as to the practice of the

churches that sprang from the Smyth-Helwys congregation. The most it could be taken to prove is that immersion as the apostolic mode of baptism was not unknown among the English anti-Pedobaptists about 1614. But as we have seen, Hubmaier and Menno were perfectly familiar with immersion as primitive baptism, yet were content with affusion.

What was wanting among the anti-Pedobaptists of the Smyth-Helwys party (1608 onward) was an overmastering conviction as to the exclusive validity of immersion.

Dr. Whitsitt cites a notice (1611), according to which Smyth, Helwys, and Busher are declared to represent each a special sort of Anabaptists.

I do not think that the passage cited by Dr. Whitsitt from Busher's writing to show that he did not recognize Helwys' church, then in England, as a properly constituted church, is rightly so applied. He is seeking to impress upon King James the fact that his predecessors and himself have carried persecution to an extent so exterminating that no opportunity has been allowed for the proper development of evangelical life: "Wherefore, in all humility and Christian modesty, I do affirm that through the unlawful weed-hook of persecution, which your predecessors have used, and by your majesty and parliament is still continued, there

is such a quantity of wheat plucked up, and such a multitude of tares left behind, that the wheat which remains cannot yet appear in any right visible congregation.”

To suppose that in this statement he was consciously or unconsciously reflecting on the little persecuted band led by Helwys and Murton is unnatural. By “right visible congregation” he may have meant a congregation that felt free to assemble publicly and to carry forward its work without hiding in corners. But this statement does show that in Busher’s opinion the organized anti-Pedobaptist life of England was at that time insignificant.

In a work entitled “Anabaptist Mystery of Iniquity Unmasked,” by J. P., London, 1623, was published a long letter by “H. H.,” an intelligent citizen who had recently adopted anti-Pedobaptist views. This letter is copied by Ivimy (I. 131–135). The writer speaks of infant baptism as “washing or baptizing their infants,” etc., “the washing of the flesh,” “the washing of the filth of the flesh,” etc. He contrasts this with believers’ baptism. The author of “The Anabaptist Mystery” stated, according to Ivimy, that the Anabaptists at this time separated from the Established Church, wrote many books, and had multitudes of disciples. He charges them with denying “the

doctrines of predestination, reprobation, final perseverance, and other truth."

Those referred to were apparently the party led by Helwys and Murton, and the letter quoted makes it probable that pouring was the form of baptism practiced at this time. From correspondence between members of the Helwys-Murton connection and representatives of the Mennonites (1624-31), we learn that there were at this time anti-Pedobaptist churches in London, Lincoln, Sarum, Coventry, and Tiverton, with a united membership of 150. This correspondence shows that there was considerable disagreement among the brethren as regards oaths, magistracy, warfare, the divinity of Christ, etc., and that they were not in harmony with the Mennonites in these and a number of other particulars; yet there is no hint of any difference of view among themselves or between these churches and the Mennonites as regards the mode of administering baptism.

The statement in "Mercurius Rusticus" (1646) that "they have amongst them (at Chelmsford) two sorts of Anabaptists, the one they call the Old Men, or *Aspersi*, because they were but sprinkled; the other they called the New Men, or the *Immersi*, because they were overwhelmed in their rebaptization," has, in my opinion, a very direct and a very influential bearing on the question before us. It would

seem to settle conclusively the fact that some anti-Pedobaptists in England, as late as 1646 practiced sprinkling, and that immersionists were by some called "New Men." This last is strongly in favor of the view that immersion had only recently been introduced among English anti-Pedobaptists.

What Featley says about the practice of immersion refers definitely to the present (1644): "They flock in great multitudes to their Jordans, and both sexes enter into the river, and are dipt after their manner with a kind of spell containing the heads of their erroneous tenets, and their engaging themselves in their Schismatical covenants. And as they defile our rivers with their impure washings, and our pulpits with their false prophecies and phanatical enthusiasms, so the presses sweat and groan under the load of their blasphemies."

He refers to Roger Williams' "The Bloody Tenet" (1644), as an instance of the abuse of the press. This reference to the actual position of the Baptists, in 1644, occurs on p. 3 of "The Epistle Dedicatory." On p. 6 he speaks of Anabaptists as having appeared "neer the place of my residence, for more than twenty yeers." Supposing the recent introduction of immersion otherwise probable, Featley's testimony has no weight whatever against this position.

CATABAPTISM.

In his *Independent* editorial, Dr. Whitsitt supposed the meaning of the term "Catabaptism" to be immersion. In his recent book he adopts the view that it means opposition to the commonly accepted baptism. This is substantially the view that, without suggestion from anyone, so far as I remember, I adopted early in my studies. The "Catabaptist," in my view, is a perverter or destroyer of baptism—that is, of infant baptism. The early anti-Pedobaptists were consumed with zeal against infant baptism, declaring it to be an invention of the Pope or of the devil. From this point of view they were stigmatized as "Catabaptists." As rebaptizers they were called "Anabaptists." That was the meaning of the term as used by Zwingli and others in the early years of the Reformation I have no doubt.



CHAPTER V.

THE WHITSITT CONTROVERSY.

“THE JESSEY CHURCH RECORDS” AND THE “KIFFIN MANUSCRIPT.”

THOSE who have carefully followed the course of this controversy must have been convinced that the records that have been quoted from under the above designations are of fundamental importance. On the basis of these, the present writer, years ago, reached the conclusion that immersion was introduced among English Baptists in 1641, in entire independence, so far as he can remember, of the considerations upon which Drs. Dexter and Whitsitt at first placed main reliance. It appears that neither of these writers, in 1880-81, when their alleged discovery was independently made, was familiar with the quotations from these Records made by Rev. George Gould in his “Open Communion and the Baptists of Norwich,” published in 1860.

By the courtesy of Dr. Whitsitt, I am enabled to use in the preparation of this chapter an accurate copy, recently prepared for him in

England, of the manuscripts employed by Gould. It is expected that Dr. Whitsitt will at an early date publish in authentic form, with illustrative notes, this important body of materials.

The caption of the manuscript is as follows: "A Repository of Divers Historical Matters Relating to the English Anti-Pedobaptists. Collected from Original Papers or Faithful Extracts. Anno 1712. I began to make this collection in January, 1710-11."

The name of the collector is not given in the manuscript. Whether it is known in England I am uninformed. "No. 1" has this heading: "The Records of an Antient Congregation of Dissenters, from wch many of ye Independent & Baptist Church in London took their first rise: ex MSS. of Mr. Henry Jessey, wch I received of Mr. Richard Adams." The collector of 1710 onward is no doubt responsible for the heading. The attempt to discredit the document on the ground that the church of Jacob, Lathrop, Jessey, etc., is called ancient and that the term "Baptist," not supposed to have been used before 1646, is employed, thus falls to the ground. The collector supposed that he had in his possession the original manuscript of Henry Jessey, relying doubtless upon the testimony of Richard Adams, who may have known the writer in his later years. The document, in my opinion, bears every mark of genuineness. I have found

nothing whatever in it inconsistent with the well known historical facts of the time and no possible motive can be imagined for the forgery of such a writing.

