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ART. I.—*The Works of Algernon Sidney, 1722.*

MILTON has well said; "A commonwealth ought to be as one huge Christian personage, one mighty growth and stature of an honest man, as big and as compact in virtue as in body." But what ought to be seldom is, and what is really good on earth is seldom in perfection. The trail of the serpent is seen everywhere. Yet this is no reason, why the best things in the highest degrees should not be earnestly sought. The school-boy may be but a blotter of paper for a long time, nevertheless he should have good copies before him all the time, lest in imitating he should incurably learn a bad hand. No man can do a better civil service to his country than to hold up before the young the best models of states and statesmen. When political virtue lives in the poor-house, political liberty goes to jail. This is ever true. Therefore he who wishes well to men, should study and adduce the bright examples of former days, for the admiration and benefit of his own and future ages, and so much the more as living instances are rare.

Very few names in the history of the past are more entitled

reason and religion to hold fast to it, until it can be shown to have been abrogated, not by an ingenious array of probabilities and plausible analogies, but by direct conclusive evidence, as clear and strong as that which demonstrates the original inspiration of the Hebrew Bible. But how immeasurably far short of such evidence does that fall, which consists in showing that a Greek Old Testament was greatly needed, and that Christ and his Apostles used it as a storehouse of religious phraseology and a source of illustrative quotation. All this might have been done with an inspired and faultless version; but it might also have been done with a human and imperfect one; and therefore the bare fact that it was done can prove nothing, either one way or the other.

From the publication of this volume we should be happy to anticipate two benefits. The first is the confirmed belief of the true doctrine, which it labours among others to demolish. The second is a general return to the enlightened, rational, and diligent study of the Septuagint version, not apart from the Hebrew text and in a kind of opposition to it, which can only lead to such results as those developed in the book before us, but in such connection with it and subordination to it, as will furnish the best safeguards against both extremes, that of ignorant or prejudiced depreciation, as well as that of overweening admiration and idolatrous attachment.

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ART. IV.—*Communion—The difference between Christian and Church Fellowship, and between Communion and its Symbols; embracing a Review of the arguments of the Rev. Robert Hall, and Rev. Baptist W. Noel, in favour of Mixed Communion.* By G. F. Curtis, A. M., Professor of Theology, Harvard College, Ala. Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, in Arch Street. 1850.

WE are not surprised that the subject of Free Communion is beginning to attract the attention of the American Baptist brethren in this country, as it has of the churches of that de-

nomination in England. Booth and Fuller laboured hard to support the sectarian principle of close communion: but by the arguments of Robert Hall in favour of free communion among all true Christians, a great change has come over the ministers and members of the Baptist churches in that country; so that it is said, the practice is likely to be prevalent through that respectable and orthodox body of Christians, especially since the Rev. Baptist Noel has come out so strongly in its favour.

The subject has been but little agitated, publicly, by the Baptist Churches in America. They have continued to maintain great unanimity and conformity with one another on this point. But we venture to predict that the time is rapidly approaching, when this subject will agitate the church from the centre to the circumference of the body. The wave is already in motion, which threatens, at last, to sweep away this exclusive schismatic principle of restricted communion from the face of the Protestant world.

This is a principle which sets up an exclusive barrier between the communion of real Christians, who cannot but love one another. Sooner or later, it must come down. The religious spirit of our age has a strong tendency to free communion among all who love the Lord Jesus Christ; and this current is so strong, that it is bearing the pious Baptist along with it; at first, against his principles; and next, by leading him to renounce those narrow views which restrain him from communing with those whom he acknowledges to be his brethren, and whom he sincerely loves as belonging to Christ, and bearing his image.

