

# SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

## NUMBER I.

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JUNE, 1847.

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### ARTICLE I.

#### THE OFFICE OF REASON IN REGARD TO REVELATION.

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Lord Bacon has very justly observed that, in relation to the subject announced at the head of this article, Christianity maintains the "golden mediocrity between the law of the heathen and the law of Mahomet, which have embraced the two extremes." The heathen system attached no importance to *truth*—"it had no constant belief or confession, but left all to the liberty of argument." In its richer developments it was evidently the offspring of imagination, requiring no piety but taste. Fables were its Scriptures—Poets its Divines—and the Fine Arts its altars. In its practical operations, it was an affair of State. Princes were its Priests—Magistrates its guardians, and obedience to its precepts a branch of the duties of a citizen. Destitute of truth, it was, of course, destitute of moral power—and from the intimate connection which subsists between the imagination and emotions, its appeals to the fancy must have served to inflame the passions and to augment the corruption which it is the office of religion to repress. Cultivating to excess that "forward, delusive faculty," which Butler pronounces to be the "author of all error," while it left the understanding without instruction and the heart without discipline, it must have formed a species of character in

the exclusion of sin, for aught we can know, God might, in many ways, wholly inconceivable by us, have magnified his law and introduced grace. All that we have contended for is this, that taking the system which he has framed, and reasoning from its revealed principles, there does seem to be necessary some work of God in honor of the law, by which it shall be blended with grace in the government of moral beings. The work of Christ in man's redemption, is that by which it is actually accomplished; but whether upon the supposition that man had never fallen, and consequently Christ had never died, the system of law remaining otherwise as it is, some other work of God, magnifying the law, would not have been still necessary to the manifestation of grace, we think altogether probable.

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### ARTICLE III.

#### THE BAPTISM OF SERVANTS.\*

The institution of slavery has existed in the world with little substantial variation since the earliest ages. There must have been some previous example of it, or the threatening against Cainan that he should be a servant of servants, would hardly have been intelligible to those to whom it was addressed. But ever since the Abrahamic covenant was introduced, it has prevailed no less in the church of God than in the ungodly world by which this church has been surrounded. When Abraham was called from the state and land of idolatry in which he had been reared, he seems to have been the owner of slaves; and in the closing period of revelation, when Paul wrote his epistles, masters

\* The present article is designed to embody the main arguments presented before the Synod of South Carolina at its last meeting, on which the action of that Synod, referred to in a subsequent page, was based. These views were ordered by Synod to be laid before the churches within its bounds. As the subject is of general importance to all Presbyterian and other pædo-baptist churches in the Southern States, it deserves at least the patient and candid consideration of Christian masters, desirous of knowing the full extent of their duties, and of doing them as in the sight of God.

and their bond-servants were both included in the church of Christ. During this entire period of more than 2,000 years, in which God was revealing his will to men, sending among them prophets and apostles, rising early and sending them, the institution of slavery is continually alluded to in the Scriptures, recognized as an existing condition of human society, and spoken of without the slightest mark of the divine disapprobation. He who cannot look upon sin with allowance, and hates every act of violence and wrong, took slaveholders to be his chosen friends, entered into covenant with them in reference to all those precious blessings on which our hopes depend, revealed to them in an especial manner his holy will, appointed some of them to be his prophets and representatives on earth, and closed the volume of inspiration, which condemns all sin, without one word of censure pronounced against this system, which is represented by many of our cotemporaries as the greatest outrage and most damning crime ever perpetrated by man. Nay, as is obvious to every reader of the Scriptures, the duties of masters and servants are prescribed no less than the duties of parents and children, husbands and wives, and no more is said of the relation of master being wrong, than of those necessary relations of the domestic state which result from the original constitution of human society. While all are called upon to repent of sin, and the various sins of which men are guilty are expressly mentioned, none are called upon to repent of the sin of holding slaves. Acknowledging the lawfulness of this state of society, the duties of masters are enjoined, and not a syllable uttered as to the guilt of continuing in this relation, and as to the duty of immediate emancipation. And servants are commanded to "be obedient to their masters, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ; not with eye service, as men pleasers: but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men." In the pastoral epistles, the ministers of Christ are commanded to "exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again, not purloining, but showing all good fidelity." And it is added, "If any man teach otherwise, and consent

not to wholesome words, even to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting [*νοσῶν*, sick, morbid,] about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth." We do not expect any more perfect revelation while the world shall stand. Till the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, the word of God remains unchanged and steadfast, and though some of our abolition cotemporaries seem impatient with the Scriptures, and others laboriously seek to impose a new and *holier* meaning upon them than their words will bear, they will ever remain the most illustrious proof of the benevolence, wisdom and holiness of God. While the times of ignorance under a former dispensation were winked at, God, who then spake unto the fathers by the prophets, and progressively revealed his will, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, and put the finishing stroke to his delineation, both of the scheme of salvation and of the rule of human duty. And it is the glory of the gospel, and the highest proof of its divine origin, that it is in advance of all the wisdom and attainments of men, and that no refinements of earth, nor schemes of morality here elaborated, can ever reach its celestial purity.

It is a consolation to the Christian master, that, abused and maligned as he is at home and abroad, as a thief and a robber, he has the testimony of his own conscience that he is neither, and that he has also the sanction and protection of the divine word, while living in that condition in which the providence of God has placed him, and while endeavoring to fulfill conscientiously the duties which this condition requires.

Still there are responsibilities of amazing weight resting upon the Christian master, and it is well for him to take a calm and deliberate view of these responsibilities in their largest extent. He cannot say, Am I my brother's keeper? There is a trust committed to him, and to this trust he must be found faithful. As the husband is to shelter and provide for the wife of his bosom, as the parent is to care for the children God has given him, so, with those just modifications the relation supposes, is the master to care for, protect and cherish the bond-servants whom the Most High

has placed beneath his power. The master is the representative of these by human law and divine, as he is of the more immediate family with which he stands connected by the ties of nature. The head of a household where slavery does not exist, has responsibilities and duties of a far lighter character. Their labor and care for us in sickness and health, and the affection they bear to us, demand a corresponding care on our part, for our servants,—a care which is not to extend merely to the present life, but to the interests of the undying soul. And more especially at this present time, when the eyes of the world are fastened upon us, and the most excited state of feeling exists in relation to American slavery, we are called upon to be found walking in the path of duty, and to be conducting in a way to commend ourselves to the impartial approbation of the reasonable portion of our fellow men. To those who are smitten with the mania of abolitionism, we are incapable of doing any thing right, so long as we lie under the damning sin of sustaining our present relation to our fellow men who are under the yoke of bondage, and we must leave them in the undisturbed possession of their uncharitable opinions.

The possession of power is always liable to abuse; and the more so, the more absolute it is. The parent has the most abundant opportunity of abusing his child, the husband his wife, and the master his servant. But in every one of these cases, affection and interest come in to prevent the unjust exercise of this arbitrary power. Strong affection makes us desire the happiness of those who sustain to us these relations, and even our temporal interest and the opinions of society around us, are restraints to check us in those moments of infatuation when passion would prompt us to deeds of violence and wrong. Yet acts of injustice, notwithstanding this, do occur in all these relations. Parents have so far forgotten themselves as to treat their children with cruelty, husbands their wives with brutal violence, and masters their servants with inconsiderate severity. In all these relations, therefore, there may be crying wrongs and excessive suffering. And since we read the "Thousand facts concerning Slavery," circulated by our abolition brethren some years ago, some of which were irrelevant and some untrue, we have read the record probably

of a thousand more, equally atrocious, of husbands treating cruelly the wives of their bosom, and parents the children of their own bodies. But religion throws its hallowed spirit over all these relations, making them more tender, more pure and healthful, and causing these transitory connections, which begin in time, to issue in eternal consequences of blessedness and peace. The unbelieving husband is often sanctified in more than an outward sense by the wife, the unbelieving child by the parent, and the unbelieving servant by the master. When religion is once established in a country, it is the order of God's providence that it is transmitted through the family in its narrower and also in its larger sense; so that the family is the nursery of the church as well as the state, and the greater number of those who make a credible profession of piety in any Christian country, have been trained first in the family, and been educated in a general knowledge of the truths of revealed religion.

Parallel with this line of facts are the institutions of religion. The first church that ever existed was set up in the family, and the first officiating priest was the head of the household. The earliest form we know the church to have assumed was the patriarchal form, and it appears to have retained this longer than any other under which it has existed. Although under the covenant of Sinai the Levites were appointed to officiate before God instead of the natural head, the first born son in each family, the ancient family aspect of the church was still perpetuated in various ways, nor has it ceased even to the present day. It was acknowledged in the Jewish rite of circumcision, and, as we believe, is still acknowledged in the rite of baptism in the Christian church.

