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Southern Baptist Seminary

HISTORY

OF

Alien Immersion and Valid Baptism

INVOLVING

**Researches From Different View Points,
by Various Writers**

BY J. H. GRIME

*Author of "Hereditary Depravity," "Close Communion
and Baptists," "History Middle Tennessee Baptists,"
"Catechism of Ecclesiastical History,"
Etc.*

265.1 .G882h

Grime, John Harvey, 1851-
1941.

JAMES P. BOYD
SOUTHERN BAPTIST

History of alien immersion
and valid baptism

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

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PREFACE.

Prof. W. J. McGlothlin, who occupies the chair of Church History in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, at Louisville, Ky., and this author had a discussion involving the attitude of Baptists toward the question of alien immersion, especially their past history upon the question. The discussion was published in the columns of the Baptist and Reflector, of Nashville, Tenn. Knowing that no work had ever been published, devoted exclusively to the history of this question, I suggested that we put the discussion in permanent form. This, however, Bro. McGlothlin declined to do, stating, among other things, that it would be fragmentary and unsatisfactory as a history. He, however, at the same time stated that a consecutive, impartial history of the question was at this time desirable, and suggested that I undertake the work. Brother McGlothlin and myself are not agreed on all points. We are agreed that the facts, without bias, should be disclosed. It shall be the purpose of these pages to record, without partiality, facts as they exist.

These pages will be devoted exclusively to history, and theory and exegesis will be employed only as they will throw light upon the history of the question.

With the hope that we shall be able to contribute, at least, something in the study of this vexed question, these pages are sent forth on their mission.

J. H. GRIME.

Ridgely, Tenn., May 14, 1909.

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INTRODUCTION.

We have just read in manuscript, "History of Alien Immersion and Valid Baptism," by Elder J. H. Grime, of Ridgely, Tenn.

As we finished the last page a hearty amen came fully endorsing the book. It is just what it purports to be, "A History of Alien Immersion." It is largely a compilation of historical facts on the subject, a clear demonstration of the fact that Alien Immersion is a modern fad of liberalists, who are more anxious to be popular than they are to be right. The book is well arranged, is clear, logical and most timely.

It should be read by all our Baptist people, and the just acknowledgment made of the timely service rendered to the cause of truth.

Would it not be timely for every real Baptist Association to go on record, by publishing their disapproval of this illogical, inconsistent, modern practice of the few lax, would-be leaders, and thus put a stop to the inroads of error which lead unmistakably to disintegration and confusion? Let Baptists be Baptists, contending earnestly for the faith.

J. G. BOW,

Associate Editor Western Recorder.

Louisville, Ky., May 25, 1909.

History of Alien Immersion and Valid Baptism

CHAPTER I.

Valid Baptism versus Alien Immersion.

DEFINITIONS.

In order to a correct understanding of any question, we should have a definite understanding of the meaning of all terms employed, and positions assumed. By the term "Alien Immersion" is meant immersions performed outside of Baptist churches, by persons who are in no way connected with them. It is commonly understood to refer to immersions performed by Pedobaptists and Campbellites. The question of divergence is, whether Baptist churches should recognize such immersions as valid baptisms, and receive members thus immersed into their churches; without immersing them again. There will be found among Baptists certain persons who take either side of this question. It will be the purpose of these pages, if possible, to determine the attitude which the denomination has occupied on this point in the past. The whole question turns upon the authority of the administra-

tor. Those who believe in the reception of alien immersion, hold that the character of the administrator has nothing to do with the validity of baptism. They hold that if we have a proper subject—a true believer in Jesus Christ—a right design—to obey God, and symbolize our death to sin and resurrection to a new life—and a proper action—the total immersion of the body in water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that we have a gospel or valid baptism, it matters not what may be the character of the administrator. On the other hand, those who oppose the reception of Alien immersion, hold that in addition to the three qualifications stated above, to have valid or gospel baptism, there must be a legal administrator—one authorized by a gospel (Baptist) church. Of the former there are two classes. The one insists on receiving alien immersion at all times and without restraint; while the other class believes it is valid, but “opposes the reception of it on the principles of good order.” Of the latter there are also two classes; the one believes we should have direct church action in each particular case; while the other class believes that it is sufficient when the church confers her authority upon the minister in his ordination. The whole thing turns, however, upon the question of church authority. The question may be stated thus: All Baptists are agreed as to the subject, design and action of baptism. But when they come to the administrator they reach the point of divergence.

The question, we think, is sufficiently clear now that we may proceed to look after its history. Perhaps this would be a good place to state, that the rejection of alien immersion is a Baptist peculiarity. Even the Roman Catholics, with all their proscriptive and persecuting arrogance, have ever received the baptism of heretics (as they are pleased to call all who differ from them). If for any cause they rebap-

tize one, they give what they call "conditional baptism," employing this ceremony: "If thou art not baptized, I baptize thee," etc. Protestant denominations, as a rule, have always received baptism from the hands of others. It is true that in their general meetings they have at times discussed the propriety of receiving baptisms performed by Catholics. But they have usually given indefinite decisions in the matter, with the understanding that if they invalidated Catholic baptism, they invalidated their own, since they received their baptism from the Catholics. It is true also that John Wesley rebaptized Dissenters in order to get Catholic, or Episcopal authority, for their baptism. These are isolated cases, however, and as a rule the statement holds good, that it is peculiarly a Baptist practice.

THE BIBLE.

The history of this question has its beginning with God himself. When God would begin the ordinance of baptism, he began it by emphasizing the administrator—in sending a man direct from God. John 1:6. The administrator was further emphasized by Christ. When the time came for him to be baptized, he did not say the administrator is non-essential, and therefore seek baptism at the hands of some Rabbi, or Priest, in his own town (Nazareth), but walked sixty miles to get baptism at the hands of a Baptist preacher—the Heaven-sent legal administrator. (See Mark 1:9; John 1:33.) Christ further emphasized the administrator when he raised the question as to whether "John's baptism was from Heaven, or of men." Matt. 21:25. And he still further emphasized the administrator when he told the "Pharisees and lawyers that they rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of John." Luke 7:30.

The administrator is still again emphasized in that

those baptized by Christ's disciples are said to be baptized by Christ himself. John 3:22 and 4:1-2. Just as the State hangs a criminal through the sheriff—their legal agent—so Christ baptized through the disciples, his legal administrators. Such could never be said of one hanged by a mob; it matters not how guilty the one lynched might be. Just so no one could be said to be baptized by Christ unless baptized by one commissioned by Him.

CHAPTER II.

Early Churches.

We come now to consider the history of the early churches upon this question.

Ignatius, one of the "Apostolic Fathers," and probably a contemporary with John and Paul, and who suffered martyrdom early in the second century, in a letter to the church at Smyrna, has this to say:

"It is not lawful without the bishop (pastor) either to baptize or to celebrate a love feast (Lord's Supper), but whatsoever he shall approve of, that is also pleasing to God, so that everything that is done may be secure and valid."—Ante Nicæan Fathers, Vol. 1, p. 90.

We move up now to the year 200 A. D., when we find Tertullian strongly opposing the reception of the baptism (immersion) of heretics (other sects). He uses this strong language:

"There is to us one, and but one baptism. . . . One God, and one baptism, and one church in the heavens. But it must be admitted that the question, 'What rules are to be observed with regard to heretics?' is worthy of being treated. For it is to us that that assertion refers.

Heretics, however, have no fellowship in our discipline whom the mere fact of their excommunication testifies to be outsiders (other denominations). I am not bound to recognize in *them* a thing which is enjoined on *me*, . . . And, therefore, their baptism is not one *with ours* either; because it is not *the same*; a *baptism* which, since they have it not duly doubtless

note this

they have *not at all*; nor is that capable of being counted which is not had."—Ante Nicæan Fathers, Vol. 3, p. 676.

It will be seen here that Tertullian reads their baptism clean out, as being nothing, and clearly makes it a test of fellowship.

In the next place the churches planted by Paul, and his fellow helpers, in Asia Minor, Cappadocia, Cilicia, Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Pontus Galatia, Bithynia, with adjoining countries, including Africa and Numidia, stood as a unit in the rejection of alien immersion up to 259 A. D.—Eusebius, Book 7, Chapter 5, pp. 257-258.

Speaking of the above, Neander (Vol. 1, p. 318), perhaps the most learned historian of his day, tells us that the only discordant note, the only ones to raise their voice in favor of the reception of alien immersion (for nothing but immersion was practiced then) was the church at Rome, and such as they dominated by their influence. It must be remembered that this was after the split in the church at Rome, and the corrupt party had started on their way to the papacy under the leadership of Cornelius. It was this factional church, at Rome, which afterward became the headquarters of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, that set the pace for the reception of alien immersion. And they carried it so far as to institute the farce of passing the act of exclusion of all churches who refused to receive it. Hear Neander describe it:

"But here again, it was a Roman bishop, Stephanus, who, instigated by the spirit of ecclesiastical arrogance, domination and zeal, without knowledge, attached to this point of dispute a paramount importance. Hence toward the close of the year 253, he issued a sentence of excommunication against the bishops (pastors) of Asia Minor, Cappadocia, Galatia, and Cilicia, stigmatizing them as Ana-baptists

appealing to paganism

2

(*Αναβαπτίσται*) a name, however, which they could justly affirm they did not deserve by their principles; for it was not their wish to administer a *second* baptism to those who had been already baptized, but they contended that the previous baptism, given by heretics (other sects) could not be recognized as a *true* one. . . . "These induced Cyprian, the bishop (pastor) to propose the point for discussion at two Synods (councils) held in Carthage in the year 255 A. D., the one composed of eighteen, and the other of seventy-one bishops (pastors); and both assemblies declared in favor of Cyprian's views, that the baptism of heretics ought not to be regarded as valid."—Neander, Vol. 1, pp. 318, 319. See also History of the Early Church, by Sewell, p. 289. See also Ante Nicæan Fathers, Vol. 6, p. 102.