The Record begins with an account of Henry Jacob's career as a Separatist leader, beginning with a writing addressed to King James in 1604, in which he offered to prove, in a disputation, "the Church of England's so farr remoteness from ye Apostolical Churches." The full titles of other writings published by Jacob in 1609, 1610, and 1612 are given. After laboring for some time in the "low countries," he became deeply impressed that it was his duty to return to England for the "kingdom of Christ's sake," which, after repeated conferences with Separatist leaders abroad, who agreed with him "that it was a very warrantable & commendable way to set upon that course here as well as in Holland or elsewhere, whatsoever troubles should ensue," he returned to England in 1616 with a considerable number of his fellow exiles. The names of his principal associates are given and a somewhat detailed account of the organization, which was effected on a day that had been appointed "to seek ye face of ye Lord in Fasting and Prayer, wherein that perticular of their Union together was mainly commended to ye Lord." Afterwards they solemnly covenanted together, standing "in a Ringwise" with

joined hands. Then follows the notification of their organization "to the Brethren here of the Ancient Church," the choice and ordination of Henry Jacob as pastor, the publication of "A Confession & Protestation, in the name of certain Christians, therein showing wherein they consent in Doctrine wth ye Church of England & wherein they were bound to dissent," "with a Petition to ye King in ye Conclusion for tolleration to such Christians." The heads of the articles, twenty-eight in number, are given. After about eight years of service Jacob was, "upon his importunity," permitted by the church "to go to Virginia" (1624). "After his Departure hence ye Congregation remained a year or two edifying one another in ye best manner they could according to their gifts given to them from above." Then follows the pastorate of John Lathrop, with abundant details of the sufferings of pastor and flock. It is interesting to know that "not one of those that were taken did recant or turn back from the truth, through fear or through flattery or cunning Slights, but all were the more strengthened thereby."

Lathrop departed for New England with the consent of the church in 1634. The name of "Marke Lucar" first appears in 1632 as a prisoner for the faith. A number of brethren withdrew to form a church, in 1630, under the lead-

ership of Mr. Dupper. The occasion of the division seems to be dissatisfaction with the church for not protesting as a body against a brother "that had his child baptized in ye Common Assemblies." Dupper insisted that the church should "Destest and Protest against ye Parish Churches."

Under the year 1633 we have the following notice that Dr. Whitsitt (after Gould) has correctly attributed to the "Jessey Church Records."

"There having been much discussing these denying Truth of ye Parish Churches & ye Church now become so large yt it might be prejudicial, these following desired dismission that they might become an Entire Church & further ye Communion of those Churches in Order amongst themselves, wch at last was granted to them and performed Sept. 12, 1633, viz: Henry Parker & Wife Widd Fearne. * * * Hatmaker Marke Luker Mr Wilson Mary Wilson Thos Allen Jo: Milburn. To these joyned Rich. Blunt, Thos. Hubert, Rich: Tredwell & his Wife Kath:, John Trimber, William Jennings & Sam Eaton, Mary Greenway—Mr. Eaton with some others receiving a further baptism.

"Others joyned to them.

"1638. These also being of the same judgment with Sam Eaton and desiring to depart

and not be censured, our interest in them was remitted with Prayer made in their behalfe June 8th 1638. They having first forsaken Us & joyned with Mr. Spilsbury, viz Mr Peter Ferrer Hen Pen Tho: Wilson Wm Batty Mrs Allen (died 1639) Mrs. Norwood."

When it was observed that Dr. Whitsitt (pp. 82 and 83) attributed the notices dated 1640 and 1641, as well as those of 1633 and 1638, to the "Jessey Church Records," some of us who had Gould's work before us supposed this arrangement of the material to be due to an oversight. This explanation was set aside by his letter published in the *Western Recorder*, in which he sought to justify what he had done. The collection of documents before me demonstrates that Dr. Whitsitt was in error in this matter, the notice from 1640 and 1641 being found exclusively in document "Numb. 2," which Gould supposed to be identical with that ascribed by Crosby to Kiffin.

The caption of this latter document is as follows: "An Old MSS., giving some Acco. of those Baptists who first formed themselves into distinct Congregations or Churches in London, found among certain Paper given me by Mr. Adams." The collector, it will be noticed, attributes the document neither to Jessey nor to Kiffin, but simply states that he found it among certain papers given him by Mr. Adams. If it

had been "ex MSS. of Mr. Henry Jessey," he would scarcely have failed to note the fact. That the reader may have the matter properly before him, I will give the essential parts: "1633. Sundry of ye Church whereof Mr. Jacob and Mr. John Lathrop had been pastors, being dissatisfyed wth ye Churches owning of English Parishes, to be true Churches desired dismission & joyned together among themselves, as Mr. Henry Parker, Mr. Tho Shepard, Mr. Sam Eaton, Marke Luker, & others, wth whom joyned Mr. Wm. Kiffin.

"1638. Mr. Thomas Wilson, Mr. Pen, & H. Pen, & 3 more being convinced that Baptism was not for infants, but professed Believers joyned with Mr. Jo Spilsbury, ye Churches favour being desired therein.

"1640. 3d Mo.: The Church became two by mutual consent just half being with Mr. P. Barebone, & ye other halfe with Mr H Jessey. Mr. Richard Blunt wth him being convinced of Baptism yt also it ought to be by dipping in ye Body into ye Water, resembling Burial & rising again. 2 Col. 2. 12. Rom. 6.4 had sober conference about in ye Church, & then with some of the forenamed who also ware so convinced. And after Prayer & Conferance about their so enjoying it, none haveing then so practised in England to professed Believers & hearing that some in ye Netherlands had so practised they agreed and

sent over Mr. Rich. Blunt (who understood Dutch) with Letters of Commendation, and who was kindly accepted there, and returned with Letters from them Jo: Batte a Teacher there and from that Church to such as sent him

“1641. They proceed therein, viz Those Persons that were persuaded Baptism should be by dipping ye Body had mett in two Companies, and did intend so to meet after this, all these agreed to proceed alike together And then Manifesting (not by any formal Words a Covenant) which word was scrupled by some of them, but by mutual desires and agreement each testified:

“Those two Companyes did set apart one to Baptize the rest; so it was solemnly performed by them.

“Mr. Blunt Baptized Mr. Blacklock yt was a Teacher amongst them & Mr. Blunt being baptized, he & Mr. Blacklock Baptized ye rest of their friends that were so minded, & many being added to them they increased much.

“The names of all 11 Mo. Janu: begin,” etc. A list of forty-one names, to which twelve were added January 9, making fifty-three in all, as follows:

“1644. Those that were so minded had communion together were become Seven Churches in London.

“1639. Mr. Green with Captn Spencer had begun a Congregation in Crutched Fryars, to

whom Paul Hobson joyned who was now wth many of that Church one of ye Seven.

“1644. These being much spoken against as being unsound in doctrine as if they ware Armenians also against Magistrates, &c., they joyned together in a Confession of their Faith in fifty-two Articles wch gave grave satisfaction to many that had been prejudiced.”

The names of the signers follow. This Confession has been often printed.

Document “Numb. 3” is the Confession of Faith, but it is not inserted.