We may as well say, without further circumlocution, that our object at this time is not to discuss the general question of slavery, not to say whether the institution is desirable or undesirable, defensible or indefensible, but whether, finding ourselves in the condition in which the church has been through the greater period of its existence, as it respects this great question, the duties which devolved anciently upon masters do not devolve upon them now — whether, in fine, it is not the duty and privilege of Christian

masters to bring their servants, while in infancy, before God, and dedicate them to him in the rite of baptism, as it was the duty of Hebrew masters, under the ancient form of the church, to dedicate their male servants in the rite of circumcision. As this is a conclusion which the writer of this article has been unable to resist, he will proceed to state, as far as his limits will allow, the reasons which have brought him to this result. And as the Synod of South Carolina at its last sessions took action on this subject in accordance with the opinion which has now been expressed, the arguments which led to that result will be freely presented in review, with such additional reasonings as may suggest themselves at this time.

In the first place, we remark that the institution of domestic slavery, existing among the patriarchs, is substantially the same institution as now exists among us. Attempts have been made by those opposed to us, to show it to be otherwise, but these attempts have, in our view, been signal failures. In whatever way slavery arose, whether as the result of violent compulsion, or whether it was submitted to voluntarily, as in innumerable instances it must have been, in the early stages of society, for the security it gave to the poor and defenceless, against injury and wrong from violent men, or to procure the means of subsistence in seasons of distress and famine, (1) it was plainly an institution already in existence and universally recognized, when Abraham appeared on the stage of action. It is not improbable, that when Terah, the father of Abraham, left Ur of the Chaldees, he left with a retinue of servants. This is always the case in every removal, in all slaveholding communities, except where families are in extremely impoverished circumstances. He left his country in obedience to the divine command, and on their way to Canaan, took up his abode at Haran, where he died, and where his family "sojourned many days." (2.) When, in obedience to the divine command, he left Haran, to migrate to that country which was to be the seat of the church for many ages, "he took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all

(1) Alison's History of Europe, vol. 1, p. 20, 21.

(2) Judith, v. 8.

the substance that they had gathered, and the *souls they had gotten* in Haran," (3) and came into the land of Canaan. He was at this time seventy-five years of age, and there had been time for his property in servants to have accumulated, both by purchase and by their natural increase. After he entered Canaan, God again revealed himself to Abraham, again entered into covenant with him, and promised to his seed the land in which he dwelt. A famine compelled him to go into Egypt, and while there, by the interested benefactions of Pharaoh, his servants, both male and female, were greatly increased in numbers. A few years afterwards, he rescued Lot, his substance, his women and people, out of the hands of Chedorlaomer, with the aid of "318 *trained servants*," i. e., probably, instructed, well-taught servants, of tried fidelity, "born in his own house." Abraham was now about 84 years old, and had that number of active young male servants, reared and carefully taught by himself. According to the usual proportion of men, capable of bearing arms, to the remaining members of society, Abraham must have then had 1590 servants, at least. These *yelidhey bairho*, οἰκονομῆς, "servants born in the house," were not all he owned. There were others, "bought with his money," who regarded him as their master. (4.) Again, we read of other men-servants and maid-servants, given to Abraham by Abimelech, king of the Philistines. (5.) These servants, who belonged to Abraham, were inherited by Isaac, who, besides large possessions of flocks and herds, which continually increased, had "great store of servants" so that he excited the envy of the Philistines. (6.) Jacob, too, came to be a man of large possessions. The wonderful increase of his flocks and herds while with Laban, is fully detailed in the inspired word. The care of these required many servants, which we find he must have possessed. (7.) Esau came against him with 400 men, which would not have been necessary, had the company of Jacob been small and feeble. Jacob's military conquests could

(3) Gen. xii: 3—5; souls they got or acquired, *hannepesh ashur asu*, πᾶσαν ψυχὴν ἣν ἐκτήσαντο. See *nepesh*, used for servants, in whom a traffick was carried on. Ezek. xxvii: 13. Comp. ψυχὰς ἀνθρώπων. Apoc. 18: 13; and 1 Mac. x: 33.

(4) Genesis xiv. 14: xvii. 23.

(5) Gen. xx. 14.

(6) Gen. xxvi. 14.

(7) Gen. xxxii. 16.



not have been made with his single hand (8); nor could Simeon and Levi, without aid, have slain all the men of Shechem. There must have been a body of dependents employed by them, and the remaining sons of Jacob, when they performed this deed of violence upon the people of a neighboring prince. (9.) The traffic in slaves, too, was rife throughout the land in the days of Joseph, and the Midianites purchased him as they would have done other kinds of merchandise. (10.)

Now, it has been asserted, that the cases of Abraham and the patriarchs were so different from ours, that we cannot reason from one to the other. That they were independent chiefs, like the Arab Scheicks, and that their servants stood in the same relation to them as the Bedouin tribes do to the heads of the clans who rule over them. But clan-ship and domestic servitude are very different things. The Emirs of the Syrians, and the Scheicks of the Arabs, are the elective rulers of the tribes, as Jacob was of the 12 patriarchs. The servants of the Emirs and Scheicks, and their subjects, are very different persons, and sustain very different relations.

The servitude of the patriarchal age, was hereditary and perpetual. Hagar was entirely under the control of her mistress, Sarah, and her children were born into slavery, and could "not inherit with the son of the free woman." (11.) If she had remained in the land, her children must have been regarded as born into a state of bondage. Job, who, doubtless, lived in the patriarchal age, speaks of the grave as the only place where the servant is free from his master. (12.) The same facts go to show that they were not bought *out* of slavery, as some have maintained, for the purpose of manumission; and that they were not bought from themselves, the price being paid to them, but from third persons, is further evident from Gen. xvii., 27, where purchased slaves are said to have been "bought with money of the stranger." (13.)

Nor was the servitude existing among the Hebrews, after their deliverance from Egypt, materially different from that

(8) Genesis xlviii: 22. (10) Gen. xxxvii: 28. (12) Job iii: 19.

(9) Gen. xxxiv.

(11) Gal. iv: 21—31.

(13) See many false reasonings on this subject in Barnes on Slavery, Philad., 1846.

among us. The Jewish servant was regarded as property, was subject to the discipline of his master, and might suffer exceedingly under that discipline. If death immediately ensued, the master was punished; but if the servant should survive a day or two, there should be no punishment, because the servant was "his money." (14.) In none of the states of this union, is there a law which bears marks of greater severity than this which is found among the laws of God. The Hebrews, who, through poverty, fell under the yoke of slavery, were released at the year of Jubilee, but others, bought of the heathen around, descended as an inheritance to children, and were bondmen forever. (15.) Fugitive slaves, who had escaped from their masters, were either pursued and taken by their masters themselves, or returned to them by the kindness of others. (16.) To the labor of their servants, they regarded themselves as entitled, without wages or compensation, other than that implied in their regular support, maintenance, and protection, (17) in their receiving "their portion of meat" [*το σίτομαθήριον*, their allowance,] "in due season." (18.) Our abolition brethren have undertaken a hard task, in attempting to point out any essential difference between the slavery of the biblical period of the world's history and that of this age and country.

Now God was pleased to set up his Church, when he gave it the permanent form it now has, in a slave-holding family. After Abraham had rescued Lot, God entered into

(14) Exodus xxi: 20, 21.

(15) Lev. xiv: 44, 46. Joseph. Antiq. iii: 12, 3.

(16) 1 Samuel xxv: 10. 1 Kings, ii: 39 et seq. Gen. xvi: 6—9. Philemon: 11, 12, 16. The Abolitionists of the North, in vain appeal to Deut. xxiii: 15, 16, to justify themselves in violating the Constitution of these U. S., by the detention and harboring of fugitives from service, who escape to the free states. If that law gave immunity to the runaway servant, and protection from the claims of his master, servitude was impossible in the Jewish commonwealth. If a servant, by escaping from his master, who resided in the tribe of Judah, into the confines of the tribe of Benjamin, could not be reclaimed, involuntary servitude was unknown in that land. Even Mr. Barnes, has the candor to acknowledge that "this relates only to the slaves which escaped to the country of the Hebrews, from surrounding nations, and that it did not contemplate the runaway slaves of the Hebrews in their own land."—Slavery, p. 140.

(17) Luke xvii: 7—10. Matth. xxv: 14 et seq.

(18) Luke xiii: 41—48. How absurd to quote such passages as James 5: 4. Jer. 22, to show the injustice of masters. What have the wages of

a covenant with him, promising him an heir, and a posterity like the stars of heaven for multitude; and the fortunes of his posterity and their deliverance from Egypt were mentioned. And he believed in the Lord, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. (19.) If he had not been a believer before, he at least at this time became interested in the justifying righteousness of Christ, and was called the Friend of God. (20.)