In the "Apostolic Constitution" we find this language: "Be ye likewise contented with one baptism alone, that which is into the death of the Lord; not that which is conferred by wicked heretics, but that which is conferred by unblamable priests."—Ante Nicæan Fathers, Vol. 7, p. 456. This statement dates in the early part of the fourth century.

ANA-BAPTISTS.

From this time until the reformation the question must be studied in the light of the Ana-baptists. It has been repeatedly stated by alien immersionists that Ana-baptists only opposed infant baptism, and that they never re-baptized on account of the character of the administrator. This statement seems strange, in view of the fact that the title was born about the time infant baptism was first introduced, and many centuries before sprinkling was in use for baptism. The only question involved was the administrator. This fact can be verified by reference to the Ante Nicæan

Fathers, Eusebius, and in fact any reputable church history of any denomination. We quote from McClintock and Strong's Encyclopedia :

“The term Ana-baptists, or Rebaptizers, is connected with the controversies of the third century. In Asia Minor and in Africa, where the spirit of controversy had raged long and bitterly, baptism was considered to be only valid when administered in the orthodox church. . . . So high were the disputes on this question, that two synods (councils) were convened to investigate it, one at Iconium and the other at Synnada, in Phrygia, which confirmed the opinion of the invalidity of heretical baptism. From Asia the question passed to Northern Africa; Tertullian accorded with the decision of the Asiatic councils in opposition to the practice of the Roman church. Agrippinus convened a council at Carthage, which came to a similar decision with those of Asia. Thus the matter rested, till Stephen, bishop of Rome, prompted by ambition, proceeded to excommunicate the bishops (pastors) of Asia Minor, Cappadocia, Galatia and Cilicia, and applied to them the epithets of Rebaptizers and Ana-baptists, A. D. 253.”—McClintock & Strong, Vol 1, p. 210.

Robinson, the English historian, has this to say, speaking of the Ana-baptists: “The third division comprehends all such as placed the essence of baptism in the virtue or competency of the administrator. . . . It was on this account, that many of the ancient Bohemian Brethren rebaptized, and were denominated by the priests, whose services they disowned, Ana-baptists. . . . Bishop Bossuet properly enough observes this rebaptizing was an open declaration, that in the opinion of the Brethren the Catholick church had lost baptism. This was precisely their meaning. They did not pretend to rebaptize; but supposing what was done in the church (of Rome) to be no baptism, they

*not rebaptize as
attitude of no as
true, outside of
& baptismal
gesture*

baptized, as they thought, properly.”—History of Baptism, p. 414.

Mosheim speaking of the Ana-baptists, says: They “acquired the denomination of Ana-baptists by their administering anew the rite of baptism to those who came over to their communion.” “They rebaptize all those who leave other Christian churches to embrace their communion.”—Mosheim’s Church History, Vol. 2, pp. 127, 296.

Gieseler says: “In accordance with this view they declared all other churches to have forfeited the rights of a Christian church; and baptized anew those who came over to them.”—Gieseler’s Church History, Vol. 1, p. 255. We might multiply these authors, but these are sufficient.

CHAPTER III.

English Baptists.

In discussing this question in connection with English Baptists, it should be remembered that the titles Baptist and Ana-baptist, were much of the time used interchangeably, referring to the same people. As long as their enemies were able to control the matter, they persisted in dubbing them as Ana-baptists, notwithstanding the Baptists have always protested, claiming that they were not Ana-baptists, but simply Baptists.

Baptists have, through the ages, been great sufferers on account of persecution, but some of the bitterest persecution known to history, was inflicted on the Baptists of England during the century following the Reformation.

It would take a great stretch of credulity to believe that these persecuted Baptists would recognize their persecutors as proper channels for the administration of the ordinances of God's House.

Of the Ana-baptists, who operated in England following the Reformation, Owen says (Works, Vol. 13, p. 184): "The Donatists rebaptized those who came to their societies (churches) because they professed themselves to believe that all administration of the ordinances not in their *assemblies* was null, and that they were to be looked upon as no such thing. Our (English) *Ana-baptists do the same thing.*"—Church Perpetuity, p. 343.

It will be seen here that the whole matter turned upon the authority of the administrator; no other

point being referred to. The mode was not controverted, for it is a matter of open history that the Church of England immersed for the first hundred years after the Reformation. 11 ?

It is admitted that the facts connected with John Smyth are not altogether as clear as we would like. (We may say, that this author seriously doubts the story of his baptizing himself.) But whatever the facts may be, it is an undisputed fact, that he and the Brownists had a heated discussion over the validity of administrations performed by the Church of England. Armitage records the following:

“When the Brownists left the English State Church, they objected to its hierarchy, liturgy, constitution and government, as anti-Christian. Smyth, therefore, broke with them on the issue, that if that church was apostate, as a daughter of Rome, then its clergy were not qualified to administer Christ’s ordinances. The Brownists, however, considered them valid, and called the English church their ‘mother,’ while they denounced her as ‘harlot,’ and ‘Babylon;’ but Smyth, having been christened in her pale, concluded that he was yet unbaptized. Bishop Hall caught this point keenly, and was severe on the Brownists when he opposed Smyth. He wrote:

“‘You that cannot abide a false church, why do you content yourselves with a false sacrament? (baptism), especially since our church (Episcopal) not being yet gathered to Christ, is no church, and therefore her baptism a nullity! . . . He (Smyth) tells you true; your station is unsafe; either you must forward to him, or back to us. . . . You must go forward to Ana-baptism, or come back to us. All your rabbins cannot answer that charge of your rebaptized brother. . . . If our baptism be good, then is our constitution good. . . . What need you to surfeit of another man’s

trencher? . . . Show you me where the apostles baptized in a bason!

“Smyth having rejected infant baptism also on its merits as a human institution, Ainsworth said, in 1609 A. D., that he had gone over to the abomination of the Ana-baptists.”—Armitage, p. 158.

Whatever may be said about immersion in England (and it is not the purpose of these pages to discuss this feature only as it affects this question), it is clearly apparent, that the Baptists of England made the validity of baptism rest largely in the administrator. Armitage says: “And there are many reasons for believing that this is a similar case, and that these fifty-three members of the same congregation declined to accept immersion from what they considered an unauthorized administrator.”—Armitage, pp. 165-166. Hence they sent Richard Blunt to Holland to secure regular baptism at the hands of the Dutch Ana-baptists. “He was immersed by the Collegiants at the hands of their teacher, Mr. John Batte. Upon his return he immersed Samuel Blacklock and the two immersed the rest (of the fifty-three) in 1641.”—A Review of the Question, p. 57. *who? spiritual?*

Gov. John Hutchinson and his wife, Lucy Hutchinson, were leading Baptists of England in the seventeenth century. To show how they stood on this question, we quote the words of Crosby: *where?*

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

Hutchinson says: “The great objection was the want of a proper administrator; which, as I have

See
 heard, says he, was removed, by sending certain messengers to Holland whence they were supplied."—English Baptist Reformation, p. 84.

Crosby, who wrote in England one hundred years after Hutchinson, in the eighteenth century, says of this same event: "So those who followed this scheme did not derive their baptism from the aforesaid Smyth, or his *congregation* at Amsterdam, it being (from) an antient congregation of foreign Baptists in the Low Countries to whom they sent."—*Ibid.*, p. 85.

These statements are not only important to show the facts they record, but they also show how these leading Baptists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries stood on this question. Whatever may be said about immersion earlier than this date referred to, it is a fact, if these historians are to be relied on, that Richard Blunt went all the way to Holland, by church or congregation action, to be baptized, and the remainder of the congregation awaited his return, simply upon the ground that they would not receive immersion at the hands of an administrator about whom there was the least doubt as to his qualifications.

(This Blunt affair is of doubtful authenticity. Whether authentic or not, it proves that this was a live question in England, and that English Baptists stood for regular baptism by a legal administrator, or such question never could have been raised.)

We come now to the doctrinal statement of the English Baptists as found in their Confessions of Faith. We take the first (1643) and last (1689) of the Calvinistic Confessions of the seventeenth century. The first of these has this to say upon this point: Art. 41—"The person designed by Christ to dispense baptism, the Scripture holds forth to be a disciple, it being nowhere tied to a particular church officer or, person extraordinarily sent, the commission enjoining the administration, being given to them as considered

through the
 question was
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disciples, being men able to preach the gospel."

The latter of these (1689) says:

Art. 28—"Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of positive and sovereign institution, appointed by the Lord Jesus, the only lawgiver, to be continued in his church to the end of the world. These holy appointments are to be administered by those only who are qualified and thereunto called, according to the commission of Christ."

The former of these was adopted by seven Baptist churches in London; and the latter by more than one hundred "Baptized" (Baptist) churches in England and Wales.

