

creating an unreal excitement, which communicated itself to some few persons in England.

Thus was completed the organization of a Reformed Church in Spain, which would have taken shape and been established in the sixteenth century—perhaps under Archbishop Carranza—had it not been for the Inquisition as wielded by the Pope of Rome, Philip II., and the Inquisitor-General, Valdès. Since his consecration Bishop Cabrera has held visitations and fulfilled the functions of a Bishop in confirming and ordaining candidates for his own congregations where necessary; and none of the evils which timid men prophesied have occurred. The question now arises, Are we to stop here? Bishop Cabrera is not a young man, and there is but one Bishop of the Reformed Church in the Peninsula. There is another Church, the Reformed Church of Portugal, of which we have here said nothing. It has six congregations connected with it, and is governed by a Synod. More than once the Synod has expressed its earnest desire that the Rev. Godfrey P. Pope, British Chaplain at Lisbon, would accept the office of Bishop, and that he may be consecrated by the same agency as that by which Señor Cabrera was consecrated. This question therefore lies with Mr. Pope himself and with the prelates of the Irish Church. These prelates have shown so much prudence and courage in their relation to the Spanish Church, that we may confidently leave the question of a reformed Portuguese Bishop to their judgment and wisdom.

F. MEYRICK.



ART. III.—THE BAPTISTS.

THE Baptists are so called in contradistinction to all other Christians who practise Infant Baptism, their leading principle being that Baptism should only be administered to adults, who are capable of exercising repentance and faith as a visible sign, or token, that they have fulfilled these conditions, and as a consequent act of consecration to God. Those who held the same tenets in this respect were formerly called Anabaptists, because they were in the habit of rebaptizing (*ἀναβαπτίζω*) those previously baptized who joined their communion. They also maintain immersion to be the only correct method of baptizing. They regard themselves as the truest representatives of the Primitive Church, alleging that Infant Baptism was seldom, if at all, practised in the Church for some

centuries; that it crept in, along with other corruptions, mainly owing to the baneful influence of the North African Church; and that there have always been those who have held their opinions, often falsely classed as heretics, *e.g.*, the Paulicians, the Cathari, the Albigenses, the Waldenses, the Lollards, and other Churches, or sects, of primitive or mediæval times.

The Anabaptists of the Reformation Period held, in some points, the same doctrines and the same views of Church government as the Baptists of later date, though they differed from them in many respects. In 1523 they were to be found in considerable numbers in Switzerland, where they were persecuted by Zwinglians and Romanists alike. In 1529 the Senate of Zurich—unmindful of the fact that they had only just secured liberty of conscience for themselves, and were exposed to persecution at any time from the adherents of Rome—actually decreed that Anabaptists, or those who harboured them, should be punished with death by drowning. In 1530 they had several churches fully organized in Middle and South Germany and the Tyrol. In 1534 they were found in large numbers in North Germany, Holland, and Belgium, increasing even under Alva's cruel and tyrannous rule, and displaying no little missionary zeal. In Poland, Hungary, and subsequently in Bohemia and Piedmont, they were persecuted with terrific violence, but, notwithstanding, rapidly grew and multiplied.

In England there is said to have been a Baptist congregation at Chesterton as early as 1457. In the middle of the sixteenth century books were written against them, indicating the prevalence of the sect; and good Bishop Latimer tells us that there were as many as five hundred of them in one town. Fox, the martyrologist, states that ten Dutch Anabaptists were put to death in different places in 1535. In 1536 a convocation of the clergy published several articles condemning Baptist opinions, and Henry VIII. issued proclamations against them. We read of a commission being issued in 1538 to Archbishop Cranmer and the other Bishops of the province of Canterbury to search after Anabaptists, and to punish them with all possible vigour; and as the result two of them were burnt in Smithfield, and fourteen altogether were put to death. In 1539 thirty-one Anabaptists who had fled from England were slain at Delft, in Holland, the men being beheaded and the women drowned. As early as 1548 whole congregations of the sect and their ministers were apprehended by legal authority; and less than ten years afterwards inquiries were ordered to be made after them in Articles of Visitation issued by Bishops Bonner and Gardiner. In 1575 Elizabeth issued a

proclamation against them; and in consequence twenty-seven of their body were cast into prison, and two burnt at the stake in Smithfield. These proclamations against Anabaptists, the persecutions to which they were exposed, and the martyrdom of not a few of them, show the prevalence in England of those who held such views in the times of the Tudors, as early as the sixteenth century.