Although this subject has not been much agitated in this country, many pious members of the Baptist Church have often been troubled and perplexed in regard to it. They have not been able to understand why the disciples of Christ, who recognise each other as such, should be kept apart from Christian communion and fellowship, on account of a difference of opinion and practice, relative to another ordinance, which both parties acknowledge to be a divine institution, and obligatory on Christians. There is, doubtless, a strong undercurrent of such sentiments, among many of the most pious and ex-

emplary members of the Baptist Churches. Their hearts say it ought not to be so; and even if they cannot answer the arguments which are brought to convince them, and therefore continue quiet, yet, when the subject comes to be agitated, this under-current will in many places break forth into a resistless torrent, and, when a good opportunity offers, the tide of brotherly-love will sweep away, as was before said, these sectarian barriers.

It has appeared to us, that the new invented distinction between the theology of the understanding and the theology of the feelings, is wonderfully applicable to this case. A pious Baptist happens to be present among Christian friends, when the Lord's Supper is about to be celebrated. He has joined with them cordially in social acts of prayer and praise, and received the word as dispensed by them, with comfort and edification. But now, he must withdraw. These Christian friends, though they esteem themselves baptized, yet have never been immersed. His heart is with them, but his adopted creed says, "Touch not—handle not;" you must not commune in the Lord's Supper, with these lambs of Christ. No wonder, that the feelings of the heart, on some occasions, cause the pious to break over the sectarian restraints which have been laid on them.

That any persons, who are acknowledged to be the disciples of Christ, can with propriety be excluded from the Lord's table, is a thing so strange and so opposed to all those feelings of fervent brotherly-love, which belong to the Christian temper, that the arguments to establish it should carry with them the force of demonstration. Whether they do possess this force, we shall not at present inquire. Whatever they be, the Baptist churches in these United States have generally been satisfied with them; and have resolutely and almost unanimously shut the door against the Christians of all other denominations. The practical inconvenience of such exclusion is not considerable, except in those cases where pedobaptists live among them and are far removed from the churches of their own creed. In the case of such, there is a real hardship, as these persons, separated from their own communion, would rejoice in the privilege of remembering the death of Christ

at his table, in the use of those symbols which he has instituted. But in regard to the great body of Christian people, who have churches of their own where they can and do resort, periodically to celebrate the Lord's Supper, they suffer no privation in consequence of the close communion of their Baptist brethren. For they seldom commune in other churches than the one of which they are members, even of the same denomination and situated near them; and if the communion of the Baptist churches were ever so free, they would seldom see Christians of other denominations coming to their communion. The subject, in this practical view, is quite unimportant. It is on account of the great principle involved, that it becomes a matter of real consequence.

To exclude from the communion of the church any of the real disciples of Christ, is, in our view, inconsistent with the clearest principles of Christian duty. It violates the best and warmest feelings of piety; and often when from argument or it is believed to be necessary, it is difficult to keep a heart warmed with brotherly affection from rising in revulsion against the exclusive principle.

The following facts, known to us, will serve to illustrate what has now been said. A distinguished preacher,\* in Virginia, who had been imprisoned for many months in a loathsome jail for preaching the gospel, happened to be present when the Lord's Supper was administered in a Presbyterian church, in which he had been brought up. It was a time of love. The hearts of God's people were melted together, and drawn out in love to the Saviour; this pious minister participated in the blessed, uniting feeling; and when the table was spread and the invitation given by the pastor to all that loved the Lord Jesus to come forward and commemorate the love of a dying Saviour, he could not resist the impulse of his Christian feelings, and came forward with the other communicants and took his seat at the table of our common Lord. And who that understands the nature of the union which subsists among real Christians can blame the act? He obeyed the command of his Master, and held sweet communion with persons, whom

\* Rev. John Weatherford.

he believed to be the genuine disciples of Christ. But he violated the law of his church, and was in due form cited to answer for the offence. On being arraigned, he candidly confessed that, overcome by his feelings, he had acted contrary to his cool judgment of what was proper, and expressed sorrow for the offence given to his brethren. Oh what a humiliation! He never could repent of the feelings which impelled him, nor of the act of obeying the command of his Saviour. But he had transgressed the rules of the Baptist church; and the good man felt bound to give satisfaction to his complaining brethren. It would be hard for any one to persuade us, that his conduct in this case was disapproved by Jesus Christ, the Master of the feast.