After he had been in Canaan ten years, Ishmael was born of his handmaid Hagar, and thirteen years after, when Abraham was ninety-nine years of age, the Lord appeared unto him again, entered into a covenant with him, renewed the promise of a numerous seed, and assured him that he should be the "father of many nations," changed his name from Abram, *the exalted father*, to Abraham, *the exalted father of a multitude*—and his wife's name from Sarai, perhaps meaning *the contentious*, or, as is supposed by some, *my princess*, to Sarah, *the princess*. This covenant is declared to be an everlasting covenant with Abraham and his seed. Of this covenant, circumcision was the seal. Every male child among them, in all their generations, was to be circumcised: and not only their own children but the servant also—he that was born in the house, or bought with money of the stranger, which was not of their seed. Twice is this repeated, that it might be clearly understood, that not their children only, but their servants also, were to partake of this rite. And the covenant of God was declared to be in their flesh for an everlasting covenant. When God went up from communing with Abraham, he circumcised all the males in his numerous family, bond and free, in the self-same day. The particularity with which this transaction is recorded, the solemn and visible appearance of God to Abraham, the formal covenant, and the peculiar seal of that covenant, the change of the names of Abram and Sarai, indicative of a change of relation, show that this was the great transaction between God and Abraham, and indicated

hired men to do with this subject. We too have our  $\mu\sigma\delta\iota\omicron\nu\varsigma$ , *shakyriym*, hired servants, and are as punctual in the payment of their wages as the most of our fellow citizens.

(19) Gen. x: 3, 6.—Rom. iv: 3.—Gal. iii. 6.

(20) Jas. ii. 22.

the form which the visible church was to assume in after ages. (21).

The Church of God was thus established in the family; the covenant was made with the head of that family; and all whom he represented in the family relation, not only his children, but his servants also, obtained a membership in the visible kingdom of God, through the faith of Abraham, which faith he had, while yet uncircumcised. That this circumcision was the seal of the righteousness of faith, of a covenant ecclesiastical, (22) and not a mere national badge, nor family distinction, is what the Apostle Paul has declared, and what we have ever maintained against our opponents on the subject of infant membership in the Church.

That it was not a family and national mark in its original design, is further evident from the fact that it is explained in the Scripture to denote, as the Christian rite of baptism does, the renovation of the heart. Depravity is called the "foreskin of the heart;" the unrenewed and unhumiliated are called "uncircumcised in heart;" this spiritual circumcision was ascribed expressly to God as its author; and even in the New Testament, believers are described as being "circumcised in Christ, with the circumcision made without hands," and the true circumcision is said to be not "outward in the flesh, but of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." (23). And further, as a family mark or a national badge, it was wholly futile, for it was practised by the ancient Egyptians, the Troglodytes of Africa, and the Colchians of Asia, is still practised by Christians of the Coptic and Abyssinian churches, was found in existence among the Mexicans when first visited by the Spaniards, and has been found to prevail among many tribes of Western Africa and of Polynesia. The true view is, that it was a sign of the righteousness of faith and of the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and it became in any sense a national mark among the Jews, only because it was the will of God that the ecclesiastical limits of the Jewish people should coincide with those of the state.

(21) See Genesis xvii.

(22) Romans iv. 11.

(23) Leviticus xxvi. 41. Deut. x. 16. Deut. xxx. 6. Jer. iv. 4. Acts vii. 51. Gal. ii. 11. Rom. ii. 28, 29.

Their civil government was a Theocracy as well as their ecclesiastical. (24.)

With this sign of circumcision and seal of the righteousness which is by faith, the Jewish church were commanded to circumcise all their male servants, both those "born in the house, and those bought with money of the stranger," and the covenant of God was to be in their flesh for an everlasting covenant. He that was not so circumcised, was "cut off" from that people. The rite was to be observed not only in their own families throughout their generations, but also in the families of those proselytes of righteousness who were received among them. In reference to these last they added the ceremony of baptism, which was extended to persons of either sex. All such persons were admitted to the passover, when that was instituted on the eve of the Exodus from Egypt. A foreigner and a hired servant could not eat thereof. (25).

Such, then, was the principle introduced into the church by the Abrahamic covenant. Every male child of the servants was to be circumcised, on the eighth day, on the profession of faith made by the master. And every adult servant, after suitable instruction, was also to be circumcised, or he could no longer remain in connection with God's chosen people. We say after *suitable instruction*, for although Abraham seems to have circumcised his servants all at the same time after God had gone up from him, (26) yet these servants had probably been sufficiently long with him for those of adult years to have become acquainted with the doctrines of Abraham's faith. The 318 servants who assisted Abraham in the rescue of Lot, were *trained* servants, or, as it is more correctly rendered in the margin, *instructed* servants, the word so translated signifying those imbued with knowledge. (27). Such servants were taken on this critical enterprise because they were attached to their master, and he could rely on their fidelity. And God speaks of Abraham as one who would command his chil-

(24) See on the extent of the rite of Circumcision, Spencer de Legibus Hebræorum, Michælis' Laws of Moses, Kitto's Biblical Cyclopædia, Penny Cyc., vol. vii.

(25) Exodus xii. 43—50.

(26) Genesis xvii.

(27) See Gesenius, Calvin, Oleaster, Vatable, Arias Montanus, and the Arabic and Samaritan versions.

dren and his household after him, and adds, They shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment. (28). Not even in Abraham's case, then, when circumcision was first instituted, is it necessary to suppose it was performed upon adults, without a previous instructing of them in the things of religion. After it was fairly instituted and brought into practice, the necessity of circumcising adults would be limited to the few servants whom the Hebrews might acquire by purchase from the nations around, or who might belong to proselyted families. On all other servants the rite would be performed in infancy, so that infant circumcision would be the rule in the case of servants as well as among the free born descendants of Abraham. The question whether adult servants could be *compelled* to receive circumcision, has been variously decided. Some have contended that they could, not only from the passage, (Genesis xvii. 12,) but 1. Because servants were the property of their master, and obliged to accede to his wishes. 2. Because the command that the servant should be circumcised, is annulled if you leave it at his option. 3. If it were not compulsory, then there would be no difference between a slave in this respect and the hired servant, for he *might* be circumcised should he so desire, but the passage (Exodus xii. 44, 45,) makes a manifest difference between his case in this respect, and that of the slave. The view taken by Maimonides of this point, he thus expresses :

“Whether a servant be born in the power of an Israelite, or whether he be purchased from the heathen, the master is to bring them both into the covenant.”

“But he that is born in the *house* is entered on the eighth day, and he that is bought with money on the day on which his master receives him, unless the slave be *unwilling*. For if the master receive a grown slave from the Cuthæans, and he be *unwilling*, his master is to deal with him for one year. After which, should he refuse so long, it is forbidden to keep him longer uncircumcised. The master must therefore sell him back to the Cuthæans, from whom he came. (29). Bochart adds that the infants of slaves could be cir-

(28) Genesis xviii. 19.

(29) Maimon. Hilchoth Miloth, ch. i. sec. 8, quoted in Ainsworth on Genesis xvii., in Bochart Hieroz. Tom. i. p. 578, and in Barnes on Slavery, p. 132.

cumcised on the 8th day by the master, whether their parents were willing or not. The same usage they extended to children that had been exposed by heathens, or taken in war. It was optional with them whether they would treat these children as freemen or slaves; if they decided to adopt them as their own children, this was acknowledged at the time of their circumcision and baptism, otherwise they were circumcised and baptized as slaves. "An Israelite," says Maimonides, (30) "that takes a little Heathen child or finds an Heathen infant, and baptizes him for a proselyte, behold he is a proselyte." And so the Rabbi Hezekiah, in the Hierosol. Jevamoth, fol. viii. 4, "Behold, one finds an infant cast out, and baptizes him in the name of a servant, do thou also circumcise him in the name of a servant; but if he baptize him in the name of a freeman, do thou also circumcise him in the name of a freeman." (31).

It was the will of God, then, and it was the practice of his people, from the first charter of the church, in its settled organized form, that the master should represent his whole household, children and servants, and that they both should receive, as far as it could be affixed to them, the seal of that righteousness of faith which he possessed. This arrangement preceded the Sinaitic covenant, and was not disannulled "by the law which was four hundred and thirty years after," but was confirmed through all that period till the coming of Christ.

It will be remembered that not all the lineal descendants of Abraham were continued in this covenant, though receiving the seal. Ishmael was excluded and his posterity, — Esau and his, — the children of Keturah and theirs; constituting a larger portion of Abraham's descendants, in all after ages, than retained their ecclesiastical connection with their great progenitor. The Arabs and Saracens have always outnumbered the Jews.

It will also be remembered, that the nations who were to be destroyed before the children of Israel, but who were spared and reduced to a state of servitude, were not admitted to the right of circumcision, nor considered a part of the

(30) Halach Aibdim, c. 8.

(31) See Maimonides and other Jewish authorities, quoted in Wall on Infant Baptism, I. p. 15, and Lightfoot on Matt. iii. 16, Selden de Jure, &c., juxta Discip. Ebræorum, L. ii. c. iii.

church of God. They were employed in menial offices, in connection with the tabernacle and temple, but were not regarded as worthy of the privileges of the congregation, having been originally under the ban, either of expulsion from the land or utter extermination, if they should resist the occupation of Canaan by God's chosen people.