*what does this
mean?*

*certainly not
in the 17th*

If language has any meaning it seems apparent that in both of these articles the administration of baptism is confined to the pales of the church, and must be performed by the authority of the same. In the first, it must be a disciple and also it must be a man capable of preaching the gospel. In the latter it confines it not only to the church, but to those called and set apart for that specific purpose. The seeming difference may be explained in this way: When the first Confession was adopted the clergy, of the State Church, had made themselves very obnoxious, and had assumed such authority as to create a prejudice with the Baptists against anything that savored of clerical domination. This article, no doubt, was intended to assert church authority on the one hand, and rebuke an arrogant clergy on the other. When the latter Confession was put forth matters had changed up, and assumed a somewhat normal attitude. It would be hard to get stronger and plainer language than is found in the Confession of 1689. But, the question comes back: "Did the framers of these Confessions intend to confine the administration of baptism to the authority and agency of Baptist churches? Were they Baptists of the strict type?"

This must be answered in the affirmative. There was a living link which binds the two Confessions together. The name of William Kiffin is appended to both these Confessions. He was the first to sign the Confession of 1643, and the second to sign the one of 1689. He was a leader of Baptist thought in his day. When you would learn the doctrinal standing of William Kiffin and Hansard Knollys, you would know the doctrinal caste of the Baptists of England in the seventeenth century. Concerning Kiffin we find the following in Cramp's Church History: "The young man (Wm. Kiffin) became an independent inquirer, prepared to follow the leadings of truth regardless of consequences. Observing that some excellent ministers had gone into voluntary banishment rather than conform to the Church of England, he was induced to examine the points in dispute between that church and her opponents. He had been five years a member of the Independent church, then under the care of Mr. Lathrop, when, with many others, he withdrew and joined the Baptist church, the first in England of the Particular Baptist order, of which Mr. Spilsbury was pastor. Two years after that, in 1640, a difference of opinion respecting the propriety of allowing ministers who had not been immersed to preach to them—in which Mr. Kiffin took the negative side—occasioned a separation. Mr. Kiffin and those who agreed with him seceded, and formed another church, which met in Devonshire Square. He was chosen pastor, and held that office until his death, in 1701 (sixty-one years), one of the longest pastorates on record."—Baptist History (Cramp), p. 447, and Both sides, p. 22.

Such was the type of the Baptists who framed the London Confession of Faith. He and his church did not only reject the administration of the ordinances at the hands of unbaptized ministers, but made the preaching to them of such a minister a test of fellow-

Account
ship, sufficient to create a division in the church. Can any one conclude for one moment that such Baptists would tolerate alien immersion? or frame a Confession of Faith in any way favorable to it? or that they would even wink at it?

We would not undertake to say that there were not some individuals in England who held connection with Baptist churches that would tolerate alien immersion. And that they have grown more loose during the last century is admitted. What we mean to say is that the Baptists of England and wales during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as a denomination, stood unflinchingly against all such innovations as alien immersion and mixed communion.

CHAPTER IV.

American Baptists.

In transferring this discussion from England to America it changes location and environments, but virtually has to do with the same people. The Baptists of America, at first, came from England and Wales, with possibly a few from other countries. It has been repeatedly stated, however, that the Baptists of this country owe their origin to Roger Williams, who, with a small company, started a church of their own by baptizing each other without any previous authority.

All Baptists delight to honor Roger Williams, and vie with each other to perpetuate his name as one of our greatest Americans, and one who did much to establish Baptist principles, especially "Religious Liberty."

What we deny is, that Baptists of America are indebted to his irregular church for the administration of baptism, or owe their origin as a denomination to him. We might state just here, by way of parenthesis, that a number of churches, in church capacity, emigrated to this country and settled here with the same constitution formed in the old world. We might state also that Roger Williams himself was too good a Baptist (as will be seen later) to try to impose such an administration upon the denomination.

Baptists on coming to America were still dubbed as Ana-baptists by their persecutors. Nich Ayres, a Baptist preacher, of New York, was given legal license

on January 23, 1721, in which he was denominated an "Ana-baptist." *Simple's History Va. Bap.*, p. 444.

The first Baptist church (Kioka) ever planted on the soil of Georgia, was incorporated as an "Ana-baptist Church." *Hist. Bap. of Southern States*, p. 32. They were everywhere dubbed as Ana-baptists by their persecutors.

NEW ENGLAND BAPTISTS.

We will begin with Roger Williams. Prof. W. J. McGlothlin tells us: "Roger Williams reached conviction that only immersion of a believer was baptism, was baptized by E. Holliman, and he baptized Holliman and others." *Guide to Church Hist.*, p. 212. This was an irregular proceeding, and is often held up before us by the advocates of alien immersion.

"Richard Scott, who was a Baptist with Williams at Providence, but who afterward became a Quaker, writing against Williams thirty-eight years afterward, says: 'I walked with him in the Baptists' way about three or four months . . . in which time he broke from his society, and declared at large the ground and reason for it; that their baptism could not be right because it was not administered by an apostle.'" *Armitage*, p. 279.

Later, in a letter to Winthrop, he repudiated his baptism on the ground of "authority." It is clear to be seen that Williams first took this rash step, but after mature thought he repudiated this irregular baptism as being invalid, and never did again adhere to it.

Henry S. Burrage quotes S. L. Caldwell thus: "But Williams remained only a few months in connection with the church. He had doubts in reference

to the validity of his own baptism and the baptism of his associates on account of the absence of 'authorized administrators.' For him there was no church, and no ministry left. The apostolic succession was interrupted and apostolic authority had ceased. It was the baptizer, and not the baptism, about which he doubted. He was a high church Ana-baptist." Hist. New England Baptists, p. 23.

"The General Association of Connecticut, in 1745, put on record the declaration that 'if Mr. Whitfield should make his progress through this government, it would by no means be advisable for any of our ministers to admit him into their pulpits, or for any of our people to attend upon his preaching and administrations.'" Hist. New England Baptists, p. 63. Here is the General Association of this New England State taking this high landmark ground. They advise against pulpit affiliation with the great Whitfield, and go so far as to advise the people to not even hear him preach, or look upon his "administrations," much less receive them. This was exactly one hundred years before the coming of J. R. Graves to Tennessee.

This clearly shows how the denomination stood in New England. That some individuals broke faith with the denomination at large was true then, is true now, will always be true.

G. D. B. Pepper in an address ("Baptists and the National Centenary"): "There have been individuals, in some instances prominent ministers, who have believed, thought, and practiced, in some respects, contrary to the common faith. Some churches have been led to place themselves, at least for awhile, in opposition to the general belief. But the denomination has been wise in its action in such cases. When possible it has allowed dissent and dissenters to remain within it. . . . A break or schism has taken place only when dissent has so made issue with the denomination

*Does this
have to
apply to the
issue?
vs. schism*

that without the break the doctrine of the dissent must be endorsed. . . . Such has been its practice hitherto. It has thus far stood together in doctrine a compact body." Hist. New England Bap., pp. 286-287.

CHAPTER V.

Eastern States.

We come now to look into the history of the Eastern States on this question, taking the Philadelphia Association as to the center. This is the *oldest* Association in America, constituted in 1707 A. D., and the London Confession of Faith which they adopted, in 1742, with slight alteration, thus making it their own, has been considered the most satisfactory statement of Baptist belief to be found anywhere, outside of the Bible. The churches composing this Association were organized of Baptists emigrating from England and Wales, except the Old Welch Tract Church, which emigrated from Wales in church capacity.

What has been the practice of this mother Association, and the Eastern States, in regard to alien immersion ? What did they esteem as necessary to valid baptism ? These are the questions to be settled in the light of the records.

This Association for a considerable period of time embraced practically all the churches in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland, with some of the Virginia and New England churches. To determine the practice of this Association on this question is to settle the question concerning a large scope of country. They were organized as an Association thirty-five years before they put forth any Confession of Faith. They were Baptists and knew why they were Baptists. They knew what they believed and why they believed it. They were what their enemies were pleased to call Ana-baptists. But in 1742 A. D.,

they reached the conclusion that it was best to put forth a statement of their belief that others might know where they stood. So they adopted the London Confession of Faith, with slight changes, as the expression of their own belief, thus making it theirs, and which since that time has been known as the "Philadelphia Confession of Faith." This confession either in full, or in an abridged form, was adopted by practically all the old Associations, and churches, up until the middle of last century, when the New Hampshire Confession was put forth. The Philadelphia, with many other old and new Associations and churches, still retain it. The Twenty-eighth Article reads thus: "Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of positive and sovereign institution, appointed by the Lord Jesus, the only Lawgiver, to be continued in his church to the end of the world. These holy appointments are to be administered by those only who are qualified and thereunto called, according to the commission of Christ."

It has been argued that this article does not involve the question of alien immersion, and that no such thought occupied the mind of the messengers of Philadelphia Association when they adopted it. But to this author's mind the language is plain and the diction forces such a conclusion.

In the first place baptism is "*to be continued in his church to the end of the world.*" With these words we are driven to one or the other of the following conclusions: First—That this language was intended to exclude baptisms in other denominations; or, Second—That the Philadelphia Association regarded these denominations as the *church of Jesus Christ*. Which horn of the dilemma will the reader take? At that very time these same Baptists were being fined, imprisoned, whipped and persecuted in every conceivable way, by these denominations. They were forced,

by taxation to pay the salaries of Pedo-baptist pastors. They taxed the poor Baptist preacher to support Pedo-baptist preachers.

“Three hundred and ninety-eight acres of land belonging, in part, to Dr. Ebenezer Smith, Baptist minister, and the Ashfield Baptists, had been seized and sold to build a Congregational meeting house. On this land was a dwelling house and orchard, and also a burying-ground, so that the Baptists found their dead taken from them as well as their property.” Armitage, p. 339.