Document “Numb. 4” has this caption: “An Account of divers Conferences held in ye Congregation of wch Mr. Henry Jessey was Pastor, about infant baptism by wch Mr. H. Jessey and ye greatest part of that Congregation ware proselited to ye Opinion and Practice of ye Anti-pedobaptists being an old MSS. wch I received of Mr. Adams, supposed to be written by Mr. Jessey, or transcribed from his Journal.” Here we have an interesting record of the discussion on infant baptism between Hanserd Knollys, Kiffin and others on the anti-Pedobaptist side, and Jessey and others on the Pedobaptist side, that led to the withdrawal of many anti-Pedobaptist members in 1644 and to the conversion of the pastor and a large proportion of the remaining membership in 1645.

REMARKS.

1. These documents are all thoroughly consistent with each other and with what is otherwise known of the history of the time in general and of the Congregational and the Baptist history in particular. We can conceive no motive for the forgery of such documents and those ascribed to Jessey and that not so ascribed were old papers in 1710. I think it would be difficult to find much historical material on which we can rely more implicitly. The two notices that the "Jessey Church Records" and the so-called "Kiffin Manuscript" have in common (1633 and 1638), while they differ in some details agree in substance. They thoroughly confirm each other.

2. Neither of the documents mentions Spillsbury as a member of the "ancient church." It has commonly been supposed that he came out with the secession of 1633, but his name does not occur in this connection. In the "Jessey Church Records" of 1638 certain withdrawing members are said to have "joyned with Mr. Spillsbury." By this time he was evidently pastor of an independent congregation, probably anti-Pedobaptist. It is said that "Sam Eaton with some others" received "a further baptism." This is the only intimation that the document gives of the rise of anti-Pedobaptism in the "antient church," but this taken in connection with the other document is quite sufficient. No

mention of Spillsbury occurs in the so-called "Kiffin Manuscript" until 1644 when his name appears among the signers of the Confession of Faith. The reason is doubtless to be found in the fact that Spillsbury did not participate with his brethren in the effort to secure succession in baptism by sending to Holland for immersion.

3. It follows from what has been said respecting the apparent trustworthiness of these documents that there is no reason to call in question the account of the discussions that led to sending Blunt to Holland to be immersed (1640) and the introduction of immersion by the two congregations (1641). It must be admitted that a difficulty is involved in the statement that Jessey with Blunt was convinced that dipping was the proper baptism, as Jessey seems to have had nothing to do with the introduction of immersion (1641) and defended infant baptism till 1645. But this difficulty is not sufficient to discredit the document as a whole.

4. The so-called "Kiffin Manuscript" makes the unqualified statement that none had at that time (1641) practiced immersion in England in the case of professed believers. Now it may be freely admitted that this statement is too sweeping. The writer should have qualified it so as to have admitted the possibility of instances of the practice unknown to these brethren.

ren. They were not omniscient and it is a perilous thing to make so comprehensive a statement. Yet I think we may fairly infer from this statement that the followers of Helwys and Murton in London and its neighborhood, who were probably somewhat known to these anti-Pedobaptists, were not at this time immersionists.

5. The value of these documents is in no sense dependent on the correctness of the supposition that they were written by Henry Jessey, and William Kiffin, respectively. It is very possible that the original records of the Jacob-Lathrop-Jessey church, that mother of Baptist churches, were drawn upon by the leaders of several of the derivative congregations and that facts remembered by individual participants in the events recorded may in some cases have been added, while facts of less interest to them may have been omitted. Some of Crosby's quotations are not found in either of these documents in precisely the form in which he has given them. This may be due to the fact that he dealt freely with the documents, extracting and abstracting as suited his purposes; or he may have had before him a different recension of the same materials.

6. A clause of the Jessey Church Records for 1633 calls for some consideration. It is said that the brethren "desired dismissal that they


might become an Entire Church & further ye Communion of those Churches in Order amongst themselves." This would seem to indicate that churches already existed in September, 1633, with whom these brethren wished to enter into fellowship. It seems likely that Spillsbury was already outside of the "antient church." The use of the plural is significant. The reference can hardly be to the followers of Helwys, whose Arminian doctrine would have been an obstacle to communion. I have no knowledge of those "churches in order" and call attention to the expression as an indication of the need that exists for further information.



CHAPTER VI

THE WHITSITT CONTROVERSY.

EIGHT MONUMENTS.

OST of Dr. Whitsitt's "Eight Monuments of the Introduction of Immersion into England in the year 1641" seem to me to furnish confirmation, more or less important, of the correctness of the account given in the so-called Kiffin Manuscript. The expression "introduction of immersion into England in the year 1641," must of course be limited to English anti-Pedobaptists, and we must beware of asserting that up to 1641 immersion was never practiced by any English anti-Pedobaptists. This, as I have heretofore insisted, would be going beyond what it is possible for any man to know. The most that can be safely said, on the basis of materials at present available, is that sprinkling or pouring appears to have been the ordinary practice and the only practice known by the Southwark (London), anti-Pedobaptists who came out of the Jacob-Lathrop-Jessey Independent church, 1633 onward.

Dr. Whitsitt is correct, so far as I know, in

making 1644 the date of the earliest occurrence of the term "Baptist." The corresponding German term (Taufers) was in common use in the early Reformation time.

The inference to be drawn from the title-page of Edward Barber's book will be considered in another section. The quotation from "The Anabaptists' Groundwork for Reformation," 1644: "I ask T. L. and the rest of those Baptists, or Dippers, that will not be called Anabaptists (though they baptize some that have been baptized twice before), what rule they have by word or example in Scripture for their going men and women together into the water and for their manner of dipping," bears testimony to the fact that some who had long since repudiated infant baptism and submitted to what they supposed to be believers' baptism had received a further baptism by immersion. The same testimony is borne by N. Holmes in his "Vindication of Baptizing Believers' Infants," 1645; "One congregation at first adding to their Infant Baptisme the adult baptisme of sprinkling: then not resting therein, endeavoring to adde to that a dipping, even to the breaking to pieces of their congregation." These two quotations are due to Dr. Dexter and we should be glad to have them verified; but this learned writer, while he sometimes garbled and misrepresented, has not been convicted of forgery,

and these statements could hardly be so modified by the context as to mean anything else than that shortly before 1644-45 some sprinkling anti-Pedobaptists had adopted immersion. In a previous chapter I have referred to the remarkable passage from "Mercurius Rusticus," 1646, in which two classes of Anabaptists, "the Old Men, or Aspersi," and the "New Men, or the Immersi," are distinguished.

PRAISEGOD BAREBONE.