At length, the Jewish nation having rejected the Messiah, were broken off from the olive tree God had planted, and we were grafted in. The promise to Abraham, that he should be the father of many nations, was now, for the first time, fulfilled. And the covenanted church received a wider extension; and the holy mountain of the Lord's house was no longer in Judea, but wherever men should be found to worship him in spirit and truth. Abraham was still the father of the faithful, and they were his seed, the *true* children contemplated in the Abrahamic covenant, as Paul, in various passages has earnestly taught.

Baptism, which had before been practised in the admission of proselytes of righteousness, and extended in Jewish practice to parents and children, male and female, masters and servants, took the place of circumcision under the ancient form of the church, and had the same spiritual signification. That this was the case, we have, among other things, these proofs, that circumcision was discontinued, and baptism used to answer the same ends, a fact, which all history confirms. — And that baptism is expressly stated to be in place of circumcision, Paul, in Col. ii. 11, 12, says: "In whom also (i. e. in Christ) ye are *circumcised* with the circumcision made without hands, putting off the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, *buried with him in baptism.*"

Justin Martyr, forty years after the Apostle, uses the same language in his dialogue with Trypho, the Jew, calling baptism the Christian circumcision — and in his *Quest. ad Orthodox.*, replies to the question, Why we do not practise circumcision? — "that we are circumcised by baptism with Christ's circumcision." Cyprian and the Council of Carthage, 150 years after the Apostles, constantly call baptism the "spiritual circumcision," and represent circumcision under the Old Testament, as typical of baptism in the New. (32.) Basil, 260 years after the Apostles, Ambrose, 274,

(32) Wall. 1, p. 103, 104.



Chrysostom, 280, and Augustine, 300 years after the Apostles, all call baptism by the name of circumcision, and in some cases, discuss the question whether, like circumcision, it is to be administered on the eighth day.

This is but a specimen of the language of the Greek and Latin fathers respecting baptism, and its substitution in the place of circumcision.

The same authorities, and others, claim baptism for the infant seed of believers, or speak of it as administered to them on the faith of their parents. Do we find it also administered to slaves, as in the ancient dispensation, on the faith of their masters?

The nearest to an affirmative answer to this question, afforded us by the New Testament, is the family or household baptisms, of which we read in the Acts and the Epistles. Lydia was baptized, and all her house; the house of Stephanas, was baptized by Paul; the house of the Phillipian jailor, by Paul and Silas; and Crispus, and all his house, by Paul and his assistants at Corinth. The house of Cornelius, too, was baptized by Peter. The house of Onesiphorus is spoken of with honorable mention, and the salutation of Paul is sent to the families of Narcissus and Aristobulus. (33.) Here are eight Christian families spoken of in the New Testament, four of which are expressly mentioned as baptized, and the others, if Christian, we know, had also received baptism as the rite which admitted them into the Christian church. We argue against our opponents in the baptismal controversy, that in so many families there must have been infants, and if the family was baptized, these were baptized with their parents. And may we not, with equal reason argue, that if in a slaveholding community, eight Christian families received baptism, which baptism was governed by the same rules as circumcision, only that it was more extensive in its application, being applied to persons of either sex, that the slave, or at least the infant slave, shared in the same rite with the children of the master? Suppose there had been no change in the form of the rite of initiation into the visible church, in the form of the seal of the ecclesiastical covenant made with Abraham, and that Christ had directed his disciples to go into all the

(33) Romans xvi: 10, 11.

earth and preach the gospel to every creature, *circumcising* them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, would they not have applied the rite of circumcision to all members of the family, on whom it could be performed, both bond and free? Would not the servant have shared with the master and his children in the sacred rite? Why, then, was it not so, where baptism was practised in lieu of circumcision. Where is the law repealing the ancient practice, and debarring a portion of those who shared in the rite and in its advantages, from their former privileges. But it was only circumcision which was discontinued. Baptism, which before prevailed in the reception of proselytes to Judaism, was retained and clothed with new divine sanctions. But, this baptism had been performed upon the entire families of proselytes, including servants, and when the Apostles were called to baptize, they would, unless divinely admonished otherwise, administer it to parents and their children, and also to the infant slaves of masters, professing faith in Christ. It was most natural for them to do so. It can hardly be believed, that in countries where there were from three to five slaves to every freeman, as was the case among the Romans and Greeks, eight families, and these not in the lowest class of society, could be received into the church, and not one slave be connected with them. Mention is expressly made of "the household servants" of Cornelius, and we have every reason to believe that there were bond-servants connected with the households of the jailor of Philippi, of Lydia, of Crispus and Gaius, of Onesiphorus, of Narcissus, and Aristobulus. As the houses or families of these persons were Christian, their being so, was acknowledged by administering to them the baptismal rite. Should any one contend that the οἶκος of the master is less extensive than the οἶκος of the master—that the one is the house, the residence of his proper family, and the other, his whole premises, including the dwellings of his domestics, and that when used metaphorically of families, the one includes the children, the other the servants also, and that because the οἶκος of Lydia and others, alone are spoken of as baptized, that therefore the children alone of these believers were baptized with them, and their servants were not baptized; we then reply, that the distinction, though ingenious, does not

seem to be borne out by the prevailing use of the Greek language, that οἶκος and οἰκία are used interchangeably, and that the οἶκος of Stephanas in 1 Cor. i: 16, is his οἰκία in 1 Cor. xvi: 15. We also read in 1 Timothy iii: 12, that the deacons were to be the husband of one wife, ruling their children *and* their own houses well, καὶ τῶν ἰδίων οἴων. The houses of the deacons were *more* than their children, and included, therefore, we suppose, their *servants*, and all matters pertaining to their domestic arrangements. (34.) We infer, then, that the household baptisms of the New Testament may have included the servants of the family as well as the children. And if they were not included, then was the principle regulating the application of circumcision under the Old Testament changed under the New, and one entire class of persons excluded from the privileges secured to them by a former and preparatory dispensation.

But of this change, we have not one particle of evidence; the presumption is otherwise; and till the contrary is shown, we must believe that infant *servants* were baptized as well as infant children, on the faith of the head of the family, who stood for the children of his own race, in the relation of father, and for the rest, in the relation of master. Both these relations were appointed by God, as the nexus which united persons, who, through their necessary condition, were not responsible themselves, with his visible church, which connection was acknowledged in circumcision, under the old economy, as it is by baptism, under the new.

In tracing down the subject of our investigation to later times, we find no reference to servants by name as the subjects of baptism, till the fourth century. We there find evidence that infant slaves were offered by their masters for baptism. Augustine, in his letter to Boniface, says, "You see that a great many are offered, not by their parents, but by any other persons, as infant slaves (*servuli*) are sometimes offered by their masters; and sometimes where the parents are dead, their infants are baptized, being offered

(34) Compare Gen. 17: 19: For I know him, that he will command his children and his household [the *lxx.* ἧν οἶκω αὐτοῦ,] after him. But the household of Abraham consisted, when Sarah and Isaac were deducted, of his *servants*.

by any that can afford to show this compassion upon them." Children that were cruelly exposed by the heathen, were also incorporated into the church by baptism, and educated at its expense; so were captive children taken in war, or redeemed, or bought with money." Augustine also says in his Treatise on Grace and Free Will, "that this grace is sometimes vouchsafed to the children of infidels, that they are baptized, when by some means, through the secret Providence of God, they happen to come into the hands of pious Christians. (35). The same thing is asserted of exposed children, by Ambrose. (36). And in the Pandects of Justinian, it is made penal, if any converted Pagan shall fail to present his infant children, or shall leave his *servants* in error. And in the Novels of Justinian it is enjoined, that the infants of the Samaritans should be at once baptized, and the rest who had reached the years of discretion, not till they had been instructed two years in the faith, and in a knowledge of the Scriptures. (37).

We find, then, that it was the custom and law of the Church at this period, that infant slaves should be baptized on the faith of their masters, and that those of a mature age should be prepared for baptism by a proper course of instruction in religion.

¶ The interest which conscientious masters took in the religious education and salvation of their servants, is strikingly illustrated by an incident which occurred in the early part of the fifth century. A gentleman of Carthage had bought a negro slave, that had been brought out of the heart of Africa, where Christianity was wholly unknown; his master had caused him to be instructed in the faith—he was a Catechumen for some time, and at last was admitted among the competents for baptism. He had appeared before the Church, made his profession of faith, and the usual renunciations. But just before the time of baptism, he became sick of a fever, and became speechless. He was baptized, however, others answering in his name, as if he had been an infant, and soon afterwards died. Ferrandus, deacon of Carthage, who writes these circumstances in a letter to Fulgentius, bishop of Ruspa, had some doubts concern-

(35) Chap. 22, Tom. vii. p. 827.

(36) De Vocat. Gent., l. i., c. 8.