“Taylor says that the Baptist ministers were ‘fined, pelted, beaten, imprisoned, poisoned and hunted with dogs; their congregations were assaulted and dispersed; the solemn ordinance of baptism was rudely interrupted, both administrators and candidates being plunged and held beneath the water till nearly dead; they suffered mock trials, and even in the courts of justice were subjected to indignities.’” Armitage, p. 349.

When they were confiscating the property of the Baptists, one of their ministers got up to preach to the poor wicked (?) Baptists, and among other things he said:

“The Baptists, for refusing to pay an orthodox minister, shall be cut in pound pieces, and boiled for their fat to grease the devil’s carriage.” Old Landmarkism, p. 197.

This was the state of affairs at the time the Philadelphia Association adopted their Confession of Faith. Who can believe for one moment that they had in mind and meant to refer to these persecuting bodies, when they spoke of baptism continuing in the church of Jesus Christ? This you must believe, or accept the only alternative, that they meant to confine baptism within the pales of Baptist churches.

In the second place they say: That those “only”

can baptize "*who are qualified and thereunto called according to the commission of Christ.*"

What do they mean by being qualified? They state positively that he must be called for that specific purpose. Can any one believe that these Baptists regarded the minister of these denominations called of God to baptize when they would come to where the Baptists had met to baptize and baptize dogs in mockery, and then drag the Baptist preachers off and put them in jail, and whip their bare backs till the blood would run down upon the ground? Does any one suppose these Baptists regarded them "called according to the commission of Christ" to baptize? when they were doing all within their power to destroy baptism from off the face of the earth? It seems such a conclusion would be impossible. But if any one is still skeptical on this point, we turn to their minutes where they forever put the matter at rest.

In their minutes, 1787, the First church of New York presented the following query: "Whether a person applying to one of our churches for admission as a member, and satisfies the church that he has been previously baptized by immersion, on a profession of his faith in Christ, but at the same time confesses the person who administered the ordinance was, at the time, neither ordained to the work of the ministry, nor baptized himself by immersion, but only chosen and called by a religious society to officiate as their teacher or minister, should be received?"

This matter was laid over until the next sitting of the Association, that they might have a whole year to deliberate on it; that their action might be the result of mature thought. At the next meeting of the body (1788) they give the following reply: "We deem such baptism null and void."

"First—Because a person that has not been bap-

not all like this!

45 years
later!!

tized must be disqualified to administer baptism to others, and especially if he be also unordained.

“Second—Because to admit such baptism as valid, would make void the ordinances of Christ, throw contempt on his authority, and tend to confusion, for if baptism be not necessary for an administrator of it, neither can it be for church communion, which is an inferior act; and if such baptism be valid, then ordination is unnecessary, contrary to Acts 14:23, I. Tim. 4:14, Titus 1:5, and our Confession of Faith, Chapter 27.

“Third—Of this opinion we find were our Associations in times past; who put a negative on such baptisms in 1729, 1732, 1744, 1749 and 1768.

“Fourth—Because such administrator has no commission to baptize, for the words of the Commission were addressed to the apostles, and their successors in the ministry, to the end of the world, and these are such, whom the church of Christ appoints to the whole work of the ministry.”

It would seem from the above that they studied their words employing the very strongest terms possible, and basing the whole upon their “Confession of Faith.” But we are not done with this matter yet. In 1791 there came a request from Abraham Booth of London England, that the Association would rescind this action. Again, they laid the matter over for one year. So in 1792 they took the matter up and passed the following:

“A query respecting the validity of baptism by an unordained and unbaptized administrator, referred in the sixth of October 5, in our minutes of last year, was taken up and determined in the negative’.

Thus after a lapse of five years time, and two years deliberation, this, the oldest and largest Association in America, with between fifty and one hundred churches, covering several States, filed their opposi-

tion to Baptist churches receiving alien immersion, in the very strongest terms it was possible for them to employ. In this Association at that time were such ministers of renown as Samuel Jones, Samuel Morgan, John Boggs, Oliver Hart, Morgan Edwards, William Rogers, Thomas Ustick and many others, too numerous to mention.

Over against this two instances have been cited as "clear cases" of this Association receiving alien immersion. As it is the purpose of this author to give as nearly as possible an impartial history I make note of them. From the minutes of 1765 I take the following:

"Query, from Smith's Creek: Whether it be proper to receive a person into communion who had been baptized by immersion by a minister of the church of England, if no other objection could be made? Answer; Yea, if he had been baptized on a profession of faith and repentance."

If we assume that the church of England refers to the Episcopal church, then the case is made out. There are some reasons, however, why we have reached the conclusion that such was not the case. In the first place; the term "church" in the minutes begins with a small letter instead of a capital, which would not have been the case, if it had been a denominational title. In the second place; in the action of the Association in 1788, when they refer to the former actions of the Association, on this question, they make no mention of this case. In the third place, just three years after this (1768) we find the following: "In answer to a query from New York, it was agreed that baptism, administered by a person not ordained, was invalid and disorderly." In taking this action they make no reference to the action of 1765, three years previous.

The question comes back, if they did not refer to

the State Church of England, what did they refer to? This was the year that the Philadelphia Association was having so much trouble with the General Baptists of England, and their custom of baptizing unconverted people. I think it more probable that they referred to these as the "church of England." This was the year in which Kehukee Association was constituted through the ministry of missionaries from Philadelphia Association, and every student of history knows full well that the question of baptizing by these people, without any profession of faith on the part of the one baptized, was a question more than any other being discussed at that time. The answer, in which they emphasized this one point of faith before baptism, is, we think, a strong pointer that the question referred to the General Baptist church of England. ✓

The other instance referred to is found in the minutes for 1806, and is as follows: :

"Query: Whether can an orthodox Baptist church receive a person who has been baptized by a Tunker Universalist, without baptizing him again? The person has renounced Universalist principles. Answer: Yes."

Now, it is well known that "Tunkers" is but another name for German Baptists. The fact that in this query, "Baptist church" is qualified by the term "orthodox," would seem to indicate that they regarded the applicant from some sort of a "Baptist" church. We are not informed as to all the circumstances connected with this case. But the fact that from time to time they put their unequivocal veto on the reception of alien immersion is sufficient proof that they did not regard this as a case of alien immersion. In fact a whole church of Tunkers, or German Baptists, united with the Philadelphia Association in 1848, and so far as this author knows is still a member of that body.

Universalist?

100 yrs later

It seems that it would take quite an amount of credulity, to believe that these two doubtful cases, were plain cases of alien immersion, when the same body composed of the same men, put forth so many unequivocal statements to the contrary both before and after.

We append some other instances in the Philadelphia Association not heretofore mentioned.

In 1732 we have the following: "Whether a person not being baptized himself, and presuming in private, to baptize another; whether pretended baptism be valid or no, or whether it might not be adjudged a nullity.

"Resolved, We judge such baptism as invalid, and no better than if it had never been done."

In 1740, "a query from Cohansie: Whether a pious person, of the number of Pedo-baptists, who forbears to have his own children sprinkled, may be admitted into our communion without being baptized? . . .

"Given to vote, and passed all in the negative, *Nemine contradicente.*" (Without opposition.)

In 1744 there came a "query from the church of Bethlehem: Suppose a person baptized by a man, who takes upon him to preach the gospel and proceeds to administer the ordinances without a regular call or ordination from any church; whether the person so baptized may be admitted into any orderly church. Yea or nay?

"Resolved, We cannot encourage such irregular proceedings; because it hath ill consequence every way attending it; it is also opposite to our discipline. We therefore give our sentiments that such administrations are irregular, invalid, and of no effect."

In 1746. "Query: Whether it is regular for an Association, to receive in, and admit as members of the Association, such as at the same time they would not

admit to their church communion, if opportunity offered?

“We answer, no.”

They everywhere prohibit Pedo-baptists from their communion.

In 1749 they reaffirm these positions.

In 1768, “In answer to a query from New York, it was agreed that baptism, administered by a person not ordained, was invalid and disorderly.”

This old association advised their ministers and churches against pulpit affiliation with other denominations. (See Minutes for 1734, 1747 and 1771.)

In order that the reader may understand what these people mean by an ordained minister, we append a circumstance reported by J. M. Pendleton, when he resided in Upland, Penn. His report was published in *The Baptist*:

“Rev. Henry Losch, a Presbyterian preacher, having learned the way of the Lord more perfectly, united with the Memorial church (Philadelphia) and was baptized by the pastor, Dr. Henson. In due time a council was called to consider the matter of Mr. Losch’s ordination. It was, fortunately, a large council, confined, so far as I know, to our city churches, and therefore it was not my privilege to be present. The council having been organized, Dr. J. Wheaton Smith offered a resolution virtually recognizing and indorsing the validity of the Presbyterian ordination already received by the brother. This led to an earnest discussion, and the vote on the resolution was quite significant—*two* for it, *fifty* against it. Dr. Smith was, of course, chagrined, and referred in no very courteous way to the decision as an ‘outrage on a Christian church,’ but the council was firm. The brother has been ordained—I do not say *re*-ordained, but simply ordained.”

This shows very clearly that when they speak of an

“*ordained minister*” they mean a minister ordained by a *Baptist* church.

We will close this chapter with a letter from Spencer H. Cone, who was at the time he wrote this (1845) pastor of the First Baptist church in New York City. This church for a half century represented in the Philadelphia Association. Spencer H. Cone, in his prime, was considered the greatest preacher in America. Hear his testimony:

“DEAR BRETHREN :—The question you ask was presented to me in July by Brother J. Tripp, Jr., of your church. I replied that, in my opinion, valid baptism could only be administered by a duly authorized minister; and stated my impression also that the ‘regular Baptist churches of England and the United States’ had long held the same sentiment. I wrote in the midst of numerous calls, and without dreaming that the hasty line was to appear in print, but make no complaint. My Baptist sentiments are public property, for in things pertaining to faith and practice I have no secrets.