The testimony of Praisegod Barebone, 1642, as given in the *Western Recorder* for July 30, is as follows: "But now very lately some are mightily taken, as having found out a new defect in the *Baptisme*, under the defection, which maketh such a nullitie of *Baptisme*, in their conceit, that it is none at all, and it is concerning the manner of *Baptizing*, wherein they have espied such default, as it maketh an absolute nullity of all persons *Baptisme*, but such as have been so *Baptized*, according to their new discovery, and so partly as before, in regard as the subject, and partly in regard of so great default in the manner. They not only conclude, as is before sayd, a nullity of their present *Baptisme*. And so, but addressing themselves to be *Baptized* a third time, after the true way and manner they have found out, which they account a precious truth. The particular of their opinion and

practice is to Dip: and that persons are to be dipped, all and every part to be under the water." What follows in no way weakens the force of what has been quoted. There is, so far as I can see, no essential difference between the teaching of the full extract as made for the *Western Recorder*, and the somewhat inaccurate and abbreviated quotations made by Dr. Whitsitt. It is true that Barebone's main object is "to prove the baptism in, or under the defection of Antichrist to be the ordinance of Jesus Christ," and his arguments are aimed apparently against Spillsbury, who contended that the baptism received under the defection of Antichrist, that is in the Roman Catholic and Protestant State churches, is invalid, and that it is the privilege of any body of believers coming to a knowledge of the truth to organize themselves according to the apostolic standard and to introduce believers' baptism anew. (See quotation from Spillsbury in Chapter I. of the present series.) In the passage before us, however, he shows that these anti-Pedobaptists have not only repudiated the baptism that they had received in infancy mediately or immediately from an apostate church, and for this reason invalid; but they repudiate it all the more energetically because of default regarding the subjects (infant baptism), and default regarding the manner (sprinkling or pouring). They are

declared, as in documents already quoted, to have been "baptized a third time," having first rejected infant baptism in favor of believers' baptism (sprinkling or pouring), and then repudiated the manner of baptism and insisted on dipping. The author expressly says that "the particular of their opinion and practice is to dip." It seems to me that nothing could be more explicit than Barebone's statement. He admits that in warm climates a partial dipping may answer very well, but thinks immersion inconsistent with due modesty and unsuitable to England. He seeks to make dipping seem contemptible by reminding his readers that "the *Romanists* some of them, and some poor ignorant *Welsh* do use dipping." "I think," he adds, "these [Baptists] will not say they learned this new truth of them, neither do I think they will hold their [that of the Catholics and the Welsh] Baptisme ever the truer for their dipping." What Barebone teaches is that immersion had recently been introduced anew in the dissenting circle referred to, with which he himself had been connected. It is significant, that he does not suggest that his anti-Pedobaptist friends have derived this "new truth" from the Anabaptists of the earlier time.

EDWARD BARBER'S TESTIMONY.

Dr. Whitsitt's use of Edward Barber's "A Small Treatise of Baptisme, or Dipping," is

open to criticism. From beginning to end the treatise is occupied with proving that "Christ ordained dipping for those only that profess repentance and faith." When he speaks of "that glorious principle, True Baptisme or Dipping," he has reference to believers' baptism as opposed to infant baptism and not (as Dr. Whitsitt seems to suppose) to immersion as contrasted with sprinkling or pouring. From beginning to end he assumes the identity of baptism and dipping. The purport of the book Dr. Whitsitt seems thus to have misapprehended. His opponents have certainly scored a point against him in this instance. The little book as carefully reprinted in the *Western Recorder*, and from the same type in pamphlet form, speaks for itself and is within the reach of all who would examine it.

It has been maintained by Dr. Whitsitt's critics that this writing, so far from supporting the position that immersion was introduced among English anti-Pedobaptists in 1641, has a strong adverse bearing. It is claimed that the confident assumption on the part of the author that baptism and dipping are equivalent terms presupposed that dipping was at that time the commonly recognized usage and presumably a usage of long standing. This use of the writing is, in my opinion, unwarranted. There is nothing in this confident identification of baptism and dipping that is in any way inconsis-

ent with the supposition that immersion had just been introduced. No doubt the question of apostolic baptism had been under discussion for some time before the church of which Jessey was pastor divided on it in 1640. The agitation of the question in this circle of believers might easily have spread to the successors of Helwys and Murton, who resided in the neighborhood. When Barber became thoroughly convinced that immersion and immersion only is true apostolic baptism he would not need to see the newly acquired truth tested by many years of practice before beginning to use the terms dipping and baptism as full equivalent. In fact, the somewhat ostentatious use of the term dipping for baptism is more favorable to the supposition that the identification of the two was a fresh conviction than that it was a matter of immemorial usage. New converts are ever the most zealous in emphasizing the principles for which they stand.

THE TESTIMONY OF "A. R."

The quotation from "A. R.," copied by Dr. Whitsitt from Dexter, and attributed by the latter to the "Second Part" of "The Childish Vanity of Infant Baptism" is taken, according to Dr. Christian, who seems to have used the original work, from the First Part. Dr. Dexter inserted in brackets a sentence that seems

to me to give an unwarranted interpretation of the author's words. Dr. Whitsitt has copied the extract, bracketed sentence and all, as follows:

“If any shall thinke it strange and unlikely that all the godliest Divines and best churches should be thus deceived on this point of baptisme for so many yeares together [i.e., as never before to know that true baptism is dipping and dipping alone true baptism;] let them consider that all Christiandome (except here and there one, or some few, or no considerable number) was swallowed up in grosse Popery for many hundred yeares before Luther's time, which was not until about 100 yeares agone.”

Either Dr. Whitsitt did not notice that the bracketed clause was inserted by Dexter, or he was misled into accepting Dexter's unwarranted interpretation as his own. It seems probable that “the point of baptism” referred to is believers' baptism as contrasted with infant baptism rather than dipping as contrasted with sprinkling or pouring.

A number of other quotations taken by Dr. Whitsitt from Dr. Dexter have been shown to be defective and misleading to a greater or less extent; but none of the criticism that I have met can be said to affect Dr. Whitsitt's contention that, so far as the documentary evidence goes, immersion was first introduced among

English anti-Pedobaptists in 1641. This proposition rests primarily on the old church records that have been so frequently referred to. It is strongly supported by a number of witnesses, whose testimony has not been successfully impeached. That a number of documents have been misquoted or misconstrued does not invalidate the main contention, which, in my opinion, is abundantly sustained.

SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

An honored correspondent requests me to answer the following questions: "1. Whether there is any record of a Baptist church in England changing its initiatory ordinance from sprinkling to immersion? 2. Whether there is any proof that Baptists in England practiced sprinkling before 1641? 3. Whether any Baptists soon after 1641 admitted that they introduced immersion at that time?"

The first of these questions seems sufficiently answered by the records considered at length in Chapter V. and by the quotations from "The Anabaptists' Groundwork for Reformation," and from "The Vindication of Baptizing Believers' Infants," given in the present Chapter. The same documents seem to me to afford a sufficient answer to the second question. In answer to the third, it may be said that the so-called Kiffin Manuscript referred to was doubt-

less prepared by a Baptist. There was no occasion to admit what must have been a somewhat notorious fact. The failure of any Baptist, so far as we are aware, to repudiate the statements of Barebone, Holmes and others, implying that dipping was a newly introduced manner of baptism may be taken as tantamount to an admission of the fact. The interesting quotation from Spillsbury's "A Treatise Concerning the Lawful Subjects of Baptism," imparted by Dr. W. H. King, of London, in the *Western Recorder* for December 3d, involves, I think, a virtual admission that immersion had recently been introduced in the anti-Pedobaptist community that he represented: "And yet not holding any baptizing, for he that is once baptized with the Lord's true baptism, he needs no more. Nor yet a new way of baptizing, as some to please themselves so call it, but only the good old way which John the Baptist, Christ and his apostles walked in before us and left the same as a rule under command in the Holy Scriptures for such as be followers of them to walk by. And as it is recorded by the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures of God, even so it is the judgment of the most and best learned in the land, so far as I have seen, or can come by any of their writings. As in all the common dictionaries which, with one consent, affirm that the word baptism, or baptizo signifies to

dip, wash, or plunge into the water, though some please to mock and deride by calling it a new found way and what they please.”