(37) Cod. Instit. l. i. tit. xi. Novell Coll. ix. Tit. xxvi. Nov. cxlii.

ing this baptism. He does not see how it could be valid in the case of one capable of reason; for, says he, it is infants only who have none but original sin, whom we believe to be saved by the faith of those that bring them. Fulgentius, in reply, comforts Ferrandus, respecting the salvation of the deceased negro. He argues that the condition required by our Saviour for adult persons was, that they should believe and be baptized. This man had both faith and baptism. Faith, and the profession of it, was his own act—baptism, the act of the minister. God's taking away his senses, was no sign of his rejecting him. He had his senses when he professed, and was alive when he was baptized. (38).

We perceive now, by these facts, what was the opinion of the Church at that day. It was, that masters should do all for the instruction and salvation of their adult slaves in their power, that they should strive to have them prepared for baptism on the profession of their own faith, but that their infant slaves should be baptized on the faith of the master himself. The adult slave could in no case be baptized if his master was a Christian, without his testimony to the character of the servant being first obtained, which is required also by the Apostolic Constitutions. (39).

As we come down to the divines of the period of the reformation and after, we find similar views entertained. Calvin, in his commentary on Genesis xvii. 12, "He that is born in the house," &c., says, "God commanded Abraham to circumcise whomsoever he had in his own power. In this shone forth his singular love towards holy Abraham, that his grace embraces his whole house. We know that formerly slaves were scarcely reckoned as numbered among men. But God, because of his favor to his servant, adopts them as his own sons. To this mercy nothing at all can be added. The pride of the flesh is cast down, when God, without respect of persons, joins the free and bond together. Moreover, in the person of Abraham he prescribes this law to all his servants, that they should strive to bring whoever are subject to their power, into the companionship of the

(38) Wall 1, 408: Bingham 3, 180.

(39) Lib. viii. c. 32. "Slaves were not received to baptism without the consent of their masters, who in such cases became their sponsors or god-fathers." Coleman Christ. Antiqq., p. 285.

same faith. For the individual families of the pious *should be so many churches*. Therefore if we desire to prove our piety, every one of us should labor to have his house ordered in obedience to God. Not only does he command Abraham to dedicate and offer to the Lord those slaves born in his house, but whomsoever he might afterwards have acquired."

Slavery did not exist in its proper distinctive character in the countries of the Reformation, nor, except to a very limited extent, in the colonies of those countries in which the doctrines of the Reformation were professed, at the time when the several Protestant confessions were drawn up. The attention of the divines of that period, therefore, was not drawn to this relation, and it seems not, as a general thing, to have been present to their minds when giving their decisions as to the subjects of baptism. Yet the Reformed Church of France admits the principle implied, in relation to children of parents who are members of the Church of Rome, or who have been and are excommunicated, and in relation also to the children of Bohemians, Saracens and Gipsies. These were admitted to baptism when presented by godly sureties, their parents consenting, and the sureties binding themselves to see them educated and instructed in the true religion. (40).

Andrew Rivet, a divine of Holland in the year 1651, expresses himself in the following terms: "By this consideration is resolved that question often agitated, and which also has arisen in this, our time, in respect to the baptism of those who are born of unbelieving parents; and so, if we regard their origin, are not in the divine covenant. For it appears that many have been baptized when they were not yet imbued with a true knowledge of Christian doctrine, nor arrived at that age when, after sufficient instruction, they might be able to render a reason of their faith. For it is the constant opinion of the ancient and modern Theologians that adult unbelievers should not be baptized before, subjected to diligent catechetical instruction, they can render a reason for their faith, and not only consent, but in addition earnestly demand, the administration of baptism. Concerning such as are baptized after open profession of

(40) See Aymon. Synodes Nationaux, Tom. 1, p. 177, Quick's Synodicon, vol. 1, p. xiv.

their faith, although all things have not been exactly observed, no difficulty is made. The doubt respects the children of unbelievers who are offered for baptism by men who are Christians. Instances of this are not few, especially in these times in which various regions before unknown having been discovered, the infants of unbelievers, plainly aliens from Christ, have been brought away, and baptized with Christian baptism.\* Concerning these, it is inquired whether they are fit subjects of baptism, since they did not belong to the covenant of God, but sprang from Pagan or Mahomedan unbelievers. This reply, therefore, is given: either these infants which are baptized, were baptized not only while their parents were unwilling, but while the children remaining still in their parent's power. Such could not be baptized, and we affirm the baptism administered unto them to be invalid, because true baptism requires those to whom it is administered, to be in the covenant. Or these infants have been taken by Christians and brought into servitude, or have been bought with their money. In this case we say that baptism can be administered to them on the same principle that circumcision was to the servants of Abraham, that were either born in his house or bought with his money. Moreover, if any have been baptized in infancy, Christians into whose power they came being the procurers, we hold their baptism valid, and would not repeat it. \* \* \* To this head is to be referred that declaration of the author of the treatise *de vocatione Gentium*, in Prosper Lib. 2, c. 8, "Sometimes this grace is conferred on the children of unbelievers, that they are baptized when, by the secret providence of God, they come in any way into the hands of the pious." Hence we gather that it was the practice of the ancient church to baptize the infants of unbelievers, but after they came into the hands, *i. e.* into the power of pious persons." (41).

Benedict Pictet, Professor of Theology in Geneva, in 1721, holds the following language: "It is demanded if one must baptize infants that are foundlings, and of whom one does not know whose they are. I answer that we may baptize

\* Columbus bore away 500 natives of America, to be sold in the markets of Seville. They were afterwards liberated by Isabella. But the same was done by other discoverers.

(41) And. Rivet, Exercit. lxxxix. in Genesis. Opera Tom. 1. p. 343.

them, provided there present himself some one who promises to have them trained in the true religion. It is demanded if one may baptize children taken in war, or which are purchased, they being unbelievers. I answer, yes, provided we are very sure of training and instructing them before baptizing them." In this last decision Pictet seems to have in view youth past the period of infancy. In the former he deems the pledge of some competent surety, such as a believing master would be in reference to his servant, all that is requisite. "The subjects of baptism," says he, in another place, "are all that are in the covenant, whether they be really such, or are likely to become such, either on account of their outward profession and communion with the faithful, or on account of their being born of Christian parents. (42).

These authorities, we have quoted, were all divines, respectively of the churches of Holland, France, and Geneva, divines of our own Presbyterian faith, and holding the strictest views as to the doctrines and discipline of our church. To them, we may add the more recent opinion of Dr. Miller, of the Princeton Seminary, who, in his treatise on Infant Baptism, says, "If deserted, or orphan children, be cast in the families of strangers, who are in no way related to them according to the flesh, but who are willing to stand in the place of parents, and train them up for God; even these strangers, in short, any person of suitable character, who may be willing to assume the charitable office of giving them a Christian education, may, and ought to present such children for Christian baptism. Not only the offspring of Abraham's body, but "all who were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money," were commanded to be circumcised. Surely, no Christian who has a child, white or black, placed in his family, and likely to be a permanent member of it, can doubt that it is his duty to give it a faithful Christian education. And as one great object of infant baptism is to secure this point, he will not hesitate to offer it up to God in that ordinance which he has appointed, provided no valid objection in regard to the

(42) Pictet *La Theologie Chretienne*, Tom. ii. Liv. xv., chap. xii. *Theologia Christiana*, Lib. xiv., cap. 4.



wishes of the parents of such a child interpose to prevent it." (43.)

Similar to this has been the decision of the Presbyterian church in these United States. In the year 1786, the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, then the highest judicatory of our church in this country, decided, "that Christian masters and mistresses, whose religious professions and conduct are such as to give them a right to the ordinance of baptism for their own children, may, and ought to dedicate the children of their household to God in that ordinance, when they have no scruple of conscience to the contrary." The overture, which called forth this decision, came from the Presbytery of Donnegal, and was, 'Whether Christian masters and mistresses ought, in duty, to have such children baptized, as are under their care, though born of parents not in the communion of any Christian church?' And in 1816, the General Assembly decided: "1. That it is the duty of masters who are members of the church, to present the children of parents in servitude to the ordinance of baptism, provided they are in a situation to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, thus securing to them the rich advantages which the Gospel provides.

"2. That it is the duty of Christian ministers to inculcate this doctrine, and to baptize all children of this description, when presented to them by their masters." (44.)

At the same time, there is a decision that the infants of believing servants shall be admitted to baptism on the faith of their parents, thus making it the rule of the church to administer baptism to infant slaves, when presented either by their believing masters or their believing parents.

It will be remembered, that these resolutions were passed by the highest judicatories of our church, when, as yet, the institution of domestic slavery pervaded the entire church in this land, and long before any of the modern theories of abolition came into vogue. They are the conclusions to which conscientious men of slaveholding communities came, when meditating on their own responsibilities to their ser-

(43) Miller on Infant Baptism, p. 57.