“First, then, what has been the sentiment of ‘Regular Baptist churches’ in England and the United States upon this subject? The ministers and messengers of more than one hundred baptized congregations of England and Wales (denying Arminianism) met in London, July 3-11, A. D., 1689, and published what they call ‘The Confession of our Faith,’ and recommended its perusal not only to the members of our churches, but to all other Christians who differ from us. Among these ministers you have the names of Knollys, Kiffin, Keach, Collins, Harris, Gifford, Vaux, Price, Finch, and a host of others, whose praise was in all the regular Baptist churches, viz.: such as was opposed to ‘general redemption and open communion.’ Under the head of baptism, among other things,

they stated that it is to be administered by those only who are qualified and thereunto called.'

"The Philadelphia Association was formed in 1707 and adopted, with alternation, the London Confession of 1689; so that in this country it has gone by the name of the Philadelphia Confession of Faith; and since that period most of the Associations in the Middle States have been formed upon the same platform. The New York Association, organized in 1791, has always held the views I advocate. In 1821, the particular point before us was discussed and settled, in answer to a 'query' from one of the churches similar to that contained in your letter. Mr. Parkinson was appointed to write a circular letter on baptism, in which he maintained the 'immersion of professing believers, by a baptized minister, as essential to gospel baptism.'

"After the adoption of this circular a resolution was passed, stating that although they considered the query sufficiently answered in the circular, nevertheless they record the opinion of the Association, that Baptist churches had better never receive persons, either as members, or even as transient communicants upon such baptism, viz.: by unimmersed administrators, many reasons are embodied in the resolution to sustain the opinion given, as the disunion, inconvenience, uneasiness, etc., which have always arisen in churches receiving such members.' But the basis of their opinion is thus set down in plain words—'Pedobaptist administrators, as far as we can see, are unknown in the Holy Scriptures.' And that is just as far as I can see, and no farther.

"The First church in this city, of which I am pastor, was founded in 1745, and as the Bible has not changed, she still adheres to her original Confession of Faith. The article on baptism closes thus: 'That nothing is a Scriptural administration of baptism, but a total immersion of the subject in water, in the name

of the Holy Trinity, by a man duly authorized to administer gospel ordinances.' (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:40-42.) The action of this church for one hundred years has been to reject as invalid, baptism administered by an unimmersed administrator. During my residence in Maryland and Virginia, the Baltimore, Columbia and Kettocton Associations (which I attended for eight or ten years, and was personally acquainted with every minister belonging to them) held the same sentiment. The subject was called up in the Associations while I was pastor of the Alexandria Baptist church, D. C., thus: A Mr. Plummer, from down East, a Free-Will Baptist, or 'Christian,' as he called himself, immersed a number of persons in Virginia, and founded a Baptist church. He baptized in the name of the Father, son and Spirit, and yet denied the divinity of the Son. In a year or two he departed from our borders—his disciples were scattered. Some of them were really converted, and wished to unite with some Baptist church in the vicinity. The church and pastor in Alexandria being satisfied with the Christian experience and deportment of two of them, I baptized them into the name of our God, Father, Son and Spirit—co-equal and co-eternal—and we no more considered their baptism by Plummer, as Christian, than we should if they had been dipped by a Mohammedan into the name of his prophet. These Associations then held that valid baptism must be administered, not only by an immersed minister, but also one in *good standing in our denomination.*

"In the early part of my ministry, I was intimately acquainted with Gano, Baldwin, Holcomb, Staughton, Williams, Richards, Fristoe, Mercer and many others, now gone to glory; and I never heard one of them drop a hint that baptism by a Pedo-baptist minister opened the door into a regular Baptist church. Indispensable engagements compel me to close. That

there are now many pastors and churches opposed to my views I know—painfully know—but all this does not convince me that *our fathers were wrong* in this matter. I must be made over again before I count that to be 'valid baptism' when neither the administrator nor those who ordained him, believed immersion of believers any part of their commission, and never submitted to it themselves in obedience to the command of the King of Zion. Affectionately, your brother in gospel bonds.

S. H. CONE.

"New York, September 30, 1845."

This letter was published in a number of papers and one book that I know. This is taken from the columns of the *Baptist Messenger*, which in turn took it from the *Examiner and Chronicle*. In the *Examiner and Chronicle* we find the following note appended:

"MR. EDITOR:—While the valid administration of baptism is under consideration, I hope you will publish the following letter from Rev. Spencer H. Cone, D.D., written to certain brethren in South Carolina. I copy the letter from my 'scrapbook,' and I advise all our young ministers especially to keep scrapbooks, that they may preserve important newspaper articles. In behalf of truth.

J. M. P."

The "J. M. P." evidently stands for J. M. Pendleton.

Spencer H. Cone was born and spent all of his eventful ministerial life within the bounds of what was once Philadelphia Association. No one could speak with more authority upon these questions. His letter settles two points. First—That up until less than one hundred years ago, the Baptists of America, as a denomination, stood solidly against the reception of alien immersion. Second—Within the first half of the nineteenth century the contrary sentiment began to assert itself; until today numbers within the denomination will apologize for it, while some openly espouse the cause of alien immersion.

CHAPTER VI.

Virginia Baptists.

Virginia was a center of Baptist influence in the Colonial days of American civilization. It is of importance in the study of this question that we know how they stood in these days. The preceding chapter has largely covered this ground, but we proceed to give a few additional items, which we think will shed some additional light on this question.

“Some time in the year of 1766, and a short time after Mr. Thomas’ preaching (in Virginia), three of the parties, viz.: Elijah Craig and two others, traveled to Mr. Harris’ house in order to procure his services in Orange, and the adjacent parts, to preach and baptize the new converts. They found to their surprise that he had not been ordained to the administration of the ordinances. To remedy this inconvenience he carried them about sixty miles into North Carolina, to get James Read, who was ordained.” Semple’s Hist, Va. Bap. p. 21.

These were what were called “Separate Baptists,” also in their order of business No. 4, we find this; “Every ordained minister of the same faith, etc., being legally called upon by any church, may administer the sacraments among them, and with the help of their church, ordain their elders or deacons if found qualified; and in case they have made choice of a minister whom they desire to be examined and ordained, they may petition neighboring ministers to proceed in the said work.” Semple’s Hist. p. 71.

In 1771 we have the following query from the church in Orange: "Whether we have a right to dismiss a member from under the care of our order? (that is to another denomination). *Answered* in the negative."

Again from "Amelia Church: What are the terms of Communion fixed in the word of God? *Answered*. Fellowship in the same faith and order." Semple's Hist. p. 73.

In regard to this first question it would seem apparent that if they would not dismiss a member to the outside, they would not receive one from the outside. And in the latter, the terms to communion are plainly stated.

In the proceedings of Dover Association in 1790 we have the following query and answer: "Whether baptism was valid when administered by an unordained person? To which the Association replied: "That in cases where the ordinance had been administered in a solemn and religious manner, that it might be considered as valid, and that persons so baptized might be admitted as members of the church upon hearing and approving their experience!" Semple's Hist p. 122.

This has been quoted to prove that Virginia Baptists, in the eighteenth century, stood for alien immersion. So far as we have been able to discover this is the only instance which has any seeming bearing in that direction. And it takes but a glance to see that this has no connection with such an idea. This Association, at this very time was in the throes of a heated controversy involving two points in one. One of these was: What does it take to constitute legal ordination? and the other was: Should church action settle all matters, or should certain things, as the ordination of ministers, be turned over to councils and presbyterys of ministers?

Many of this Association thought that church action was sufficient without the laying on of hands by a presbytery. This is the only thing involved in the action referred to above, as any one can see by consulting their minutes of 1786 and 1792. (Semple, pp. 121, 124.) In 1792 they forever settled the matter in favor of regular ordination.

We have still another case involving the same question, but with different action. This occurred in 1777, with Culpeper Association, as follows:

“When the Rev. John Leland, from New England, came preaching among them, and became a member of Mountponcy church, the church unanimously called him to the administration of the Word and ordinances without ordination by the imposition of hands. This being contrary to the established rule of the Ketocton Association, and indeed of the Baptists of Virginia generally, when the church sent her delegates to the next Association they were rejected. The habits of the Baptists in New England and of those in Virginia respecting apparel were also much at variance. Mr. Leland and others adhered to the customs of New England, each one putting on such apparel as suited his own fancy. This was offensive to some members of the church. The contention on this account became so sharp that on the 25th of July, 1779, about twelve members dissented from the majority of the church and were, of course excluded. The dissenting members formed themselves into a church, and sued for admission into the next Association, and were received. The majority dismissed Mr. Leland in order, and soon after this he submitted to ordination by the imposition of the hands of a presbytery.” Semple’s History, p. 234.

This action, making this question a test of fellowship, what some modern historians are pleased to call

proscription, occurred more than forty years before J. R. Graves was born.

But to forever settle the question of the attitude of Dover Association, we refer to her action in 1844, as follows:

“Whereas, Many individuals, who have been immersed by a Pedo-baptist ministry, wish to unite with the African Baptist church in Williamsburg, and, whereas, the church desire advice as to the propriety of their reception;

“Therefore, *Resolved*, That in view of the advice sought by the African Baptist church in Williamsburg, we recommend, according to the decision of this Association at its meeting at Clark’s Neck, and subsequently at Emmaus’, that the individuals referred to be not received.”