The following event occurred in the same part of the country, and not far from the same time with that just mentioned. A very pious young Presbyterian, and a candidate for the ministry, happened to be present at a Baptist meeting, when the Lord's Supper was about to be solemnized; and when the table was spread, hearing the officiating minister inviting all persons of regular standing in sister churches to come forward and join in the communion, he supposed, that by sister-churches, were meant, professing Christians of other denominations; and he accordingly came forward among the communicants; and the deacons had not the resolution to prevent the desecration of the ordinance, by removing him! But when, afterwards, he learned his mistake, he was greatly mortified at having obtruded himself on the communion of a church, which viewed him as altogether unworthy to partake with them of the emblems of the Saviour's broken body and shed blood; and yet this young man, as he then appeared, and as he has since proved by half a century of holy living, was as dear to Christ as any one of the company of believers with which he by mistake communed.

When the Baptist missionaries to the heathen are visited by their brethren of pedobaptist communions, they find it very difficult to carry out their exclusive principles. The late Captain Wickes, of Philadelphia, informed us, that when he carried to India, the Rev. W. Ward, and several other missionaries, some of whom were sent by the London Missionary

Society, he spent some time at Serampore, the principal station of the Baptist missionaries. When the time of administering the Lord's Supper came round, the Baptist brethren were put to a severe trial. They had treated Captain Wiekes, a man of eminent piety, and the London missionaries, with the utmost cordiality and kindness, as beloved brethren, and should they now sit down at the Lord's table in the midst of the heathen, and exclude two beloved brethren from their communion! No: they could not do it. Brotherly-love broke over the barriers of sect, and although in England Carey and Ward and all the rest had been strong in favour of close communion, they, on this occasion, gave it up, and these brethren all sat down together as became good Christians; and, in our opinion, this cordial reception of beloved Christian brethren engaged in the same missionary work, by the Baptist church of Serampore, will never be imputed to them as a sin by the great Head of the Church.

The Rev. Dr. Cox, one of the most distinguished Baptist preachers in London, in a late speech informs the public, that on a certain occasion, when he happened to fall among Christian brethren of another denomination, when they surrounded the table of the Lord, he felt it to be his duty to withdraw; but he announced, that now his views on that subject were entirely changed, so that he felt free to hold communion at the Lord's table with all true Christians.

About the same time, without any concert or knowledge of each other's design, two of the greatest preachers living, the one in the Great Britain, the other in the United States, took up their pens to defend the doctrine of free communion among Christians. It will readily be understood that the reference is to Robert Hall and John M. Mason of New York. The latter of these clergymen, at that time, was a minister of the Associate Reformed Church, which maintained close communion, gives us the following account of the circumstances which led him and his flock into the practice of communing with Christians of another denomination: "In August, 1810, a combination of circumstances wholly providential, being unsought and unexpected by all concerned, led the third Associate Church in the city of New York, then recently formed

under the ministry of Dr. John M. Mason, to hold their assemblies in the house belonging to the church under the care of Dr. John B. Romeyn, a minister of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in North America. As the hours of service were different, the one congregation succeeding the other in the same place on the same day, the first effect of this arrangement was a partial amalgamation of the two societies in the ordinary exercises of public worship—the next, a mutual esteem growing out of mutual acquaintance with each other, as united in the same precious faith; and, finally, after a very short time, invitations on both sides to join in commemorating, at his own table, the love of that Saviour, who gave himself for them an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet smelling savour. The invitations were as cordially accepted as they were frankly given. The bulk of the members of both churches, as well as some belonging to correlate churches, mingled their affections and their testimony in the holy ordinance. The ministers reciprocated the services of the sacramental day, and the communion thus established has been perpetuated with increasing delight and attachment, and has extended itself to ministers and private Christians of other churches.”