(44) Minutes of Synod of New York and Philadelphia, p. 519. Digest, p. 97. Hodge's History of Pres. Ch., ii., 413.

vants in the light of God's word. The rule by them established, appears to be correct and scriptural, and sustained too by ecclesiastical usage. The only question is, whether it is in all respects as strenuous, as a proper regard to the commands of God and the duties of believing masters, would make it; whether, in fine, there are any circumstances which will exempt believing masters from presenting their infant servants to God in baptism, which would not also exempt them from presenting their infant children? Under the Abrahamic covenant, during a former dispensation, both children and servants were circumcised. Why, under the Abrahamic covenant, in the present dispensation, this covenant being still in force, should they not be baptized? Is it said that the covenant was made with Abraham and his seed, and therefore is now to be confined to the believer and his seed? We reply that the seal of the covenant was originally applied to more than the natural seed of Abraham; it was applied by express divine appointment to all whom he held as property, and represented as such; it was regarded as the privilege of the servant of the believing master, that he also should have that measure of connection with the visible church, which circumcision gave. Is it asked if this privilege shall also be extended in the New Dispensation, to adult servants, as in the old? We answer, No—because in the New, the requirement addressed, manifestly to adult persons, is, *believe* and be baptized, and in their case, the application of baptism is limited to such as make a credible profession of faith in Christ. The duty of the master to his adult slave, we conceive to be, to instruct him by every means in his power, in a knowledge of Christ, and to use the proper means for his conversion, that he may believe in Christ, and be baptized, when he so believes, on the profession of his own faith. We hold to "believer's baptism" for all adults, but maintain that infants are to be baptized on the faith of their parents, if free, or on the faith of their masters, if the children are born in slavery and their own parents are not members of the church, or do not choose to offer them on the profession of their own faith. By all means, the *master* is to see to it, and on him the responsibility is made to rest by God's word, of having them dedicated to God in baptism, and trained up in a knowledge of his ways. God will have families and house-

holds, entire households, their head being a believer in Christ, acknowledged as joined to his church, and taught to know his ways. Where domestic slavery exists, he holds the master responsible for all this. And the conscientious master, if he views the subject rightly, dare not content himself with exacting their daily toil from his servants, and furnishing them as he does the brute beasts that labor for him merely with their *σιτομαστιχιον*, their portion of meat in due season, with a house to protect, and clothing to cover them, and care in sickness and old age. He is held responsible, by God, for their religious training, as the parent is for the religious training of the child, (though not to the same degree, for neither is the opportunity nor the ability the same,) and to secure this, God has determined that they shall belong to his church, as the infant child of the believer shall belong to his church, that whoever becomes a permanent member of a family whose head is a believer, whether it be by being born of his seed, or by being born in his house, though not of his seed, or by being bought with money from the stranger, shall be also a member of his church, and acknowledged as such by the primary rite of initiation. God does not place men under the absolute power of others, without binding those, under whom they are so placed, by the most stringent obligations. The father is made, by God's appointment, not merely the natural, but the ecclesiastical head of the child in his infant years, and so the master is of the servant. By a double, yea, triple bond, nature, law and covenant, the father and master, themselves being free and responsible, are held bound for the dependent and irresponsible members of their families. In this way, is there a compensation divinely appointed for the abridgment both these relations suppose, of the personal freedom of those in subjection. In this way, are both relations made to subserve interests for time and eternity, precious to society and to the bodies and souls of the major portion of society. In the providence of God, these bondmen have been torn from their country, and placed under Christian masters for their salvation. Numbers of them have been joined to Christ, while their brethren at home are worshippers of the devil. But how much faster would their illumination and sanctification have been secured, if believing masters had acknowledged this sacred

relation they sustain to them, dedicated them to God in infancy, and trained them up for him. How would the reproach of slavery itself have been well nigh rolled away, and the sacred influence of religion have blessed with its happy purifying power the hut of the servant and the dwelling of his master? How would the providence of God, in bringing them to this Christian land, to learn the ways of peace, been more signally vindicated in the eyes of all mankind? When a Christian man finds himself in the condition of Abraham, the father of the faithful, i. e., of believers, he must follow his example wherein it has been crowned with the divine approval. This being ascertained, the conscientious man, must ever regard him as a pattern, and be found walking in the steps of faithful Abraham. He would so have many proofs of the divine approbation. "Shall I hide from Abraham, saith the Lord, that thing which I do: For I know him, that he will command his children and his *household* after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." The master is responsible for all his house. This responsibility, Joshua, another ancient master, felt, and made this noble determination: "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." And Solomon, who in his great prosperity, got him servants and maidens, and had servants born in his house, so that he became great and increased more than all that were in Jerusalem before him, bestowed especial attention upon his servants. "The sitting of his servants" is mentioned as one of the things which awoke the admiration of the queen of Sheba; and doubtless he, in his better days, paid great attention to their religious well-being. When he repented of his sin, he, doubtless, as his illustrious father did, when he came up from conveying the ark from the house of Obed Edom, "returned to bless his house;" nor was the blessing, in either case, confined to the children, it must have been extended to the servants of the family also. A shame will it be to us, an everlasting reproach, if our servants shall be no otherwise situated as to religious and church privileges, than those of the men of the world, which have their portion in this life.

In the arrangement, by which the servants of believing masters, were acknowledged as in the covenant, and enti-

tled to its seals as well as their children, we see distinguished proofs of the divine wisdom.

There was a reason, in the nature of the case, for this arrangement; for with them, as with us, the care of their children devolved much upon their servants; and unless these servants were educated in religious things, in some measure as their children were educated, they would corrupt their infant offspring, and train them up in the ways of evil. And in no other way could they be a holy people, than by the religious education of their children and servants together, which was secured by the divine ordinance, and the holy covenant of God, by embracing them alike in the visible church, and affixing to them equally the visible sign of the covenant, the seal of the righteousness which is by faith.

Our children catch the very dialect of our servants, and lisp all their perversions of the English tongue, long before they learn to speak it correctly. The irreligion and vice which prevail among them, become common to them and our own offspring. And not only is this true of our domestic servants, but those who may be more removed from our immediate families, exert their corrupting influence over those members of the same, with whom they casually or in the necessary conduct of business, are brought in contact. We need, for our children's sake, as well as for the sake of those whom providence has placed beneath our guardianship and care, and who toil for us and attend us in our hours of sickness and calamity, to obey this ancient divine institution, which no subsequent legislation has ever repealed. And, especially when this system of domestic slavery, is now by the entire civilized world, ourselves excepted, violently impugned, and we resort to the divine word for shelter and defence from the angry arguments of men, we should see to it that we place it on a scriptural basis, and that by our conduct towards our servants, we may claim for ourselves the divine approbation and protection.

In conclusion, we remark, that we have occasion to know that the views we have now expressed, will have to contend, not only with many practical difficulties in carrying them out, but with many objections in the minds of our brethren. The subject has been up for the last two years before the

Presbytery of Charleston, and the Synod of South Carolina, and though a decision, favorable to these views, was given by the votes of the great majority of the brethren of Synod present, it was manifest that difficulties were felt by some, as to the practical working of the plan. In our view, these difficulties all arise out of our own neglect, through all these years that are past. The church has been unmindful of its duty and its solemn obligations, through two or three generations, and it is hard to repair the ruins of so many years, to recover from the sins which long habit has fastened upon us. All these objections, demand an attentive consideration, and we feel called upon to meet them as far as may be in our power.

We suppose, then, it will be granted, that with minor differences, the slavery of the patriarchal and Jewish period of history, is substantially the same as that now in existence. The institution, in its early commencement, may have originated in violence, or it may have been, as Alison in his history of Europe remarks, voluntary on the part of those submitting to it, and a benefit to them rather than an evil. In whatever way it originated, it was treated as an existing relation, taken up and protected by the ecclesiastical covenant made with Abraham, and continued down, unproved, through the period of inspiration. The Christian church was engrafted upon the Jewish, or rather upon the patriarchal, and the Abrahamic covenant is still the charter of the church. It seems to us to follow, that men finding themselves in the situation of Abraham, are now required to do what he, by this covenant, was required to do, and, therefore, to apply the seal of the covenant, which now is baptism, to those to whom he was bound to apply it, discharging, at the same time, those duties of religious nurture, which it implies.