This action was published in *The Baptist* before the coming of J. R. Graves into Tennessee, while R. B. C. Howell and Wm. Cary Crane were the editors.

“This is the Association to which Broadus, Jeter, Ryland, Taylor and others of prominence belonged.” They refer, as will be seen, to two former actions of this body in harmony with this one. The vote stood 52 to 10 in favor of the resolution.

The following from the Kettocton Association, the oldest Association in Virginia, being constituted in 1766, it seems would forever settle the question as to the attitude of Virginia Baptists on this question.

“In 1791, a case was brought before the Association which produced considerable agitation. James Hutchinson, who was born in New Jersey, but raised in Loudoun county, Va., had gone to Georgia, and there first became a Methodist and then a Baptist preacher. Previous to his joining the Baptists he had been baptized by a Methodist preacher. When he offered to join the Baptists of Georgia it was made a question whether his baptism, being performed by an

unbaptized person, was valid. The Georgia Baptists decided that it was valid.

“In the year above mentioned, Mr. Hutchinson came to Virginia to see his relations in Loudoun county. While he was there his preaching became effectual to the conversion of many. Mr. Hutchinson baptized them. These things stirred up the question in Kectocton Association, whether the baptism of Hutchinson and his new disciples was valid? The decision here was just the reverse of the decision in Georgia. They determined not to receive either him or those baptized by him, unless they would submit to be rebaptized. After some time they consented and the ordinance was re-administered.” Semple’s Hist., p. 391.

The historian speaks of this as a radical action. But if any action to the contrary ever occurred among early Virginia Baptists, the name of the body, and the time it occurred is not recorded, so far as our research has extended. That some of the Virginia Baptists of later years have grown lax on this question is true. But it is equally true that they firmly opposed anything like alien immersion through their early history. They made it a test of fellowship.

These instances, recorded above, are a little bit hard on some modern historians, who cannot extend their vision “beyond sixty years ago.”

CHAPTER VII.

Baptists of North and South Carolina.

The Baptists of the two Carolinas are very closely allied, but each State has its early centers of Baptist influence. We will begin with the South State. Of late years South Carolina and Virginia have been mentioned as the most lax of any of our Southern States upon this question. But South Carolina, like Virginia, shows no traces of it, so far as we can ascertain, in her early history.

The Charleston Association is the second oldest in the United States, being constituted in 1751, and like all the old Associations adopted the London or Philadelphia Confession of Faith, which has already been abundantly quoted on this question. The history of this Association is the history of the early Baptists of South Carolina. The close relation between this and the Philadelphia Association and the frequent exchange of pastors, and the fact that they both had the same Confession of Faith, is sufficient ground to assert their oneness in doctrine and practice.

The following query and answer found in the minutes for 1758 have been quoted by alien immersionists as an instance of alien immersion:

“Whether baptism administered by Paul Palmer, a disorderly person, be valid?”

“Answer: Though Palmer was a disorderly person, yet as he baptized according to the word of God, persons baptized by him may be received into our churches, upon satisfactory examination as to prin-

ciples and grace." Furman's Hist. Charleston Association, p. 37.

Who was Paul Palmer? He was a General Baptist, and to him is ascribed the planting of the Baptist standard in North Carolina. He was baptized into the fellowship of the Old Welsh Tract church by their pastor, Owen Thomas, and was ordained in Connecticut. (See Hist. Sandy Creek Association, p. 42, and Hassell's Church Hist., p. 662.) His baptism and ordination were regular. He was a Baptist. Just what the "disorder" referred to here consisted in we are not informed. He is said to have been loose on requiring his candidates to relate an experience of grace before baptism; and this may be the "disorder" referred to here. This is most probably it, for in the same year they passed an action endorsing such baptisms. (Hist. Charleston Ass., p. 37.)

We turn our attention now to North Carolina. The Sandy Creek Association is the third oldest in the United States, being constituted in 1758, mainly through the labors of Paul Palmer and Shubael Stearns. Much of their early records are lost, but enough remains to ascertain how they stood on this question. In 1822 we have the following, viz.:

"Query: If a man representing himself to be a legally ordained minister of the gospel, receives persons into the church and baptizes them, but is afterward found not to be in possession of proper credentials, are such persons, so baptized, to be considered regular members of the church, and entitled to privileges thereof?

"Answered in the negative. If a minister acts without church authority, his ministerial acts are invalid. If he be clothed with valid church authority, his acts are valid, though he may be a bad man; that is, the validity of his official acts depends upon his being *a member of the church, and clothed with min-*

isterial authority. If he has no church membership, and is without ordination his acts are invalid." Purefoy's Hist. Sandy Creek Ass., p. 122.

Again, in 1839, a query from Pleasant Grove church:

"Is it consistent with the spirit of the gospel, and according to the Scriptures, for any regular Baptist church to receive into her fellowship any member or members of another denomination, who have been baptized by immersion, without baptizing them again?"

"Answer: We think it is not. The vote on this query was unanimous. The Baptist is the only denomination that is not guilty of schism—of making a division when it came into existence. They existed prior to any Pedo-baptist denomination now in existence. Baptists have never seceded from any other denomination. All other denominations have either seceded from Rome or one another; they made a division when they came into existence, instead of receiving their baptisms as valid, they are to be *marked* and *avoided* for causing *divisions*. Rom. 16:17.

"We cannot admit the validity of their baptisms without admitting that they are true and Scriptural gospel churches, if we do this we *unchurch ourselves*, for God never set up or authorized but one Christian denomination. He is not the author of confusion or of antagonistic denominations.

"The Baptist is the only denomination that can claim descent from the apostolic churches, through the true persecuted and witnessing church, that fled into the wilderness for 1,260 years. See Rev. 12:6 and 14.

"That the Baptists have descended from this true church is susceptible of the clearest proof. This is not true of any other denomination. We all know the day when, and the man or men who set them up, and not one of them had existence before A. D. 1500.

Ordinances cannot be validly administered by both Baptists and Pede-baptists. God is not the author of but one of them, consequently we cannot receive members upon baptism administered by them, without repudiating the ordinances administered by ourselves." Hist. Sandy Creek Asso., p. 179.

We suppose the reader will have no difficulty in understanding the language just quoted.

We now turn our attention to the Kehukee Association of the same State, being the fourth oldest in America, constituted in 1765, A. D. This Association at first adopted the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, but in 1777 they abridged it, and retain it until today in this shortened form. The Sixteenth Article reads thus: "We believe that no minister has a right to the administration of the ordinances, only such as are regularly called, and come under imposition of hands by the presbytery." (See Burkitt & Read's Hist. Kehukee Ass., p. 54.

This is a clear statement that baptism (as well as the Lord's Supper) is confined to regularly called and ordained ministers of the church. If any one has any further doubt as to the meaning of this Association upon this point, let them refer to the following questions and answers which occurred in the same meeting in which this Confession of Faith was adopted:

"Query: From the church in Chowan: *"Suppose a man to be a member of the Presbyterian church, and therein ordained a minister of the gospel, and administrator of the ordinances thereof with approbation of them in their way, afterwards submits to believers baptism—is his ordination valid to the Baptists? Answer, No."*

Again: "From the church in the Isle of Wight: *"What shall a church do with a minister who labors to make them believe that, difference in judgment*

about water baptism ought to be no bar to communion?

“Answer: Such a practice is disorderly, and he who propagates the tenet ought to be dealt with as an offender.”

These statements are clear, and show that no authority in “ordination” was recognized except it come from a Baptist church.

Six years later, in 1783, the following occurs:

“Is the baptism of a believer a legal baptism, if performed by an unauthorized minister?”

“Answer: It is our opinion that the person who administered the ordinance was very much out of his duty, and displeasure ought to be shown to such a practice; but as for the person’s baptism, as it was done in faith, we esteem it legal.”

This has been cited as a case of alien immersion. But to my way of thinking it does not involve that point. The minister referred to was evidently a Baptist minister. This is shown by the answer, which implies that he is a subject of church discipline. It follows then, we think, clearly (as nothing is said concerning ordination) that he has baptized some one on his own motion, without the action of any church, as, for instance, an itinerant or traveling minister, baptizing on his own score. Any one who will take the pains to examine the records will see that this very point was dismissed at this same sitting of the Association.

CHAPTER VIII.

Georgia Baptists.

Georgia is, and has been from the first, a great Baptist State. As early as 1733 a colony was established among the wilds of Georgia. Concerning this colony Rev. Mr. Lewis, of Margate, England, sneeringly remarked: "There are descendants of the Moravian Ana-baptists in the new plantation of Georgia." Among these there was no minister so far as we can learn. The first Baptist convert ever made upon Georgia soil so far as we have been able to learn was Nicholas Bedgewood, in 1757. There being no authorized Baptist minister in Georgia, he traveled all the distance to Charleston, S. C., to receive baptism at the hands of Oliver Hart, pastor of the First church of that city (a good start). See Hist. Bap. in Southern States, p. 28.