The connection, however, of our modern Baptists with these Anabaptists is by no means clear; they seem to have sprung rather from the Brownists, or early Independents. Indeed, their early history is somewhat obscure, and does not properly commence till the seventeenth century. From the "Baptist Handbook" we learn that "the earliest General Baptist churches of which any history is known were founded about 1611-14 by Thomas Helwisse in London, Tiverton, Coventry, etc., and the earliest Particular Baptist church by John Spilsbury, at Wapping, in 1633." Many of the Brownist, or Independent, congregations held Baptist views, repudiating the practice of Infant Baptism, and these founded a separate congregation in London on September 12, 1633; and we read of another Baptist church being founded in 1639. Their opinions rapidly spread; so much so, that in 1643 they held an assembly in London, at which a Confession of Faith was drawn up, which was generally accepted as a standard for about seventeen years. In 1646 they had as many as forty congregations in London alone; and in Cromwell's time their tenets were held by many members of Parliament, and by large numbers in the army and in civil employments. Under James I. and Charles I., and again after the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660, they were cruelly persecuted; indeed, the last man executed by burning for alleged heresy in England was Edward Wightman, a Baptist, on April 11, 1612. Under Charles II. the celebrated John Bunyan was put into prison in 1660, and kept there for twelve years; and in 1683 a pastor at Bristol named Fownes was apprehended while preaching in a wood, and conveyed to Gloucester gaol, where, after two years and nine months' imprisonment, he died. After the glorious Revolution under William III., and with the passing of the Toleration Act in 1689, all persecution of the Baptists as well as of other dissenters ceased. All remaining disabilities imposed by the Test and Corporation Acts were finally removed by the repeal of those Acts in 1828.

The first Association of Baptist churches was organized in 1653, in Somersetshire; this was followed two years later by one in the Midland counties. Others were formed from time to time in different places; and at present there appear to be in England and Wales thirty-four of these in connection with

the Baptist Union, which was founded in 1863, and now has a regular constitution, and is duly registered as a corporation capable of holding property under a common seal.

Baptist opinions were carried to America by Roger Williams, who emigrated to Boston, Massachusetts, in 1630. Driven thence because he refused to recognise the power of the civil magistrate in religion, he formed a settlement in Rhode Island, and in 1639 founded the first Baptist church on the American continent. The views of the denomination rapidly spread there. At the beginning of the eighteenth century there were only sixteen Baptist congregations in America, at the close there were about nine hundred—a fifty-six-fold increase; and at the present time one-fourth of the Protestant population of the United States is said to belong to their communion. The "Baptist Handbook" for this current year gives the following statistics for the United States: Number of members, 3,980,088; of churches, 44,037; of ministers, 28,820; of scholars in Sunday-schools, 1,500,832; and of baptisms, 205,157.

In the British Isles we gather from the same authority the number of members of the denomination is 353,967, or less than one-tenth of those in the United States; of churches, 2,917; of ministers, 1,935; of scholars in Sunday-schools, 513,638; and of baptisms, 15,795.

For the last eighty years the Baptists have paid great attention to the preparation of candidates for their ministry. As early as 1685 a member of the community in Bristol left a portion of his estate for the education of young men for the ministry under the pastor of the chapel in Broadmead, Bristol. By the help of this bequest, subsequently supplemented by others, an academy was started in 1720. This developed into the Bristol Baptist College in 1811. Similar institutions have been founded elsewhere, and there are now eleven colleges—including one in Scotland, one in Ireland, and three in Wales—educating about 250 students for their ministry.