Spillsbury repudiates the charge of rebaptizing, on the ground that immersion alone is true baptism, any other so-called baptism whether it be practiced on infants or adults being regarded as of no consequence. He denies that immersion is “a new way of baptizing, as some please to call it.” It is “the good old way which John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles walked in.” He does not say that it has been practiced for generations by his anti-Pedobaptist predecessors, as he would probably have said if he had thought so. He speaks of some who “please to mock and deride by calling it a new found way.” He does not deny that it was a “new found way,” so far as himself and his party were concerned.



CHAPTER VII.

THE WHITSITT CONTROVERSY.

AS TO ROGER WILLIAMS' BAPTISM.

LITTLE need be said on this question. The materials for and against immersion as the manner of his baptism are exceedingly meager. The strictly contemporary notices (Winthrop and Peters) simply refer to the introduction of a new baptism, or anabaptism, without giving any intimation that there was anything unusual in its form. The only contemporary who has given us a hint as to the manner of the new baptism is William Coddington who, more than thirty years after the event, charged Williams with having been "one time for water baptism, men and women must be plunged into the water; and then throw it all down again." There was no time after 1639 when Williams was inclined to insist upon the practice of immersion; though he continued from 1645 to the end of his life to regard immersion as the apostolic form. His opinion was that true baptism had been lost in the apostasy and could be restored only by direct divine interposition. From the notices of

baptism contained in Williams' works we can draw no assured conclusion regarding his practice in 1639. Immersion of infants was being insisted on at this time by one of the leading New England pastors (Chauncey), but this has no important bearing on the question. Williams cannot be supposed to have been ignorant of the fact that primitive baptism was immersion, and in all probability he was familiar with the practice of the Rhynsburgers, from whom a few years later the English Calvinistic anti-Pedobaptists were to derive their supposed succession in the matter of immersion.

The fact that the introduction of a new baptism at Providence was two years in advance of the introduction of immersion among the anti-Pedobaptist members of the Jacob-Jessey church and its derivatives has little weight, when we consider the fact that Williams was a learned man and must have known of immersion as a form of baptism and the primitive form, and the fact that when he reached conviction on any matter he was not in the habit of tarrying for any. Moreover, there is no record of any change in the form of baptism among the Providence Baptists after Williams' withdrawal.

Dr. Whitsitt shows a decided inclination towards the theory of sprinkling and pouring. I am inclined to follow the one clear statement of Coddington until further material comes to

light. Yet I am not prepared to assert categorically that the initial rite in connection with the new organization was immersion, or to deny categorically that it may have been some other act. The known facts are few and simple, and each student of the question has a right, after weighing the evidence, to reach for himself a probable conclusion. Dr. Dexter was inclined to the opinion that Williams and his party practiced immersion.

IN CONCLUSION.

How stands the case of Dr. Whitsitt and his critics? Has the learned and eloquent and genial successor of Boyce and Broaddus forfeited his right to the confidence and support of the denomination? Let us see.

1. The *Independent* editorial ought never to have been written and having been written should have been relegated to oblivion. It was unduly dogmatic and was unfriendly in tone to his own denomination. It is my humble opinion that he owes the denomination an explicit apology for this performance.

2. He has shown an excessive desire for the reputation of being an original discoverer. It was apparently in this interest that he fathered the offensive editorial. He supposed himself to have been the discoverer of what was clearly

set forth in a not very scarce book published as recently as 1860 (Gould's "Open Communion and the Baptists of Norwich"). It is true that without the help of the documents contained in this book he reached the probable conclusion that immersion was introduced at about the time indicated by a document contained therein, and for this he deserves credit. In his published volume he speaks of having recently undertaken "some researches in this field which were rewarded by finding a still earlier manuscript on the same subject." One expects to hear that he has unearthed some important material hitherto unused. Yet all that he claims is to have reached certain conclusions with reference to the documents described and copied from by Gould, and in this he has, in my judgment, attributed the really important passages to the wrong document. His mistake consists in his crediting the notices that are derived from the manuscript Gould regarded as identical with the so-called "Kiffin Manuscript" used by Crosby to the "Jessey Church Records." This in no way affects the credibility of the documents. We are all liable to errors of judgment and to inadvertencies, and he would be a rash man who would cast a stone of reproach for a mistake of this kind. I believe that Dr. Whittitt still considers himself in the right in this matter of the manuscripts, and he will no doubt

seek at an early date to show that he alone has rightly apprehended the situation.

3. In seeking to multiply documentary attestations to a conclusion sufficiently supported by unimpeachable witnesses, Dr. Whitsitt has followed Dr. Dexter in citing a number of notices of doubtful applicability. Dr. Dexter's reputation for painstaking accuracy has been so great that one might well be excused for relying on his quotations from rare books. He has long been known to have been intensely partisan, however, and the comparison of some of his quotations with original works by opponents of Dr. Whitsitt has not redounded to the credit of the great Congregational historian. We are all liable to be misled by depending too much upon the researches of others, and Dr. Whitsitt's fault in this respect cannot be regarded as other than venial.

4. Dr. Whitsitt's services to the denomination have been too long continued, and too distinguished, and his loyalty to the principles and practices of the denomination too thoroughly tested, to admit of his being deposed and dishonored for heresy or disloyalty. The conclusions that he has reached are, in the main, such as have long been accepted by the great majority of those who have made a specialty of Baptist history. If Dr. Whitsitt's opponents should seek to secure his condemnation by the Southern

Baptist Convention, I have not the slightest doubt but that he would be enthusiastically sustained by an overwhelming majority.

5. I would urge upon those brethren, who are convinced that Dr. Whitsitt's historical conclusions are wrong, and who believe that regular Baptist churches have existed from the beginning, to be content to rest upon these convictions and to impress them upon others with word and pen, and to avoid even the appearance of intolerance in their dealings with others, who with equal sincerity take a different view of the facts. Church history is so large a subject, its materials are so immense, its obscurities at many points are so great, the difficulties of ascertaining or grasping all the facts and relations of any particular event or series of events are so insuperable, that the utmost modesty and reserve are becoming in the true student of history, and the utmost charity should be exercised toward those who may reach conclusions different from our own.

6. I would urge upon Dr. Whitsitt and his friends, on the one hand, and his opponents, on the other, that a truly conciliatory attitude be at once assumed by all. Let neither side claim to be absolutely blameless and insist that all overtures of peace be made by the other; but let each in a spirit of Christian charity resolve that strife shall come to an end. It is an un-

unseemly and a damaging thing that a great Christian body that makes high claims as regards devotion to Christ and that has a truly heroic history, should be exhausting its energies in controversies on obscure historical facts to the neglect, in some measure, of the great interests of the Kingdom of Christ. There must be either a division of the denomination into "Successionists" and "Anti-successionists," with Separate Conventions, Theological Seminaries, etc., or "Successionists" and "Anti-Successionists" must recognize each the right of the other to a name and a place in the denomination. Neither can by any possibility coerce or suppress the other. Toleration or disunion: which shall it be? I have not the slightest doubt but that toleration will prevail. For this let all who love the Lord Jesus Christ and who appreciate the importance of the great Baptist denomination as an agency for the extension of His Kingdom labor and pray.



CHAPTER VIII.