This departure from the custom of his church by Dr. Mason, did not pass without censure from many who belonged to that denomination, which gave occasion to his writing and publishing his treatise in defence of free communion. We have given this brief account of the origin of this treatise, because, instead of forming an argument for ourselves, we choose to adopt the language of this eminent man, in exhibiting our views on this subject.

Dr. Mason deems it expedient, in his argument, to go to first principles; and begins by stating the doctrine of the unity of the Church of Christ. In proof of this he adduces one scriptural argument, “As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one spirit. For the body is not one member but many.



In these words, Paul lays down certain indisputable principles, concerning the natural body.

1. That the multitude of its members does not destroy its unity, nor their relation to it as a whole.

2. That their union with the body is the foundation of all the value, beauty and excellence of the members in their respective places.

3. That the efficiency of the members consists in their united co-operation, as parts of a common whole—that there should be no schism in the body.

4. That from their union with the body, there result, by a divine constitution, a communion of interests, a sympathy of feeling, and a reciprocation of benefits—that the members should have the same care one for another, and whether one member suffer all the members suffer with it, or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.

“The use of this similitude Paul declares to be an illustration of the unity of the church, and of the intimate communion of believers. Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular.

“It is true that the apostle turns his argument directly against the contentions in the Corinthian church, about the superiority or inferiority of public offices and spiritual gifts; and it is also true that the principles of his argument are general, and equally applicable to every thing which tends to cherish among Christians a party feeling, at the expense of weakening the sense of their union; or of interrupting their communion as members of the body of Christ; are never intended to be so applied. Moreover, the apostle himself extended his argument to matters, which without affecting the substance of our faith, hope, or duty, do yet produce great diversity of opinion and habit, and has shown that they ought not to infringe on Christian union; nor consequently upon the expression of it in Christian communion.

“Finally, the apostle opposes the spirit of ecclesiastical faction to the spirit of Christian love. This heavenly grace is above prophecies, tongues, knowledge, the faith of miracles, the most magnificent alms, the very zeal of martyrdom. Now this love, the only cure for the gangrene of party strife—the

most characteristic feature of Christ's image in a renewed man—the most precious fruit of his grace, and yet the fruit which the bulk of his professed followers seem to think themselves under hardly any obligations to cultivate—this love is said to originate in the love of God shed abroad in the heart, and to be drawn out to the brethren precisely on this account because they are the children of God—the disciples of Christ—and therefore not on account of their adherence to one or another denomination, however sound it may be in the faith. Hereby, said the Saviour, shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love to one another. Every one, adds the beloved John, who lay in his bosom and drank deeply into his spirit, Every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him. And surely, the description which Paul has given of Christian love, corresponds to any thing else as well as to that gloomy distance and sour disdain, which are cherished by some professors towards others, of whose graces the light at least is equal to their own; and which, by a hardihood not easily attained or equalled, are converted into testimony for Jesus Christ." The eloquent author having considered the analogy which the apostle draws between the natural body and the church, gathers from it the following results, viz.:

"1. The body of Christ is one.

"2. Every member of this body has, by a divine constitution, utterly independent of his own will, both union and communion with any other member, as infallibly as hands and feet, eyes and ears and nose, are by the very constitution of the physical body, united together as parts of a whole, and sympathize with each other accordingly.

"3. The members of this body of Christ have a common and inalienable interest in all the provision which God has made for its nutriment, growth, and consolation; and that simply and absolutely because they are members of that body. Therefore;

"4. the members of the church of Christ, individually and collectively, are under a moral necessity, i. e., under the obligation of God's authority, to recognise each other's character and privileges, and consequently, not to deny the tokens of

such recognition. Sacramental communion is one of these tokens: therefore the members of the church of Christ as such are under obligation of God's authority to recognise their relation to Christ and each other, by joining together in sacramental communion. Nor has any church upon earth the power to refuse a seat at the table of our Lord to one whose 'conversation is as becometh the gospel.'