The Baptists have been conspicuous for their zeal for Foreign Missions. Next to the Moravians, they were the first of British Christians to take up missionary work amongst the heathen; for our own Society for the Propagation of the Gospel had for its primary object only our own colonies. In 1784 the Northampton Association of Baptist Churches set apart the first Monday of every month for prayer for the spread of the Gospel amongst the heathen. In 1792, or seven years before the inauguration of our own great Church Missionary Society, the Baptist Missionary Society was founded at Kettering, in Northamptonshire, the sermon on the occasion being preached by the celebrated William Carey, who uttered

then the memorable, oft-quoted sentence, "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God." In the following year he sailed for India, and shortly after was followed by Marshman and Ward. Being prevented by the authorities from commencing work in British India, they started a mission in the Danish settlement of Serampore. The Society is now engaged in active operations in the East, in Africa, and in the West Indies, and its ordinary income for the year ended March 31, 1897, was £64,792, and expenditure £69,874, exclusive of amounts raised and expended at the mission stations and some special funds.

Indeed, not only in this, but also in other respects, it would be alike unjust and ungenerous to refuse frankly to recognise "the works of faith and labours of love" which the Baptist community has so largely exhibited; especially we may not forget the conspicuous part they played in the emancipation of the slaves in the West Indies. They have had their fair share of saints—men who, by the holiness of their characters and the devotion of their lives, have "adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things"; while amongst their ministers there have been many whose lips have been touched with fire from heaven. A religious community, which numbers amongst its ministers Robert Hall and Charles H. Spurgeon, two of the greatest preachers of any country or age, and amongst its missionaries Carey and Marshman of Serampore, and Judson of Burmah, and which includes in its ranks John Bunyan and Andrew Fuller, John Forster, and Dr. Gill the Commentator, cannot but occupy a conspicuous place amongst the Churches of Christendom.

There are a great many sects of those who hold Baptist opinions, *e.g.*, the Free-Will Baptists, the Seventh-day Baptists, the Campbellites, etc. Without attempting to describe the differences which separate these respectively one from the other, we may refer to the following main subdivisions:

1. The General, or Arminian, Baptists, who hold that Christ died for all men; but that those only who by faith appropriate His salvation will be saved.

2. The Particular, or Calvinistic, Baptists, who hold that Christ died only for the elect.

These in 1891 amalgamated; and the leading subdivisions now are:

1. The Baptists, including General and Particular.

2. The Strict, or hyper-Calvinistic Baptists.

There is a further classification of members of the Baptist denomination into:

(1) The Open, who admit Pædobaptists and all without distinction to the Holy Communion,

(2) The Close, who admit only those who have undergone the rite of Adult Baptism to the other Sacrament.

This latter ground of difference caused, at the beginning of this century, much discussion, in which the celebrated Robert Hall took a leading part. Since then the principle of Open Communion has largely spread; and it is said now to be the usage of nearly half the Baptists of the British Isles and of the majority of those in North America.

The first Confession of Faith amongst the Baptists in England was published in 1644, and several editions of it, with alterations and additions, were published in subsequent years. In 1655 another code, in sixteen articles, laying down with much precision the principal articles of their belief, was put forth by the Association of Baptist Churches in the Midland counties. In 1677, a General Assembly of Baptists adopted the Westminster Confession, which was completed in 1646, *i.e.*, subsequently to the first Baptist Confession, with some changes and omissions; and this is still the standard of doctrine most largely accepted, at all events, in the United States. In 1689, a general meeting, attended by delegates from more than one hundred congregations, was held in London; and at this gathering a Confession of Faith in thirty-two articles was drawn up, containing a tolerably complete compendium of theoretical theology and practical Christian duty. This was ordered to be disseminated amongst all the Baptist churches of the United Kingdom, and remained for about one hundred and fifty years their recognised standard of doctrine and communion. It seems, however, to have fallen into disuse now for many years; and there does not appear to be any generally accepted standard of faith for the ministers and members of the Baptist denomination at the present day.