REVIEW OF DR. J. T. CHRISTIAN'S BOOK: "DID THEY DIP?"

IN HIS introduction to Dr. Chistians's book Dr. Eaton bestows high commendation on the author's remarkable talent for gathering and arraying authorities, and on his accuracy in the use of authorities.

The materials that comprise this volume are essentially the same as have appeared in the *Western Recorder* and the *Baptist and Reflector*, and which Dr. Jarrell used in his *Index* articles. All the errors that were pointed out by me in my *Index* articles have been perpetuated and a considerable number appear to which special attention has not heretofore been called.

Dr. Eaton, in the introduction, and the author in the body of the work, both made use of a passage from a modern epitome of Fox's Book of Martyrs, according to which there were in England in the time of Edward VI. two sorts of Anabaptists, both of which insisted on immersion instead of sprinkling. I have gone carefully through an early black-letter folio edition of the Acts and Monuments and the

modern critical edition of the work in eight large volumes by Townsend, and have failed to find the slightest basis for the statement. It appears to have been introduced by the epitomist on his own responsibility and to be absolutely worthless.

This spurious notice is, I believe, the only direct evidence of the practice of immersion among English anti-Pedobaptists before 1641.

The large amount of material adduced to show the persistence of immersion among Roman Catholics in the Mediæval time and in the Church of England after the Reformation is irrelevant to the discussion, except so far as it was needful to show that Dr. Whitsitt had unduly minimized the extent to which infant immersion was practiced in the Church of England in the 17th century.

On pp. 57-58, the author seems to misapprehend the significance and bearing of the discussion on the mode of baptism in the Westminster Assembly (1643). He quotes correctly Lightfoot's account, which is the only full statement that we possess, and follows this up with a quotation from a modern encyclopedia article based upon a misunderstanding of Lightfoot's that puts the matter in an entirely erroneous light. According to Lightfoot the close vote (25-24) was not between immersion and sprinkling, but on the toleration of dipping as an al-

ternative form along with sprinkling. The majority of one definitely excluded immersion as an allowable form, and gave sole validity to sprinkling. The twenty-four who voted against the resolution would have been very far from voting for the exclusion of sprinkling. They simply contended for the toleration of immersion. The quotation from the encyclopedia article seems to convey the impression that sprinkling and immersion were pitted against each other and that sprinkling carried the day by only a single vote. Dr. Christian seems to place this statement on precisely the same level as regards authoritativeness with that of Lightfoot, who was one of the chief disputants in the Assembly, and he seems content to leave on the minds of his readers the impression that nearly half of the members of the Assembly contended for immersion to the exclusion of sprinkling. He does not say this in so many words, but the incautious reader is, we think, likely to reach this conclusion.

The statement on p. 61 that "the normal mode of baptism among the early Anabaptists was immersion," is wholly unwarranted by the facts.

The author seems to regard Robert Robinson as a high authority and quotes his exploded errors as if they were gospel truth. Robinson's view of the practice of German and Dutch

anti-Pedobaptists seems to have been based chiefly on the etymological significance of the German and Dutch words for baptism. These words, like "baptism" itself, came to indicate in popular use the initiatory Christian rite, involving the use of water, however it might be applied; and it would be as absurd to draw from their use an inference as to the mode of baptism in the 16th century, as it would be to suppose that all who at present use the term "baptism" practice dipping.

The impossible translation from Menno's works referred to in Dr. Whitsitt's book and in one of my articles, is reproduced here (p. 65) with all confidence. The author follows Robinson in making the wholly unwarranted assertion that "Menno was dipped himself, and he baptized others by dipping."

In quoting from the Munster Confession of 1533 the author omits the passage in which "water-sprinkling" is given a place side by side with dipping in the definition of baptism. He omits also the evidence of eyewitnesses as to how the ordinance was actually administered in Munster. This was by pouring handfuls of water on the head of the kneeling candidate.

On p. 76 the author quotes from Gieseler to the effect that the Anabaptists call themselves Catabaptists, Fuessli being referred to as authority for the statement. This statement is

not only utterly contrary to the fact, but the passage in Fuessli has precisely the opposite bearing. In this passage the anti-Pedobaptists involved declare infant baptism to be "Widertauf." So far from being perverters of baptism, as they were charged with being, those who baptized infants were declared to be in reality chargeable with such perversion. The term Catabaptism is not used in the passage, but the term Widertauf may be regarded as equivalent thereto, Wiedertauf being equivalent to Anabaptism.

The author quotes largely from modern writers without any regard to their qualification to speak authoritatively on the matters involved in the discussion.

Undue stress is laid (p. 134) on the fact that Separatists like Penry were charged by their opponents with Anabaptistry. All that they meant was that the Separatist position, if logically carried out, would lead to Anabaptistry, which was proved to be true a few years later. Penry was in thorough sympathy with Barrowe and Greenwood and was not a Baptist. There seems to be no historical foundation for the statement that he was an immersionist.

The author gives (against Dr. Whitsitt) the proper arrangement of the documents designated "Jessey Church Records" and "Kiffin Manuscript," but is unjustifiably sceptical as

regards the genuineness of these documents. The difficulty that he experiences from the headings of the documents vanishes when it is remembered that these were introduced by the collector of the body of materials, 1710-12.

By comparison with the original texts of works quoted by Dr. Whitsitt on the authority of Dr. Dexter, Dr. Christian has been able in a few instances to show that Drs. D. and W. have in some instances failed to give the real sense of the writers quoted. Yet, as I stated in one of my *Index* articles, abundance of documentary evidence in support of Dr. Whitsitt's chief contention remains unassailable to render his conclusion highly probable.

The author accepts a challenge (pp. 201 onward) to name three individual believers who were dipped before 1641. Yet he fails utterly in his effort to fulfill the task assumed. His attempt to prove from Edwards that Paul Hobson was an immersionist in 1639 is a remarkable specimen of reasoning. Edwards wrote in 1645 that P. H., had been a preacher a great while, and that he subscribed the Confession of Faith of the Anabaptists in 1644. It is otherwise known that P. H., assisted in the formation of a Baptist church in 1639. *Ergo*, he was an immersionist in 1639!

On p. 215 the author quotes from Kiffin the statement "that our congregations were erected

and framed according to the rule of Christ, before we heard of any reformation, even at that time when episcopacie was in the height of its vanishing glory," to prove that immersion had long been practiced in England. By reformation he means, of course, the Puritan revolution that overthrew Episcopacy in 1641. This statement does not compel the supposition of an earlier date than 1633, for the organization of the churches with which Kiffin was in fellowship, or exclude the possibility of improvement in the mode of administering baptism in 1641.

There is nothing fresh in the author's discussion of the Roger Williams question. The author quotes me as saying that Coddington, the only contemporary authority on the form of Roger Williams' baptism, "seems to have witnessed the ceremony." It is not likely that he actually witnessed it, as he resided at Newport, some miles away, but it is reasonable to suppose that he had accurate information at the time as to what actually occurred at Providence.

REPLY TO DR. CHRISTIAN'S REJOINER.

Through the courtesy of the editors of the *Christian Index* I have been permitted to see Dr. Christian's rejoinder in advance of its publication. I have little to add to what I have published on the questions involved. The following observations may not be out of place.