It is objected to this, that if we adopt the provisions of that covenant, we must baptize not only our infant but our adult slaves, on the profession of our own faith in Christ. To this we have already, in part, replied. We further add, that the genius of the former dispensations, was different from the genius of this. Those were designed to embrace the seed of Abraham, according to the flesh, and this the spiritual seed of Abraham alone. A historic faith, therefore, was all which was secured under those dispensations,

in such as were admitted to sealing ordinances. To secure this, we have seen pains were taken to instruct all who were capable of instruction, till they understood and received the doctrines of Judaism, before administering the rite of circumcision. Thus, proselytes and their adult servants, were prepared for circumcision and baptism in the Jewish church. And servants, purchased by Jewish masters, if not ready to give their intellectual assent to the doctrines and usages of Judaism at once, were instructed and dealt with for a twelvemonth, and if impracticable, were sold back again to the pagan nations, from whom they had been purchased. Even Abraham's grown servants, who were circumcised at once by him, had probably been years in his possession, and all the while taught a knowledge of the true God. They were trained, instructed, catechised, and, it is to be presumed, cheerfully submitted to a painful rite, on the conviction of its propriety, as a religious ordinance appointed by God. Now, according to the genius of the new dispensation, none have a right, they being of adult years, to membership in the church, except those upon whose hearts the work of regeneration has taken place. With infants, the rule of admission is otherwise. Their connection with believing parents, constitutes them members of Christ's fold, which membership is acknowledged, not constituted in their baptism. In like manner, the connection of infant bond-servants with believing masters, did constitute them members of the church, which membership was acknowledged in their circumcision, and should now be acknowledged in their baptism. We can conceive no more evil, arising from recognizing this connection of infant servants with believing masters, as constituting a reason for membership in the visible church, than the connection of infants with their believing parents. It matters not how the connection is formed, whether by blood or otherwise. If God ordains the connection, though different in its nature, as constituting the channel through which covenant mercies and privileges shall flow, man has no right to withstand him, impugn his wisdom, or annul his ordinance. Grace runs not in the blood, sin, not piety, is transmitted, in accordance with the law of carnal descent. It is the fact, that both child and servant are dependent on the master, — that he has both within his power, represents both, is

responsible for both, and accountable for both by all law, human and divine, has a property in both, which the *parents* of the infant servant have not. It is because the master is the head of his entire household, of his children and his servant's children, and not the parents of these servants, the head of their own offspring, that membership in the church is made, in this ancient and still binding covenant, to be dependent on the master's faith. The contrary doctrine to this, would seem to sweep away infant baptism altogether. For, if one entire class of subjects are to be supposed debarred from the baptismal rite, under the new dispensation of the old Abrahamic covenant, why not the other. If the infant born in bondage, why not the infant born in civil freedom. Is it urged, that in the New Testament, the promise is said to be to you and your children? It is replied, the language was no other in the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, yet the covenant plainly included more, and its seal was more widely applied. Is the language of Paul, "The believing husband is sanctified by the wife, &c., else were your children unclean, but now are they holy," adduced to show that the covenant embraces the children alone? We answer, the question there was respecting the permanency of the marriage relation only, and not at all respecting the relation of servants and master, the mention of the ecclesiastical state of the fruits of the marriage, was alone apposite to the Apostle's argument, and its mention does not show that the ecclesiastical relation of the infant servant had terminated. Is it urged that Pædobaptist writers almost never bring this particular question into view, and seem to regard it as excluded, it will be remembered that these men, in modern times, have not ordinarily been holders of slaves, and have not felt that this question had any present interest to the church.

Is it pleaded that now, when different views prevail through the community, to a large extent, on the whole subject of baptism, and of those who are entitled to it, new difficulties exist in the administration of infant baptism? We answer, it is manifest that these different views have arisen, in a great measure, from the abuses which have crept into the church, in the practice of infant baptism, and from the erroneous notions of those who have held it, and further, that the errors in opinion on this whole subject, now



prevalent, cannot absolve us from our duty. Is it still pleaded that great difficulties lie in the way of training up our servants in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? We answer, that we must do so, or we cannot train up our *children* in the fear of God; we must educate, in some measure, our whole dependants together, that any portion of these may be educated aright; and, further, that the same difficulties pressed the master under the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, without absolving him from his duty; and that if a conscientious master could discharge his duty then, he can, with sufficient effort and self-denial, discharge his duty now.

It may be asked, what shall be done where the parent of the infant servant opposes its baptism, either because hostile to all religion, or because a member of a church hostile to pædobaptist views. Shall the master in this case have the baptismal rite administered to the infants of these servants? We conceive that he should, because on him primarily rests the responsibility of their education in religion, as well as in relation to all things else connected with their welfare. Because, further, infant circumcision was a divine ordinance, and no hostility of slave parents, from whatever cause arising, could absolve the master. Because it is the master's duty to repress the opposition of the one servant, who is hostile to all religion, and to explain to the other his own religious views and obligations, and to show him his own sincerity and conviction of duty in the matter; and we venture to say, if this were affectionately and tenderly done, there is hardly a Christian servant to be found who would allow himself to stand opposed to the wishes of the master. If it be asked whether the master has a right to interfere in the religious opinions of his servant, we answer yes, even as he has to interfere with the religious opinions of his own children, and it is his duty to interfere. He is bound to guard him against all mischievous errors, and to lead him to all truth. His interference with the servant's children, to secure their religious training in connection with the church of Christ, is a solemn duty. He judges for his servants and their children in all other things, even to the questions how, where, with whom they shall live, and what through life they shall do, and it is the least of all like usurpation to judge for them here.

Every Hebrew master did control, and was commanded to control, his servant in religious things, to bring him into the covenant, to cause him to eat the passover, and to oblige him to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, a command of the decalogue binding still on us.

But it has been said that the relation of master and servant is *sui generis*, a civil relation and not ecclesiastical, and the church, therefore, has no right to interfere in relation to it in any way. We answer, that slavery, in its essential character, is neither a civil nor an ecclesiastical institution, but one wholly domestic. It arises in the family, is created by the wants of the family, and is under the primary control of its head, with whom, in the first instance, it originated. In all countries where it has existed, it has been acknowledged as a domestic institution. Slaves are a part of the οἶκος, οἰκία, familia, domus, household, of their master, as truly as are their master's children. They are called οἰκέται οἰκήσιοι, familiares, domestici, *benay baith*, domestics, "sons of the house." When Abraham circumcised his family, he held only the family relation. He was a component part of no civil government. When men unite in a civil capacity, the institutions they form recognize and protect the relations before existing; and if legislation has respect to servants, it has also to children. And so in the church. The church creates no social relations not before in existence in human society; it recognizes and regulates, where they are not sinful in their nature, those it finds in being.

But it has been said that Abraham was a type of Christ, and that because he was so, all connected with Abraham were in union with the church of God, because all who are joined to Christ are constituent parts of the church which is his body: and though in some things Abraham was an example, in others, in which he was a type, he was not so, and it is inferred that, in the circumcision of his slaves, though he acted under a divine command, he is no example to us.

Our first remark in relation to this, is, that there is something sacred in a type where it really exists, which makes us discourse of it with an awe, which we do not feel on ordinary topics, even of a religious nature. We would be exceedingly unwilling to deny the existence of a type where one by the divine appointment was intended, and unwilling

to assert the existence of one where none was meant. The entire subject of types is intrinsically difficult, and one on which both a skeptical and an imaginative turn of mind are alike liable to err. We do not suppose that mere resemblance between two things constitutes one of them the type of the other; resemblance in itself would more properly point out the constancy and uniformity of the divine laws, than that one thing is symbolical or admonitory of another. "It is essential to a type," says Bishop Vanmildert, "in the scriptural acceptation of the term, that there should be competent evidence of the divine *intention* in the correspondence between it and the antitype; a matter not left to the imagination of the expositor to discover, but resting upon *solid* proof from the Scripture itself, that this was really the case." (44). In this, more than in almost any thing else, the history of the past makes us feel the necessity of a divine warrant to enable us, with certainty, to declare the existence of a type. It is further essential to a type that it should be an adumbration of the thing typified. And it seems to us that it should not be another instance of the same thing it is supposed to typify, but something which, while it is similar to it, is still specifically different from it. If it be an instance of the same thing it is thought to typify, it is but an example, it may be the first in a series, and therefore very important, as revealing to us the method which is to be pursued in all succeeding instances of the same thing.

Now there are two admitted points in which Abraham stands related to us. In the first place, as an *example*. He is the example and pattern of our justification. So the Apostle reasons. (45). And we who are justified "walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham." (46). For this reason, because of the resemblance between us and him, in this respect, and because he was the first one in this dispensation of the covenant of grace, was he the "father of them that believe." (47). So Jabal and Jubal, sons of Lamech, with some unimportant modifications of sense, were respectively the fathers of those who dwelt in tents, and who handled the harp and organ. (48). He is

(44) Bampton Lectt., p. 199.

(45) Romans iv.

(46) Verse 12.

(47) Verse 11; see also Gal. iii.

(48) Genesis v.

the example whom we should imitate in our faith, who believed even against hope, and received the blessings which God had promised: It is on this footing of an example, divinely appointed, as has already been seen, that we are disposed to base, in great part, our duty, to present our children and servants in baptism. It is an example which has been followed by all who have been acknowledged as in the Abrahamic covenant down to the times of Christ, and is still of binding force, unless God shall, by some express command, repeal the usage as the law of the church, and inform us that the example of Abraham, our father, is not in this to be followed. But in vain have we searched the Scriptures for any such command or declaration.

But Abraham stands related to us *as head of the covenant*. In this point of view, what was proper to the members of this covenant, and indeed the blessings of the covenant itself, are sometimes also affirmed of him. He represented, in fact, the covenant itself in its entire fulness. It was said of him, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." But, when we have this promise drawn out in its true meaning, we find it said that in his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. And when we still further hear the Apostle, pointing out the main import of this promise, we find him commenting thus: "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ." (49.) But the head of a covenant is not properly a type, as a federal head of those whom he represents. As head in this gracious covenant, he was the father of many nations, (which his name Abraham denotes,) not only of the Jewish tribes, but of the myriads out of every language, kindred and tongue, who walk in the steps of the faith of Abraham, and are redeemed through the promised seed, Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.

