

Baptism in our Baptist Churches and creeds we note that, while Calvin allows that Baptism is our witness of our faith, his emphasis is not on that as ours tends to be. For him the Sacrament is a sign of what God has done and is doing. There can be no doubt that in this the Reformer is right, and it might be well if we Baptists of the modern world gave more attention to the positive content of the doctrine. If we ask the paedobaptist what Baptism does for the infant and look for an answer, we ought to be able clearly to state what, on our theory, it does for the believer. It is not enough to say that it gives him an opportunity to witness. It is a ceremony which has to do with the believer's appropriation of the grace of God given in Christ. There is a real ministry of the Spirit of God upon the spirit of the believer in Baptism. What that ministry is needs careful definition.

In conclusion we may note with gratitude that Calvin broke away from the mediaeval doctrine of baptismal regeneration. He denied that the Sacraments are essential to salvation (though he insists that all Christians require them) and also that unbaptised infants of necessity are doomed to eternal damnation. As to the Form he was indifferent save that he preferred primitive simplicity to the elaborations which characterised the Roman ceremony.

ARTHUR DAKIN.

## Devizes in 1699.

A PHOTOGRAPH of the following document hangs in the vestry of the Old Baptist Church at Devizes; and a second photograph has been given by Mr. Henry Tull to the writer.

Of the people concerned. It was not known how John Rede the donor was related to Colonel John Rede, who in 1659 had been chief of a garrison in Scotland, in 1672 had a licence refused to conduct worship at his house in Porton, but obtained one for his house in Idmiston, twenty miles south-east of Devizes. The donor, who was a principal burgess of the town, died 1701. The man who attended the important meeting of the Western Association in 1723 was probably his son. Daniel Webb and John Coleman were deacons of the Devizes church. James Webb appeared in London at the 1689 assembly as pastor of this church; his name appears last in 1701. John Filks is first mentioned in 1704, acting as pastor till 1723, with the help of Thomas Lucas of Trowbridge. Richard Anstie was a grocer

in Devizes; the family has a long record of Baptist service, Joseph becoming assistant at Bristol Pithay before 1753. This Andrew Gifford was the cooper of Bristol, baptized in 1659 at the age of 18, whose licence in 1672 is one of the treasures in the Gifford museum, pastor of Pithay, lived till 1721. Sir John Eyles in 1673 gave the lease of numbers 22, 23, The Brittox to this church; he and Richard Webb who died 1680 had been the most conspicuous early members. The Webbs and Filks were cousins; both families gave many ministers to the churches.

W. T. WHITLEY.

To all whom it may concerne. Whereas I John Rede of ye Devizes in ye County of Wilts Esqe by a certaine writting vnder my hand & seal ye fourteenth day of Septr. 1699. Did make over a Bond of ye penalty of two hundred pounds for ye payment of one hundred pounds yt I had on Daniell Webb of ye Devizes aforesd: clothier vnto James Webb, John filks Richard Anstie & Andrew Gifford, & their assigns; reseruing ye interest of ye sd hundred pounds to my self dureing my naturall life, And after my Decease ye sd hundred pounds & interest thereof to ye sd James Webb John filks Richard Anstie & Andrew Gifford & their assigns in trust to such vse & vses as they shall think fitt &c—NOW these are to declare that notwithstanding it is said to such vse, & vses as they shall think fitt, yet I haue assigned it to them with this intention yt they shall think no vse or vses fitt for ye dispose of ye said hundred pounds and interest But what I do her by direct (viz) That ye interest of ye sd hundred pounds shall be yearly distributed amongst such poor ministers of ye Churches called Baptists as are not able to provide for them, & that as ye sd trustees shall from yeare after yeare think meet according to each poor ministers necessity, also I do Direct that when two of ye sd trustees shall die, the Survivors of ym shall assign over ye sd hundred pounds & interest to fower other of Baptist congregation, yt ye trust may be continued for ever, ALL which Direction I desire ye sd trustees & their assigns will always keep to, & ffaithfully observue, as they wil answere it in ye day of Judgment, before ye allknowing & Righteous Judg. In testimony hereof I haue herevnto set my hand this present nineteenth day of Septembr. 1699.

witnessed by

John Eyles      Jon : Webb      ye mark of  
John Coleman   Dll Webb      John Rid X

J : REDE