As regards the principal doctrines of the Christian Creed, the Baptists are in general accord with our own and the other Protestant and Evangelical Churches. Thus they hold (1) Holy Scripture to be given by the inspiration of God, and its supreme authority as the one sole rule of faith. (2) The doctrine of the Trinity—the Three Persons in the One Godhead. (3) The doctrine of the Incarnation—that the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity became man. (4) The doctrine of the Atonement—the one offering of Christ for the sins of the world, offered once for all on the Cross. (5) Regeneration, as the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit—that all who are to be saved must have the “new birth unto righteousness” effected by Him. (6) Justification by faith only; but that that justification must be followed by good works as “the fruits of faith,” for without holiness “no man shall see the Lord.” (7) The two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. In

their exposition of these doctrines, they are in very general accord with the statements of our own Articles and other formularies, except as regards Baptism, with respect to which they differ in the following particulars :

1. Baptism should only be administered to those who are capable of understanding Christian doctrine, of exercising repentance and intelligent faith, and of making an open profession of their belief in Jesus Christ—in short, only to true believers; the outward rite being the seal of the faith that is in them.

In support of this view they allege :

(1) That from our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus it would appear that spiritual regeneration must precede Baptism, which is the outward visible token of the inward spiritual change.

(2) That our Lord, when He instituted Baptism, associated teaching with it.

(3) That, so far as we can gather from the Acts of the Apostles, none but those fully conscious of what they were doing were admitted to Baptism.

(4) That whenever Baptism is spoken of in the New Testament, it is implied that the recipient has undergone the spiritual change first; and that otherwise the rite has no significance.

2. The only correct mode of Baptism is by immersion, or dipping in the water.

In support of this view they assert :

(1) That this was undoubtedly the practice of the Church, as far as we can gather from what is recorded in the New Testament; as, indeed, is plain from St. Paul's reference to it in Rom. vi. 4, 5, and Col. ii. 12, where the going down into the water represents death and burial, and the coming up out of it again resurrection—the illustration being meaningless if Baptism were by sprinkling.

(2) That this was the method used by all Christians for thirteen centuries, until the Roman Church introduced the practice of sprinkling.

(3) That the Greek, Armenian, and other Oriental Churches baptize by immersion still.

They also differ from us in another important particular, viz. :

3. That of Church Government.

Of the three leading systems,

(1) The Episcopal, or government by Bishops ;

(2) The Presbyterian, or government by councils of Presbyters ;

(3) The Congregational, each congregation being inde-

pendent, and having along with its pastor or pastors the right of self-government, subject only to the Headship of Christ;—

this last is the system which they have adopted, believing it to be most in accordance with New Testament teaching and precedent.

They hold further in this connection that the only order of the ministry is that of pastors—known in the New Testament as presbyters or overseers; and that government and discipline can only be exercised by these in conjunction with the whole body of baptized believers gathered together in the particular congregation. True, they join together in associations for the purpose of Christian fellowship and work; but these associations are merely consultative, and can only give counsel or advice, without the right of exercising any control over the associated congregations.

It will be thus seen that, except in these three particulars, they do not differ from us materially. Indeed, the points in which we agree are so much more important and numerous than those in which we differ, that reunion in course of time ought not to be regarded as quite an impossibility.

Dealing with the points of difference, we observe—

1. With regard to Infant Baptism we could not relax our rule. For, without insisting too much on the probable arguments based on (1) the three cases of Baptism of whole families recorded in the New Testament, in some one or more of which, presumably, there were young children; (2) the analogy of Circumcision in the Jewish Church; (3) the fact that our Saviour allowed the young children to be brought to Him, and said that “of such is the kingdom of heaven”—we have (4) the Apostle distinctly stating that the children of believing parents are “holy,” and if “holy,” then *ipso facto* they are consecrated to God, and have a right to receive the seal of Baptism. We should not think of baptizing the infants of any but professing Christian parents, as it is on this principle alone we baptize infants at all. In the case of Adult Baptism, we are quite in accord with the Baptist view that faith and repentance are indispensable preliminary conditions for the reception of the outward rite; while we hold that in the case of infants the promise to fulfil these conditions is made for them beforehand, “which promise,” subsequently, “when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.” As it is, there are not a few nominal members of our own Church who unhappily neglect to have their children baptized in infancy, and we make no difficulty about baptizing these in riper years on the fulfilment of the requisite conditions; and, indeed, our Church has a special service appointed for such

cases. Though, then, the non-use of the practice of Infant Baptism could not possibly be sanctioned by our Church as a principle, may not the deferring of the rite, perhaps, be tolerated in the case of the children of parents who have conscientious prejudices against it, as, indeed, practically, it is tolerated now in the case of the children of the negligent and indifferent ?