These two points, appear to exhaust all that the scripture teaches us of the relation subsisting between Abraham and ourselves, nor do we find divines, in general, regarded Abraham as a type of Christ and of our relation to him. Macknight speaks of him as a type of believers; (50) and Frey, whose book on types is the only one expressly on the

(49) Galatians iii: 16.

(50) Apost. Epist. p.p. 252, 713.

subject, at this moment at hand, says, divines do not consider him a type of Christ. (51.) Yet, in many respects, the stipulations of the *covenant*, of which he was the head, were typical. Isaac, in particular, was a type of Christ, in many respects, and also of believers; and the natural seed of Abraham, were types of the spiritual seed; and the natural and civil blessings secured in the covenant, of the spritual and eternal ones this spiritual seed are to enjoy. The offering up of Isaac in particular, has been considered as typical of the one great sacrifice. But in this, Isaac was the type of Christ, the second person in the glorious God-head, and Abraham, an example of overcoming faith, and not a type of either the Father or the Son, though some, as Mr. Frey, make Abraham's act, a striking emblem of the love of God the Father, in the gift of his Son to suffer and die. This is the only personal transaction, we recollect, in Abraham's life, to which a typical import could well be given. It may be true, that all covenants, which God enters into with men, since the fall, rest, ultimately, on the merits of Christ, but this will not prove the head of the covenant a type of Christ. Noah may have been designed as a type of our Redeemer, for his name, and the hopes expressed by his father Lamech, may be interpreted to confirm this supposition. But, the covenant entered into with him, did not necessarily constitute him so. The ark, more properly, and the salvation effected by it from temporal death, was a type of Christ and his salvation, rather than Noah. Both he and Abraham, were examples of eminent faith, which examples we are bound to follow, as far as they themselves followed the command of God.

But, even admitting the typical relation of Abraham and those connected with him, to the Messiah and those connected with him; if the argument for the baptism of servants must fall to the ground, because of this, so also must the argument for the baptism of infants, so far as this rests on the covenant made with Abraham. But we see no other foundation for it, than the principle recognized in that covenant. The declaration, that the promise is unto you and your children, found in the New Testament, the federal holiness of children, whose parents are in the church,

(51) J. S. C. F. Frey, *Scripture Types*, vol. ii., Lect. xxv.

and the declaration of Christ, respecting children, that of such is the kingdom of heaven, seem to be only recognitions of the principle of the older economies, which is traced back to the Abrahamic covenant, where it was first publicly recognized by God.

But if all connected with Abraham were in the covenant, because this is so of all who are connected with Christ, of whom he is affirmed to be a type, our argument is valid still, on scriptural grounds. Those connected with him, whether as children or servants, were sealed with the seal of circumcision, the seal of the righteousness which he himself had through faith. In the generations which succeeded, the children and servants of his posterity bore the sign of circumcision in their flesh, because of their connection with him. But, how were proselytes, *their* children and servants circumcised? Here there was no natural connection with Abraham. They possessed faith in Abraham's God, and in the promised seed. And why are not all believers now equally proselytes to the faith of Abraham, which he had, being yet uncircumcised? Why are not they, *their* children and servants, equally in the covenant, and equally entitled to its seals? Are not all believers still his true seed, and in the covenant made with him? Do not those of them, who are masters of bond-servants and parents, sustain precisely the domestic relations he did? We ask then for the warrant from above for declaring a part of those who sustain these connections out of the covenant, and another part in. Or, if the circumcision of servants was typical of something to come, which the circumcision of infants was not, we ask for the anti-type, which being come, releases us from the necessity of performing this typical rite.

It may be objected, that in acknowledging infant servants, as entitled to baptism, on the faith and suretyship of their masters, we introduce a new element, not recognized in our Confession of Faith, which declares that "the visible church consists of all those throughout the world, that profess the true religion, together with their children," and that "the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized," thus excluding the infants of servants who are not believers in Christ. Our answer to this has, for substance, been given, that when the Westminster, and other early con-

fessions of the Reformed churches were written, this particular subject was not a practical one to the framers of these confessions. They were not holders of slaves, and this question did not come before them. This confession was adopted by the Synod of Philadelphia, without change, in 1729. But, in 1786, the decisions were given on the subject of this article, which we have before quoted, in answer to the overture from the Presbytery of Donnegal. The Donnegal Presbytery, at that time, occupied the geographical position now occupied by the Presbyteries of Baltimore and Carlisle, into which it was that very year divided, and the institution of domestic slavery then pervaded the entire bounds of the Presbyterian church, both in the North and the South. The body which gave the decision, was a body of men who were intimately connected with this domestic relation.

As to the failure of direct historic evidence, in favor of the baptism of infant servants, from the cessation of the Jewish church to the times of Augustine, we can only say that Augustine speaks of it as a custom in existence; that it resulted, in his day, from the conviction that baptism came in place of circumcision, a conviction which we can trace up through the earliest fathers; that the same break in the historic proof exists in relation to the baptism of the infant children of believers, though for a shorter period. If the occurrence of intervals of time, during which the traces of an institution or custom fail from history, could prove its non-existence, the argument for the weekly Sabbath, as an institution perpetually observed by the people of God, would utterly fail, for there are no express notices of it, from Adam to Moses, a period of 2500 years, nor from Moses to David, an interval 500 years in duration.

We have thus considered the principal objections we have heard urged against our argument, and none of them seem to us to overthrow it. The greatest one of all, appears to arise from the practical difficulty of carrying out a long neglected duty. Yet, that it is practicable to do so, is plain from the case of Abraham, who, though a more extensive holder of slaves than any of us, could, and did perform for them all that circumcision required him to do, and it required of him all that baptism requires of us. He could do

it, and obtain the approbation of God for his faithful performance of the duty. If he, and other Hebrew masters, could discharge these obligations, so can we. Not the same amount of training is required from us, in relation to them, as is required in relation to our own children, for the same amount cannot now, nor ever could be bestowed. In our belief, all difficulties would vanish, or be gradually overcome, by conscientious perseverance. It will take years, and may require a generation, to place this matter in the favorable position in which it should be placed. God requires us to do what we can. He certainly requires us to attend to the religious education of our servants, whether living in immediate connection with ourselves and children, or more remote. If we are not willing to meet our obligations here, we are not worthy of the responsible trust he has devolved upon us, by bringing so many of our race beneath our power. He requires it of us, as really as he requires of us the religious education of our own children. We can provide for their religious training. Where the parents are pious, we can conduct it through them. We can furnish to all our servants the preached word. We can show them that we take an interest habitually in their religious welfare. We can pray with and for them. We can have them regularly taught in the doctrines and duties of the Christian faith. Less than this, we are not permitted to do, by our obligations to them as men—by our responsibility to them as our dependents—by the requirements made on us by God in his holy word.

To every reader of these pages, then, and especially to all resident in its immediate bounds, we commend the resolutions of the Synod of South Carolina, at its last sessions, as expressive of the duty of the church and its members on this important subject.

“1. *Resolved*, That it is the duty of believing masters to train up their servants, as well as their children, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

“2. *Resolved*, That the principles of the Abrahamic covenant, as to the circumcision of servants, is still in force in reference to the infant offspring of those who stand to us in this relation; and that as baptism succeeds to circumcision, it is the duty of masters to dedicate such serv-



ants to God in the ordinance of baptism, and to do all in their power to train them up in a knowledge of the truth, and in the way of salvation through Christ.

"3. *Resolved*, That though there are great and manifest difficulties in carrying out the principles of these resolutions, these difficulties have chiefly resulted from the long continued neglect of believing masters and of the church, and that these difficulties must be gradually overcome by continued and persevering efforts. (52).

The language of the able and good Bishop Berkeley, used by him more than a hundred years ago, in relation to these very plantations in America, is solemn and sad. "To this," says he, speaking of a cause which we trust does not now exist, "may be imputed the small care that hath been taken to convert the negroes of our plantations, who, to the infamy of *England*, and scandal of the world, continue heathen under Christian masters, and in Christian countries. Which could never be, if our planters were rightly instructed and made sensible, that they disappointed their own baptism by denying it to those who belong to them: that it would be of advantage to their affairs, to have slaves who should obey in all things their masters according to the flesh, not with eye service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, as fearing God: that gospel liberty consists with temporal servitude; and that their slaves would only become better slaves by being Christian." (53).

Though we believe our servants are far more enlightened and Christian than they were then, and are many removed from heathenism now, yet the language is still too sadly true; with all our doings, we do too little for them. We are too partial, too inefficient, too languid in our efforts for their salvation. The day has come for more energetic action, more ample instrumentalities, more self-denying labor to bring them to a knowledge of Christ, who hath made of one blood all nations of the earth.

(52) Minutes of Synod of South Carolina for 1846, p. 21.

(53) Berkeley's Works, Vol. II., p. 422.