"This general conclusion, flowing irrefragably from the scriptural doctrine of the unity of Christ's body, and the union and communion of its members, is illustrated and confirmed by a consideration of the *tenure* by which all Christian churches and people hold their Christian privileges.

"None whom these pages address will pretend that there are no true Christians in the world but themselves, and no true church but their own—that all others are mere heathen; and all their churches synagogues of Satan. The very idea of such arrogance is abhorred by those whose feelings and practice are most adverse to free communion. They profess to acknowledge and honour other churches—to rejoice in the gifts and graces of other Christians—to account them as 'dear children of God,' as 'brethren beloved' in the common Redeemer. This is all right—Christian like—just as it should be. But does it never appear to these good men so much as incongruous to decline taking a family-meal with any of the household of faith, who do not happen to occupy the same apartment with themselves; to own them as 'saints,' and 'precious saints,' and yet deny them the provision which belongs to saints? And at the moment of greeting them as brethren, *beloved* brethren, to tell them, 'You shall not have at the table where we sup, one crumb of the bread nor one drop of the wine which Jesus, your Lord and ours, has given to you as well as to us?' This is certainly an original way of expressing *love*! But to press the matter a little closer, these true churches and Christians, have a right to the holy sacraments, or they have not. If not, it is a contradiction to call them true churches; the rightful possession of the sacraments being essential to a true church. They have then such a right. How did they obtain it? By a grant from the Lord Jesus Christ, unquestionably. He gave all church privileges

to his church catholic; and from this catholic grant do all particular churches derive their right and property in whatever privileges they enjoy. Other true churches hold their right to all church privileges by the very same tenure by which we hold ours; and consequently the members of those churches have the same right to the table of the Lord as our own. By what authority then does any church undertake to invalidate the right bestowed by Christ himself? And what less, or what else does she attempt, when she refuses to admit Christians from other particular churches to the participation of any ordinance which Christ has established for common use? The sacramental table is spread—I approach and ask for a seat. You say, no. Do you dispute my Christian character? Not in the least. Why then am I refused? You do not belong to our Church. *Your church!* What do you mean by *your church*? Is it any thing more than a branch of the Christian church? Whose table is this? Is it your Lord's? If yours and not hers, I have done. But if it is the Lord's, where did you acquire the power of shutting out from its mercies any one of his people? I claim my seat under my Master's grant; show me your warrant for interfering with it. Methinks it would require a stout heart to encounter such a challenge; and that the sturdiest sectarian upon earth, not destitute of the fear of God, should pause and think before he ventured on a final repulse. The language of such an act is very clear and daring. 'You have indeed, Christ's invitation to his table; but you have not *mine*; and without mine his shall not avail.' Most fearful! Christ Jesus says, '*Do this in remembrance of me.*' His servants rise to obey his commands, and a fellow-servant, acting in the name of that Christ Jesus, under the oath of God, interposes his veto, and says, 'you shall not.' Whose soul does not shrink and shudder! Place it in another light. Is it, or is it not the *duty* of Christians in all true churches to show forth the Lord's death in the sacrament of the supper? If it is their duty, how should an act of communion in 'the body and blood of the Lord' be lawful and commanded in our church, and be lawful and forbidden to that same person in another? How should two persons both honour the Redeemer, by communicating in their

respective churches, and both dishonour him in the very same thing, if they should happen to exchange places?"

The foregoing argument of Dr. Mason was not written with any special relation to the opinions and practice of the Baptist society; but they bear with equal weight upon them as on the Seceders, against whose opinions they were directed.

Hitherto, we have made no remarks on the arguments employed by the author under review. It is pleasing to find that he writes in a Christian spirit, and acknowledges the Christian character of those who, he labours to prove, should not be admitted to the communion of the Lord's Supper, by the Baptists. Indeed, he maintains, that it is the duty of all Christians to hold some kind of communion with all the true followers of Christ. He occupies a whole chapter in the inculcation of this duty; that is, "Fellowship with Christians as such, and not as members of any particular visible church." His object, he says, "is to illustrate what will hardly be denied; that as Christians we must and ought to have fellowship with those whom we esteem Christians, as such, though they may not be members of our own, or of any particular visible church, but of Christ's mystical body, the church universal."