1. My review of Dr. Christian's book is not to be regarded as in itself a complete review of the subject-matter of the book. It is to be taken as supplementary to my articles. Most of the material published in the book had already appeared in various papers and my *Index* articles were of so recent a date that it would have been useless to go over again the ground therein covered.

2. I did not mean to find fault with Dr. Christian on the ground of paucity of material. I simply stated, by way of information, that most of the matter contained in the book had appeared in various papers. Of course Dr. Christian himself deserves the credit of collecting the materials published in the newspaper articles as well as in the book. I did not collate the books with the newspaper articles to ascertain what had been added in the latter. The fresh material may have been greater than I supposed. I certainly meant to cast no reflection on the extent of the author's researches or his accuracy in quoting such books as he has used.

3. For myself, I have no ambition to be regarded as a discoverer. I am content to examine carefully such historical materials as interest me, and are accessible, and it is my aim to interpret and apply judiciously such materials as I may have occasion to reproduce. I have no theo-

ries of history to maintain, and am willing to let every document speak for itself. I claim no infallibility for my conclusions, and no exhaustiveness as regards my researches. I am always ready to correct the former, and happy to extend the latter.

4. Readers of the *Index* hardly need to be informed that I am no partisan of Dr. Whitsitt's. Any views I have reached on Baptist history have been reached independently of his researches. It is just possible that I may have read the *Independent* articles when they appeared, but I do not remember that I was in any way influenced by them.

5. I am not aware that I have asserted that English anti-Pedobaptists, before 1641, never immersed, or ever sprinkled. The fact that the English anti-Pedobaptist were, so far as we know, chiefly of Dutch origin, would make it highly probable that their mode of baptism corresponded with that of their Dutch brethren. I think it is sufficiently proved that the Menonites, at the beginning of the 17th century, did not commonly immerse. The passage cited from Mercurius Rusticus, 1646, regarding the *Aspersi* and *Immersi*, would seem to prove the practice of sprinkling by some anti-Pedobaptists at that date, and the earlier existence of this practice may be with some confidence inferred. The passage quoted from Barebone.

in which he accuses the anti-Pedobaptists of receiving a third baptism, would seem to imply that they had earlier submitted to a form of supposed baptism as believers, with which they afterward became dissatisfied. When he defines the particulars of their new position to be dipping, this would seem to show that the second baptism was other than dipping.

6. I have seen nothing as yet that invalidates the testimony of the so-called Kiffin Manuscript. If we insisted on seeing the original manuscripts of all historical documents, we should greatly limit our working materials. The careful preservation in the copies of this body of documents of the old orthography and abbreviations is, I think, sufficient evidence that the copying has been carefully done. From 1641 to 1710-12 is not "over a hundred years," and the latter date is only 9-11 years after the death of Kiffin, September, 1701, to whom rightly or wrongly, the document has been attributed. The entire body of documents seems to bear all the internal marks of genuineness. No motive for falsification suggests itself to me. I am not aware that a single anachronism has been pointed out. The difficulty involved in the statement as to the division of the church between the followers of Jessey and Barebone, which I pointed out in my *Baptist History*, has not yet been satisfactorily explained. But this

is no sufficient ground for rejecting the document containing the statement.

7. I have nothing to add regarding the quotation from Foxe. If any early edition of the Acts and Monuments should be produced containing the quotation or anything like it, I will accept this as evidence that Anabaptists immersed in Foxe's time. I need not repeat what has been made so clear in my *Index* articles, that immersion was practiced to some extent by anti-Pedobaptists in the early Reformation time. I am not aware that any one in that age denied that immersion is baptism or that the primitive church practiced immersion. Luther's own preference for immersion is well known. But, on the other hand, I have no evidence that any of the Reformers or the anti-Pedobaptists insisted on the exclusive validity of immersion. "Taufen" originally meant "to dip," just as baptize originally meant to dip, but in the Reformation time the use of this term certainly did not carry with it the obligation to conform the act to the root meaning of the word.

8. Dr. Christian's edition of Gieseler is evidently different from mine. In my edition the reference to the passage in Fuessli discussed in my notice, reads as follows: "They naturally disowned the name of Anabaptist, as they declared infant baptism invalid; they rather called this (infant baptism) Anti-baptism." This

statement is rightly based on the passage in Fuessli. When I wrote the notice I had not looked up the matter in Gieseler, but only in Fuessli. Gieseler understood the passage precisely as I explained it in the notice. The edition of Gieseler, from which I quote, is that edited by Henry B. Smith, and published by Harper & Bros. (Vol. IV., p. 121). If Dr. Christian quotes correctly from the edition he refers to, the fault is with the translator and not with Dr. Christian. The term used by Fuessli is not "wiedertauf," but "widertauf." Since writing the above sentence, it occurred to me to consult Gieseler in original German. I find Smith's translation strictly accurate. The passage is found in the original in volume III., page 214, edition of 1840.

The quotation from Ottius given by Dr. Christian in his rejoinder, does not represent the original Latin. I will here give a translation from Ottius' *Annales Anabaptistici* referred to by Dr. Christian in his reply to my critique:

"Generally and in common parlance they are called *Anabaptists*, Gr. *Anabaptistai*, as on the contrary, John, the forerunner of the Lord, was called Baptist--*baptistes*, baptizer, (*tinctor*); and his baptism is taken for his whole teaching and ministry (Matt. 21-25). Nor ought the total dipping (*intinctio*) and ablution of the entire body to be here so much pressed, since the word baptism signifies as well aspersion as immersion,

and the same notation and obnoxiousness of the thing is retained, a different method moreover (prevailing) in colder regions from that (employed) in warmer. Therefore they are called Anabaptists, as well as because themselves are rebaptized as because they rebaptize others, namely, adults, or those that have been baptized at an early age outside of their company. Germ. *Wider-täufer*; Belg. (Dutch), *Wederdoopers*, *Herdoopers*, *Doopers*, *Doopsgesinde*; from the principal dogma or head of doctrine, from the watchword or mark of the congregation. They are denominated Catabaptists also, Gr. *katabaptistai* who are opposed to Baptizers (*Baptistai*), or who assail Baptism, despisers of Baptism, who inveigh against pedobaptism and wish it to be eliminated from the Church of God and proscribed, not only as useless, but also as unlawful."

To translate *tinctor* "dippers" is to beg the whole question. It is about the most neutral word that could have been selected for designating the administrator of a water-ceremony. Its ordinary meaning is "dyer." The corresponding verb means "dye," "stain," "soak," "wet," "moisten," "bathe," "color," "tinge."

Compare the above with Dr. Christain's quotation and remark: "They are generally and commonly called Anabaptists just as John the Baptist is called the dipper; and the baptism of that one is accepted for his whole doctrine and minis-

try.' Ottio (*sic*) then condemns them at considerable length because they refuse to sprinkle, and in many places he calls them redippers."

Not only is the translation of the single sentence quoted very far from being accurate or complete, but there is absolutely no foundation in what I have quoted or in the context for the assertion that the author (Ottius) condemns them (the Anabaptists) at considerable length because they refuse to sprinkle, and in many places calls them redippers.

Again it will be observed that Dr. Christian not only mistranslates and draws unwarranted conclusions from this passage, but he completely ignores the full and unambiguous definition of Catabaptism that is opposed *toto cælo* to that adopted by himself.