Mr. Bedgewood became a preacher, and planted the cause in Georgia. The first church established on the soil of Georgia was at Kioka, and bore the name of "Ana-baptist." The oldest Association in the State is the Georgia Association, constituted in 1784. This Association, since near its origin, has ever stood firm against the reception of alien immersion. The Yellow River Association is also one of the oldest in the State. The article, in their Confession of Faith, on this point reads thus: "That water baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances of the gospel, to be continued until the Lord's second coming, and to be administered *only by orderly Baptist ministers regularly or-*

dained.” Hear this old Georgia Association express herself later on, in 1824:

“Query: Should a person on profession of his faith receive baptism by immersion at the hands of a minister who is of the same faith, but of another and Arminian denomination, on a change of sentiments and a desire to come into union with a regular Baptist church, be required to submit to the ordinance again? Answer in the affirmative.”

Just five years after the organization of this Association (1789) Jesse Mercer, the man who has done more for the Baptist cause in Georgia than any other, was ordained. For a long period of time he was Moderator of this old Association. It was he who established the *Christian Index*. It was he who established the first Baptist school and finally Mercer University. It was he who laid his thousands upon the altar for education and missions, thus starting the influence which has made Georgia the great missionary State that it is. It was he who never gave an uncertain sound on doctrine, and led in the influence which has moulded Georgia into the great Baptist State that it is. In 1811 he wrote the circular letter of Georgia Association on the church and its functions. The outline of his arguments are as follows:

“I.—*The apostolic church*, continued through all ages to the end of the world, is the only *true gospel church*.

“II.—Of this church *Christ* is the only *Head*, and true source of all ecclesiastical authority.

“III.—Gospel ministers are servants in the church, are all equal, and have no power to lord it over the heritage of the Lord.

“Having established these propositions to his own satisfaction, he infers the following ‘*clear and certain truths*’:

“I.—That all churches and ministers who originated

since the apostles, and not successively to them, are not in gospel order; and, therefore, cannot be acknowledged as such.

“II.—That all who have been ordained to the work of the ministry without the knowledge and call of the church, by popes, councils, etc., are the creatures of those who constituted them, and are not the servants of Christ or his church, and therefore, have no right to administer for them.

“III.—That those who set aside the discipline of the gospel, and have given law to and exercised dominion over the church, are usurpers over the place and office of Christ, are against him; and, therefore, may not be accepted in their offices.

“IV.—That they who administer contrary to their own, or the faith of the gospel, cannot administer for God; since without the gospel faith, they have nothing to administer, and without their own, he accepts no service; therefore the administrations of such are unwarrantable impositions in any way.

“Our reasons, therefore, for rejecting baptism by immersion, when administered by Pedo-baptist ministers, are:

“I.—That they are connected with ‘churches’ clearly out of the apostolic succession; and, therefore, clearly out of the apostolic commission.

“II.—That they have derived their authority by ordination from the bishops of Rome, or from individuals who have taken it upon themselves to give it.

“III.—That they hold a higher rank in the churches than the apostles did, are not accountable to, and, of consequence not triable by the church; but are amenable only to or among themselves.

“IV.—That they all, as we think, administer contrary to the pattern of the gospel; and some, where occasion requires, will act contrary to their professed faith.

“Now, as we know of none implicated in this case, but, are in some or all of the above defects, either of which we deem sufficient to disqualify for meet gospel administration, therefore we hold their administrations invalid.”

He adds: “But, if it should be said that the apostolic succession can not be ascertained, and then it is proper to act without it, we say that the loss of the succession can never prove it futile, nor justify any one out of it. The Pedo-baptists, by their own histories, admit they are not of it; *but we do not*, and shall think ourselves entitled to the claim until the reverse be clearly shown. And should any think authority derived from the *Mother of Harlots* sufficient to qualify to administer a gospel ordinance, they will be so charitable as not to condemn us for professing what is derived from Christ. And, should any still more absurdly plead that ordination received from an individual is sufficient, we leave them to show what is the use of ordination, and why it exists. If any think an administration will suffice which has no gospel pattern, they will suffer us to act according to the divine order with impunity. And if it should be said that faith in the subject is all that is necessary, we beg to require it where the Scriptures do, that is, everywhere.” *Memoirs of Jesse Mercey*, by Mallery, pp. 146-148.

The Yellow River Association of Georgia, one of the old Associations of the State, has this statement in their Confession of Faith:

“Water baptism and the Lord’s Supper are ordinances of the gospel, to be continued until the Lord’s second coming, and to be administered only by orderly Baptist ministers regularly ordained.” *Leaves of Life*, p. 106.

The Flint River and Western Associations had some controversy over the reception of members from

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churches which had seceded from the Flint River Association. In 1834 they jointly adopted the following resolution:

“We recommend that those who have been received by experience and baptized by seceding ministers since their acknowledgment of a different faith to that of the Flint River Association, which was assigned by them at the Sharon church, be, on application, received by the churches on experience and baptism as others who have never been members.” *Leaves of Life*, p. 122.

In the Baptist Encyclopedia, giving the History of Georgia Baptists, we find the following:

“In general, when a course of action has been decided, the Baptists of Georgia are harmonious. In regard to church order they are very strict, and in doctrine they are strongly Calvinistic. . . .

“In sentiment it (convention) was what has been denominated as ‘Landmark’ generally. . . .

“Among the instrumentalities which this convention put in operation for the promotion of its operations was a paper called ‘*The Landmark Banner and Cherokee Baptist.*’” Baptist Encyclopedia, pp. 443, 444.

The Georgia Baptist State Convention, when in session in Macon, April 29, 1872, passed the following resolutions:

“That baptism is the immersion of a believer in Jesus Christ, by an authorized administrator, in the name of the Trinity. That such a baptism is a prerequisite to church membership and admission to the Lord’s Supper.

“That unbaptized persons, not being church members, cannot be clothed with authority to administer the ordinances and therefore immersions performed by such persons are null and void.

“That the sincerity of the subject cannot supply

the want of authority in the administrator." These resolutions were published in the *Index* for may 2, 1872. (See Sumter Debate, p. 165.)

As late as 1903, J. J. Porter, in the Sumter Debate, made use of the following:

"As to the Baptists of Georgia, they are solid, with the exception of one church, against the reception of alien immersions. The editor of the *Christian Index* stated that there was only one church in the State that was known to favor the reception of alien immersion." Sumter Debate, p. 217.

The only case, even hinted at, of the reception of alien immersion in Georgia's early history, so far as we can learn, is the case of Mr. Hutchinson, incidentally mentioned in Semple's History of Virginia Baptists. It received a partial endorsement of Georgia Association, but resulted in great confusion. Campbell in his History of Georgia Baptists, page 58, has this to say of this affair: "But in the end it terminated unfortunately. Many were not well pleased with such a course, and therefore it led on to strife and confusion. However, as he was an eloquent man, and truly fervent in spirit, many were conciliated by his zeal and perseverance, and strong hopes were entertained that much good would be effected through his instrumentality. He went to Virginia, was rejected, and then rebaptized." Campbell further says: "Thus terminated a most fierce and distressing controversy. So much for admitting a Pedobaptist administration of the ordinance of baptism." Hist. Ga. Bap., p. 58.

CHAPTER IX.

Southwestern States.

We will include in this chapter the States West of Georgia, exclusive of Tennessee and Kentucky.

In regard to the position of the Baptists of Alabama upon this question we have been able to gather but little data. The reader, however is referred to a discussion upon this question between one "Fidus," of Muscle-Shoals, Ala., and J. L. Waller, of Louisville, Ky. The former writing in *The Baptist*, and the latter writing in the *Western Baptist Review*. We have examined the records personally, but have them not at hand at this writing. As we remember, "Fidus" claimed the Alabama Baptists were very strongly opposed to the reception of alien immersion, and the same was conceded by Waller. See *Western Baptist Review*, Vol. 3, p. 464.

With reference to Mississippi Baptists on this question, we give a few quotations from the minutes of the Mississippi Association which was constituted in 1806, A. D. In the records for 1808 we find the following:

"Shall the ordination of a minister of the gospel, who may become a member of the Baptist church, be considered valid who was ordained by men not in our connection?"

"Answered in the negative."

Again in 1830 we find this:

"Resolved, That it be recommended to all the churches composing the Association, not to invite into their pulpits any minister who holds the sentiments,

or creeds expressed," (by the followers of A. Campbell). In the same meeting they print this statement:

"Anything contrary to Baptist doctrine is heresy."

In 1839 we find this in their minutes:

"*Resolved*, That in the opinion of this Association there are three things necessary to constitute gospel baptism, viz.: a regular authorized administrator, a believer in Christ and immersion in the name of the Holy Trinity, and as such those ministers who have been excluded from our communion for immorality or heresy, are not proper administrators, and consequently, immersions administered by Campbellite ministers, or reforming teachers, as they call themselves, is not valid baptism."

The Confession of Faith adopted in Louisiana Associations confines baptism and the Lord's Supper within the pales of the church. See Paxton's History of Louisiana Baptists, p 77.

The Concord Association of Louisiana was constituted in 1832, and in 1855 we find the following question and answer:

"Is it consistent with the principles of the gospel for Baptist churches to receive members from the Campbellite societies, without being rebaptized?"

"Answer: It is not." Hist. Louisiana Baptists, p. 263.

Again: This same Association in 1832 put forth a Confession of Faith, in which they make this statement:

Art. 4. "We believe that believers are the only proper subjects; and immersion the only Scriptural action of baptism; and the only legal administrators of the ordinance are the regularly ordained ministers of the gospel in full fellowship in and with the United Baptists." Hist. Louisiana Baptists, p. 246.

The Ouachita Association was constituted in 1844,

and the Twelfth Article of their Confession of Faith reads thus:

“Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water by a legal administrator.” Ibid, 295.