After this liberal concession it will appear difficult to reconcile these opinions with the close communion of the Baptist churches. But this the author attempts by taking a distinction between Christian and Church communion. While he admits and maintains the former as the duty of all Christians, he insists that the latter properly appertains to members of the same particular, visible church. Or, if occasional communion be ever held with members of other churches, it should be with such only as they could admit to full membership. The author has much to say about the symbols of communion; all of which, in our judgment, has no tendency to establish the distinction which he makes. Indeed as this distinction is entirely new, it is also arbitrary, having no foundation in scripture, or in the nature of the case. It will be forever impossible, while it is admitted that certain persons are the real disciples of Christ, and that we are bound to maintain Christian communion with them, lawfully to exclude them from the

Lord's table; which is an institution intended for all Christians. Let us suppose a case. A pious Pedobaptist resides in the midst of a Baptist population, but remote from any church agreeing with him on the subject of baptism. He is well known to his Baptist brethren, and they cannot doubt his piety, because his whole life and conversation are such as become the gospel. When the Lord's Supper is about to be partaken of, he applies to the Baptist Church for the privilege of sitting down with them at the table of their common Lord; but he is refused, and informed, that unless he will agree to be immersed he cannot be admitted. He may expostulate and plead that they admit him to be a brother, a disciple of Christ, and join with him in other acts of worship, and why not in this, which seems to have been appointed as a communion of saints. But the refusal is peremptory. This church of professing Christians takes upon them the responsibility of preventing an acknowledged disciple of Christ from obeying his dying command. They take upon them to prevent a real servant of God from receiving edification and comfort, by an attendance on an ordinance instituted by Christ for this very purpose, and greatly beloved of God for the promotion of these very ends. Christ has renewed this man, and has given him his Spirit to dwell in him, of which he exhibits all the evidence which can be demanded by any church; him whom Christ receives and acknowledges as his disciple, his professed disciples refuse to admit to Christ's table! Can any reasoning about symbols of communion, and the necessity of preserving the primitive doctrine of baptism, prove this to be right? Impossible.

But we shall be met here with the *argumentum ad hominem*, that the Baptists act in this matter on precisely the same principles as the Pedobaptists; for these will not admit any person to the communion of the Lord's Supper who has not been baptized. This argument, at best, proves nothing; for if Pedobaptists in similar circumstances, act on the same principles as the Baptists, it only proves that they are illiberal too; and debar from the Supper persons whom they acknowledge to be his disciples. But let us look at the argument. Pedobaptists have no occasion to act on the principle adopted

by the Baptists; for a case can scarcely occur in which a person will apply for admission to the Lord's Supper, who is not also willing to submit to baptism; and as a matter of *order* they will baptize the applicant before he is admitted to the Lord's Supper. The case of the Quakers is commonly brought forward. But it is irrelevant; for Quakers repudiate all sacraments, and never apply for admission to the Lord's Supper. The author reports a case of a Quaker applying to Bishop White for admission to this ordinance, of which we never heard, nor of any one like it; and until we see the evidence of its reality, we cannot give it the least credit. But it should be considered that the Quakers not only reject the Sacraments, but maintain such opinions concerning the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, and concerning their own inspiration, that holding such errors, they could not commonly be received into orthodox churches; if no difficulty respecting baptism stood in the way.