I could make a good many remarks on the use of authorities illustrated by this example, but I forbear.

I have not at hand a copy of Fleury. He was an 18th century French Catholic writer, and can scarcely be supposed to have investigated early anti-Pedobaptist history with much care. If he used the language attributed to him, it is hard to imagine what party he can have referred to as baptizing in a sacred fountain in 1523. The earliest case of believers' baptism I know of in connection with the Reformation movement, was in December, 1524, or January, 1525. Spanheim's works re-

ferred to were published long after 1641, and may well refer to the latter practice of the Baptists.

The passage quoted by Dr. Christian in his rejoinder from Musculus as translated by Man, proves nothing whatever as to the practice of the Anabaptists. The writer evidently has correct views as to the form of baptism, but the point in which the Anabaptists "take the foundation of their baptizing" from the example of Paul, in rebaptizing those who had been baptized without proper understanding by John the Baptist, is the "repetition" of the rite, and not the dipping.

9. I beg the readers of the *Index* and those who are taking a leading part in this unhappy discussion, to remember that this controversy is none of mine, and that I do not wish to be regarded as a champion of the theory of the late introduction of proper baptism among English anti-Pedobaptists. Having been invited by the editors of the *Independent*, and by the editors of the *Index* to review the controversy, I have done so to the best of my ability. I have sought to be absolutely fair to all, and have imputed unworthy motives to none. Personally, I should rejoice to be able to prove that English anti-Pedobaptists and German anti-Pedobaptists, as well as the evangelical parties of the Mediæval time, were, in every respect, apos-

tical and Baptist. I shall hail with delight any new material that has a real bearing in the direction of making it probable that they were such. Meantime I rejoice in all that I know of their heroic labors and suffering, and regret that to so large an extent they were content with a form of baptism not apostolic. If my future studies give me new light on the questions involved, I shall be glad to impart it to those who are interested. I do not wish any one to accept my judgment on the points involved, except so far as they appear to be based upon a right interpretation of authentic materials. It is not my intention to take any further part in the present discussion.



APPENDIX.

THE BAMPFIELD DOCUMENT.

I have selected the following document (No. 18), from "A Repository of Divers Historical Matters relating to English Antipedobaptists. Collected from original Papers or Faithful Extracts. Anno 1712." These "Papers," among which are the "Jessey Church Records," were recently copied by George Gould, of London, for Dr. Whitsitt, by whose permission I have examined them. No. 18 reads as follows:

An Account of ye Methods taken by ye Baptists to obtain a proper Administrator of Baptism by Immersion, when that practice had been so long disused, yt there was no one who had been so baptized to be found. with the Opinion of Henry Lawrence, Lord President, on ye Case.

Mr. Francis Bampffield in ye Historical Declaration of his Life, tells us (p. 15, 16, 17). That after he had been convinced yt ye True Baptism was by Immersion & had resolved to be so baptized himselfe, he was a long time in doubt about a fit administrator of it. whereupon he set himself to enquire diligently after ye first Administrator of Baptism by Immersion, Since ye revival of yt practice in these latter times. wt account he obtained of this matter he gives in the following words. Namely. That being in London and making Enquiry there, his dissatisfaction grev on; for upon such search being made concerning either a first, or after Administrator of this Ordinance; He was informed, either by printed Records, or by Credible Witnesses, That ye Administrator was

Either a Selfe Baptizer: But he knew no such Administrator to his Satisfaction; for if ye Historian have not wronged some of ye first so baptized in Holland, wch is too usual; (Ainsworth's Defence of Scrip. p. 3; Clifton's Christn Plea, p. 181, 182; Mr. Jessop's Discovery of Errors of ye Anabaptists, p. 65). One John Smith a member of Henry Hainsworth's Church there, being excommunicated for some scandalous offence, is reported to be one of ye first, who baptized himselfe first, afterwards baptized others.

Or two men according to their Principle in their judgment altogether unbaptized before, did Baptize one another at ye first, & afterwards did baptize others; & so ware many of ye Baptizings in London, originally reported to be in one, if not in two instances, where also no extraordinary call from God thereunto, yt ever he heard of yet, is pretended.

Or else, a private baptized Brother, no lawfully called Minister of Christ, nor rightly ordained officer in a true Church, did baptize others; & so he understands ware some of ye choicest and best Baptizings in ye esteem of Several of ye baptized Ons in London; carried on by one who always refused to be any Minister or ordained Officer in ye Church. He has been credibly informed by two yet alive in this City of London, who ware members of ye first Church of baptized Believers here, yt their first Administrator was one, who baptized himselfe, or else he and another baptized one another, & so gathered a Church; wch was so opposed in Publick and private yt they ware disputed out of their Church State & Constitution, out of their Call to office; that not being able to justifie their principle and practice by ye Word, they ware broken and Scattered

Or such one or more, whom such a company of Believers who had no lawfully called, rightly ordained Minister or Church officer amongst them before, Nor any such Minister or Ministers, Officer or Officers, to ordain or Commission Such & Yet do choose or undertake to ordain by laying on of hands, they being all private Brethren, some private Brothers or Brethren into ye Ministerial Office & to send him or them forth to preach & Baptize

Or else some such one who however pretending to be called and sent forth by men, Yet is not gifted, graced and qualified according to ye requirements of Christ in his word for such an honorable office & weighty work

Or otherwise some such who say they ware at first passing under this Ordinance under an unavoidable Necessity of doing somewhat this way beyond and beside ye ordinary stated Scripture Rule & way, wch they hope ye Lord did accept of, they giving to him ye best they had according to their then understanding. thus farr Mr. Bampfield Henry Lawrance Esqre, in his Excellent Treatise intituled Of Baptism discourses in ye last Chapter of ye Minister of Baptism wherein he shows, etc.

The Document here continues with the added record of Laurence's theory of the administrator of baptism in accordance with the observations of Bampfield, as found in Crosby Vol. I, pp. 105, 106 and as incorporated in this volume, p. 131. Bampfield became a Baptist in London 1676,

and his work referred to in this Document was published in 1681, entitled, "A Name, A New One;" or "A Historical Declaration of His Life," (Crosby Vol. I, p. 368); and the introduction and conclusion of the Document were written somewhere between 1681 and 1710, by whom we know not. Its historical value consists in confirming Crosby's account of restoring immersion which had "*long been disused*" in England, by the Baptists, in the "*later times*" which both accounts mention alike; and in reiterating Blunt's declaration, 1640, that "*there was no one who had so been baptized to be found,*" according to the Jessey Records and the Kiffin MS. This Document also like Crosby refers to Laurence in proof of the "third method" of restoring immersion without a baptized administrator; and it is evident that Bampfield, in search of the original administrator of immersion, confined his inquiry to the General Baptists in London. This "Account" also, like Crosby's, is a statement of the "*Methods taken by ye Baptists to obtain a proper Administrator of Baptism by Immersion,*" after the long disuse of the ordinance, and hence this Bampfield Document is a special discovery of the irregular or third method by which the General Baptists restored immersion in England, just as the Kiffin MS. and the Jessey Records discover the regular or second method of the Particular Baptists, at the same time, 1641—the second method preceding the third method in the order of time. This is a further discovery which confirms Dr. Whitsitt's discovery, if the author of this Document has rightly quoted and construed Bampfield's work referred to.

L.