2. In the matter of the mode of administering Baptism the difference between us and them is only an apparent one in practice, and not a real one in principle at all. For our Church, as is clearly stated in her rubrics, requires in the first instance Baptism to be by immersion, allowing only of Baptism by affusion, when it is certified that "the child may not well endure" to be dipped in the water. If the second, or merely tolerated, method has become practically universal, it is because, in a climate like ours, to immerse a child in water and then take it out into the cold air, would always be a more or less hazardous proceeding, and not unfrequently attended with fatal results. Whitby, in his commentary on Rom. vi. 4, observes: "This immersion being religiously observed by all Christians for thirteen centuries, and approved by our Church, and the change of it unto sprinkling, even without any allowance from the Author of this institution, or any license from any council of the Church, being that which the Romanist still urgeth to justify his refusal of the cup to the laity, it were to be wished that this custom might be again of general use, and aspersion only permitted, as of old, in case of the *clinici*, or in present danger of death." There is no real antagonism, then, between us on this point, and nothing to prevent immediate reunion should it be found on other grounds practicable.

3. The diversity of view, however, with respect to Church government seems to create a crucial difficulty in the way of anything of the kind; and it is not easy to see how it could be got over. Those who hold Congregationalism as the best form of Church government would be hardly likely to accept the condition requiring them to acquiesce in what is called "the Historic Episcopate," or the rule of Bishops in any form. In this connection, however, it is important to note Hooker's memorable dictum that, while episcopacy is of the *bene esse* of the Church, it is not of its *esse*; nor must it be forgotten, that prior to the Act of Uniformity in 1662 numbers of the ministers of the Church of England held Presbyterian views, as is shown by the fact that two thousand of them, including the celebrated Richard Baxter, resigned their preferments on that occasion. The definition of the Church in our Article XIX. certainly opposes no barrier to reunion. If other obstacles were

removed, the thing need not, perhaps, be regarded as quite impossible, if only negotiations were carried on with tact and in a spirit of prayer; at all events, we may venture to indulge in some hope, if we cannot have much assurance, of success in this direction.

It will always, however, be open to question whether it is worth while to aim at actual uniformity of government and forms of worship in the Christian Church; for it is, to say the least, doubtful whether it may not be more influential by being presented in these respects to different minds in different aspects, just as in the case of the Gospel itself one truth comes out into prominence at one time or place, another at another, to suit the particular exigencies of the age or people. To get the various denominations in our own country to reunite on one common basis of doctrine, and to submit to one common authority, seems at present almost Utopian, and outside the sphere of the practicable; but union in the oneness of the Spirit in the one Lord is attainable, and, indeed, is largely realized to-day by many from all the Churches who are members of "the mystical body," "which is the blessed company of all faithful people," and of which Christ is the living Head. Whether any other union than this is possible until the Lord Himself comes to rectify the wrongs, adjust the disorders, and allay the controversies of earth, is a matter of very grave doubt. Meanwhile, we may join in earnest and frequent intercession to Almighty God that He would be pleased to purify those corrupt Churches, reunion with which now is an absolute impossibility for those very many who, like ourselves, take the Holy Scripture, and it only, as our rule of faith; and that He would, in His good time, hasten the visible fulfilment of the Redeemer's prayer for the unity of all who believe in Him—"That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us."

J. HUGHES-GAMES.



ART. IV.—"THIS DO," OR "OFFER THIS" ?

IN the manual entitled *The Congregation in Church*, on page 49 we read:—"Our Lord's command was, 'Offer THIS in remembrance of Me.' In the Greek version of the Old Testament (commonly called the 'Septuagint') which was in use in our Lord's time and read in the Synagogues, and which was then, and is now by the Greek Church, looked upon as of