Moreover, the Quakers do not pretend that they have ever been baptized with water, but the Pedobaptists conscientiously believe, that true infant baptism is agreeable to the Scriptures; and this puts them in very different circumstances from the Quakers, and those who repudiate all the Sacraments of the church and the ministry also. We will, however state a case which recently occurred, which will serve to illustrate what has been said. A convert from Romanism applied to be received into a Presbyterian church. The minister and session of the church had adopted the opinion, now very prevalent, that Romish baptism was not Christian baptism, and they proposed to the applicant, of whose piety they entertained no doubt, to be re-baptised; but to this he resolutely objected, alleging that his baptism in the Romish Church was valid, and of course refused to be re-baptised. There was a case, similar to that of a Pedobaptist applying to a Baptist church. They think that he has never received Christian-baptism; but he is confident that he has. Now, in the case mentioned, the applicant was admitted, after all arguments to convince him proved unavailing.

And here, it may be remarked, by the way, that those learned Italians, who have recently forsaken the Roman

Catholic Church, and some of whom have taken refuge in this country, do commonly believe that their baptism is valid. A learned Capuchin, who had been a public preacher in Italy for twenty years, assured us, that this was his decided opinion; and he expressed some indignation at the idea of being required to be re-baptised.

But let us now try to make out what would be considered a parallel case by the Baptists; although it can scarcely ever occur. A person, who appears to be sincerely pious and desires to obey all the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ, applies to a Pedobaptist minister for admission to the Lord's table. And being interrogated, whether he has been baptized, he declares that while he believes the Lord's Supper to be a permanent ordinance, he is persuaded that baptism was temporary, and only applicable to Jews or Gentiles entering the Christian Church. Ought such a person to be admitted without baptism?

To this, our answer would be in the affirmative. Because the omission of a compliance with one command of the Saviour through misapprehension, ought not to prevent a sincere disciple from obeying another; when he does not feel that the obligation of the first binding, but is convinced of his duty to obey the second. And if it is the duty of this disciple to remember Christ at his table, no man has a right to hinder him. Though his knowledge be defective and his opinion erroneous respecting the one institution; yet he is clear respecting the other, and needs this means of sanctification and comfort as much as others. Them that are weak in the faith we are commanded to receive. The appeal of the Baptists to our practice, has, as it relates to us, no solid foundation. We would receive to the communion such true believers as conscientiously think that they have been baptized; and such as never presumed that baptism was not now obligatory. And, we believe, that the only safe ground on which the Baptists can place their practice of close communion is to maintain, that all who refuse to be immersed are no true Christians.

Our author, however, is far from embracing this opinion. His heart seems to overflow with brotherly kindness, which is



not confined to his own denomination. As is found in many other cases, he does not follow out his own principles. He is happily inconsistent with himself. He admits that other denominations may be a part of the true church, though not regularly constituted. They may have the blessing of God in their assemblies, and in their attendance on the ordinances of God. But though real members of Christ's body, and of his visible Church, they cannot be admitted to the Lord's table! It is wonderful that such glaring inconsistency is not at once evident to a mind so perspicacious and candid as that of Mr. Curtis! But that we may not be suspected of misrepresenting his opinions, hear his own words. "In a former part of this work, we have said that we did not unchurch other denominations. Nor do we. We will not deny the claims of any body of evangelical Christians, organized for maintaining social worship, to be considered a Christian Church. Not a regular church indeed. Still we do not doubt that such assemblies realize many church blessings, particularly this, that when they gather together, though but two or three, in the name of Jesus, He is with them." And in the participation of the Lord's Supper, how many thousands by the aid of the Holy Spirit have been enabled by faith to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man? And if they had no right to come to the Lord's table, can we believe, that this ordinance could have been made to them the channel of such rich communications? The Baptists, who exclude all Pedobaptists from this ordinance, ought for consistency's sake, to maintain, that the Lord's table ought never to be spread in their churches. For if they have no right to partake of the ordinance, it is evident that they ought not to attempt to celebrate it. And when they do, they cannot be acting in accordance with the will of the Lord, but all their delightful communions, in which they affectionately remember Christ and his sufferings, are nothing else than mere will worship! It is a point, not yet settled among our Baptist brethren, whether Pedobaptist ministers are to be considered as really ministers of the church of Christ. Usually, they have been freely admitted into the pulpits of the Baptist churches, and treated as brethren, authorized to preach the

gospel: but if they have never been baptized, and on this account are excluded from the Lord's table, it is hard to conceive how they can be lawful ministers of the church. Certainly, if excluded from the Lord's Supper, they ought to be from the ministry. This has of late been felt so strongly by the Baptists, in the South West, that recently when two Presbyterian ministers, regularly ordained by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, were induced by some motives to join the Baptist church, they were not only re-baptized, but were both re-ordained. Now, this is consistent. But what will Mr. Curtis say to it? who admits that the Presbyterian is a true, though not a regular church. The truth is, if Pedobaptists have no right to the privilege of the Lord's Supper, their Churches are no true churches; their ministers are not the ministers of Jesus Christ; and all their doings and all their worship is without the stamp of divine authority. There is no other true church in the world but the Baptists; and for more than a thousand years, when there were no Baptists, there was no true church of Jesus Christ in existence. And how the Baptist church obtained a beginning—who had the right to commence baptizing, by immersion, is a subject which has greatly perplexed their Doctors; and can even now be scarcely considered as settled on a stable foundation.

Although our author is commonly frank and candid, and manifests amiable feelings towards his brethren of other denominations, yet we have met with one paragraph in his book of very different character. "The system of Pedobaptism," says he, "as a system, has been the embodiment, and is now the main support of some of the most cardinal errors, that have ever afflicted Christendom; such as baptismal regeneration and an unconverted Church membership and ministry, &c." Here, the author's usual candour forsakes him. As to baptismal regeneration, it is repudiated by almost all evangelical Pedobaptists, and has no necessary connexion with infant baptism. And we are of opinion, that adult baptism by immersion has, among the Campbellites, been an occasion of as much evil as the baptismal regeneration of infants. And it would be as just to attribute to the Baptist church the doctrines of adult regeneration by baptism, as held by Alex. Campbell

and his followers, as to connect the Puseyite doctrine of baptismal regeneration with all Pedobaptists. As to the purity of the Pedobaptist churches, though the New Testament teaches us that absolute purity was neither to be expected nor arrived at in the church on earth yet we are willing that the Presbyterian churches in this country, should be impartially compared with the Baptist churches as a body; and if their members are less consistent and holy in their lives, we are exceedingly mistaken. As to unconverted ministers, we believe there are such, in every communion; but we are again willing, that our ministers should be brought into a fair comparison with those of the Baptist churches, and we fear not the issue. Although we differ from the Rev. Mr. Curtis and his close-communication brethren, yet we are pleased with the friendly spirit which he manifests, and should not be at all surprised, if before many years, he should be found among the zealous advocates of free communion between all the sincere followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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- ART.—V. 1. *Martin Luthers geistliche Lieder, mit den in seinen Lebzeiten gebräuchlichen Singweisen. Herausgegeben von Philip Wackernagel. Stuttgart. 1848, 8vo. pp. 194.*
2. *Das Deutsche Kirchenlied, von Martin Luther bis auf Nicolaus Herman and Ambrosius Blaurer. Von Dr. K. C. J. Wackernagel. Stuttgart. 1841. 4to pp. 895.*
3. *Paulus Gerhardts geistliche Lieder, getreu nach der bei seinen Lebzeiten erschienenen Ausgabe wiederabgedruckt. Stuttgart. 1843. pp. 216.*
4. *Geistliche Gedichte des Grafen v. Zinzerdorf, gesammelt und gesichtet von Albert Knapp. Stuttgart u. Tübingen. 1845. royal 8vo. pp. 368.*
5. *Evangelischer Liederschatz für Kirche and Haus. Von M. Albert Knapp. Stuttgart and Tübingen. 1837. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 682, 912.*
6. *Stimmen aus dem Reiche Gottes. Eine auserlesene Samm-*