The Red River Association of Louisiana was constituted in 1848, and passed the following:

“*Resolved*, That in the opinion of this Association, a properly qualified administrator is essential to Scriptural baptism.

“*Resolved*, That the authority of an orderly Baptist church is an essential qualification to authorize one to administer baptism.

“*Resolved*, That immersions performed by administrators not authorized by such a church should not be received by Baptists.” Hist. Louisiana Baptists, p. 332.

TEXAS.

As to Texas, she is too young to have a history, on this question, extending much beyond the middle of last century. This author spent nearly four years in that State, from 1904 to 1908. During my stay there, we lived in different parts of the State and traveled in nearly all parts of it, forming the acquaintance of hundreds of ministers of all grades, and on both sides of the mission controversy. Yet we never heard of a single instance of the reception of alien immersion during the four years, or a single intimation that any one favored such. To our personal knowledge many of the leading preachers and churches would not tolerate it.

“Drs. J. B. Gambrell and George W. Truett, of Texas, state that, the reception of alien immersion is almost wholly unknown in Texas.

“They state that the practice of receiving regular baptism only is so general that the exceptions to such practice are rarely considered by the Texas churches.”

These brethren authorize me to say that they are personally in hearty sympathy with the above."

Before closing this chapter we will append an extract from Eld. B. M. Bogard: "I am sure no man can write the history of alien immersion in Arkansas, for it has never existed in the State. I am sure there has never been a Baptist church in Arkansas that ever did receive an alien immersion. It therefore has no history in this State, and therefore you can not write it, except, to record the fact that it never took root in Arkansas soil.

"Of course there may have been some alien immersions found their way into unsuspecting churches by means of letter, but none has been received straight."
"Ben M. Bogard."

The above letter explains itself.

We might say before closing this chapter, that Southern Illinois, much of Missouri and the Western States stand firm on this question, while many others have been caught in the meshes of "liberalism."

CHAPTER X.

Tennessee Baptists.

There is perhaps no State in the Union that has received more attention on the question of alien immersion and valid baptism than has Tennessee. It is the home of the lamented J. R. Graves, who during his life time was one of the most active and able defenders of regular baptism. Such was his prominence for half a century, or nearly so, that many have charged him with originating the doctrine commonly known as Landmarkism.

This is doubtless due in some cases to inadvertence, in others to ignorance, and it is to be feared that prejudice in some instances has much to do with the charge.

J. R. Graves was born in Vermont, April 10, 1820, and came to Tennessee July 3, 1845, and in the fall of 1846 he became associate editor with R. B. C. Howell on *The Baptist*, a paper then being published in Nashville. It was through this paper that he exerted his most powerful influence for nearly half a century. It has been charged that, "such a thing as making the reception of alien immersion a test of fellowship, was never known until about sixty years ago, when it was brought into Tennessee by J. R. Graves and imported from Tennessee into Kentucky."

The utter groundlessness of this statement has already been seen in the foregoing pages and will be overwhelmingly disproved in the pages to follow. All true Baptists of Tennessee delight to honor the

memory of J. R. Graves. But neither he nor they ever saw the day that they would tolerate new things much less originate them. It was only a strenuous effort to perpetuate the old and time-honored doctrines and practices of the Baptists, such as the rejection of pulpit affiliation and alien immersion.

The coming of Baptists to Tennessee was mainly from Virginia and North Carolina. By reference to the chapters on these States, it will be seen what manner of Baptists they were. Their history in this State begins with the latter part of the eighteenth century. The history of East Tennessee is largely told in the history of Virginia and North Carolina. So we will confine this chapter mainly to Middle and West Tennessee.

The coming of Baptists into Middle Tennessee dates back to 1786. The first Association (Mero District) was constituted ten years later. This, however, was of short duration. The oldest Association of permanent duration was the Cumberland constituted in 1803. These Baptists were strict constructionists, and would tolerate nothing that was irregular. We have before us the Confessions of Faith of some of the Old Associations which I will here give. The Red River Association (Middle Tennessee), constituted 1806, from Cumberland:

Art. 12. "We believe that no ministers have a right to the administration of the ordinances only such as are regularly baptized, called, and come under the imposition of hands by the presbytery." Hardy-Wallace Debate, p. 180.

The Concord Association is the oldest Missionary Association in Middle Tennessee, being constituted in 1810. This was ten years before J. R. Graves was born, and I may say that this is the Association to which J. R. Graves belonged in after years while he was located at Nashville. Here is one of the articles

in their Confession of Faith upon which they were constituted in 1810:

Article 10. "We believe that ministers have no right to administer the ordinances, only such as are regularly baptized and come under the imposition of hands by the presbytery." Bond's Hist. Concord Association, p. 14.

Salem Association, Middle Tennessee, was constituted in 1822. Here is what their Confession of Faith says:

Art. 10. "We believe that no minister has a right to administer the ordinances only such as are regularly baptized and come under the imposition of hands by a presbytery." Hist Middle Tenn. Bap., p 14.

The Enon Association, constituted 1850, adopted the same Confession, in fact practically all the old churches and Associations of Middle Tennessee adopted this or a similar Confession of Faith.

That the reader may further see how these Baptists stood on this question, we quote the following preamble and resolution offered by Elder John Bond, and passed by Concord Association in 1840:

"*Whereas*, Certain causes operated to influence this Association several years ago to adopt an order recommending the churches composing it to reject members of the churches then denominated Separates, who might apply for membership with us; and whereas, these causes have now ceased to exist; therefore,

"*Resolved*, That we do hereby rescind said order, and recommend to the churches to exercise their discretion in the premises as occasion may require."

The Salem took like action. The explanation of this is, that the Separate Baptists in the division of 1827 had among them some who were under the influence of Alexander Campbell's teaching and these old Associations drew the line of fellowship against them until they would rid themselves of this trouble. As

soon as they had time to settle themselves they did "shove those infatuated with Campbellism to the woods" and hence the above action on the part of these Associations.

Again: In 1844 Salem Association passed the following:

"Whereas, The Freedom Association (of Kentucky) has proposed a correspondence with us; resolved, therefore, that we send a friendly letter and delegates to inform them that we are willing to correspond with them, provided they will correct the error of one of their churches for receiving members into their fellowship who were immersed by unauthorized administrators." For all the above see the minutes.

Freedom Association did correct the trouble. See Spencer's Hist. Ky. Bap., Vol. 2, p. 559.

All the above occurred long before the coming of J. R. Graves to Tennessee.

In the minutes of Salem Association for 1850 we find the following:

"Resolved, That the churches be advised to receive none but those who have been *baptized* on a profession of their faith in Christ, by a legal administrator; and that we esteem legal only such as act under the authority of the regular Baptist church as organized after the model of the gospel."

Again; In 1854 the following was passed:

"Resolved, That it is inconsistent for Baptists to recognize Pedit-baptist preachers as gospel ministers, denying as we do the legality of their official acts, by inviting them to occupy our pulpits or preaching with them."

We turn now to West Tennessee. The Baptists of this section in the main came from Middle Tennessee. But that the reader may see how they stand, we will quote the Confession of two of their oldest Associa-

tions. The Western District Association, constituted 1823:

Art. XI. "We believe that no minister has the right to administer the ordinances, only such as are regularly baptized and come under the imposition of the hands of a presbytery." Edgar's Church Hist., p. 7.

Indian Creek Association, constituted early in last century:

Art. XII. "That none but such as have been baptized by a regularly ordained Baptist minister, have a right to church membership or communion." (See *The Baptist* for Dec. 12, 1846.)

Obion Association (Tennessee and Kentucky), constituted 1828:

Art. XI. "We believe that no minister has a right to the administration of ordinances, only such as are regenerated and born again, regularly baptized, specially called of God to the work of the ministry, and come under the imposition of the hands of a presbytery." Edgar's Church Hist., p. 26.

In their minutes of 1829 they say: "We are willing to receive a correspondence from any of our sister Associations, upon the principle on which we were constituted." Again in 1830 and 1834 they make this matter a test of fellowship.

The following editorial is taken from *The Baptist* of 1888:

"Rev. J. H. Grime, of Shop Springs, Tenn., has recently baptized a church. They belonged to the 'Christian Baptists' (?) but after hearing Bro. Grime preach a week they agreed by vote to accept baptism and become Baptists right. Among them were two preachers who went down into the water singing, 'Am I a Soldier,' and came up singing, 'How Happy Are they Who Their Saviour Obey.' Who were they, Bro. Grime, Campbellites?"

The above refers to Boiling Springs church, Putnam

county, Tenn. They were similar to the Free Will Baptists. The preachers baptized were J. D. and Samuel Howell. They are today prominent ministers of that section.

We will conclude this chapter with a statement from the Southern Baptist Review:

“The grandfather of Dr. Wm. Whitsitt, of the Louisville Theological Seminary, who died at an advanced age, left an able paper with me upon this question (alien immersion), which he prepared the last year of his life. His eighth objection is:

“We object to receive the baptism of Pedo-baptists, because we think it a *dangerous innovation*. We have no recollection that the history of the Baptists furnishes an example of the kind, and we are well assured that the common sense and piety of the Baptists were as strong one hundred years ago as they are now. This question we have before us must be a new-comer. We hope it will not be very obtrusive. . . . We say again, we think this a *dangerous innovation*.” South-Bapt. Rev., vol 5, p. 388 and Old Landmarkism, p. 213.

There was no man in Tennessee better prepared to speak on this question than Elder James Whitsitt. Some one has said, that his history was largely the history of the Baptists of the Cumberland Valley. He was considered the Historian of the early Baptists of Tennessee and wrote many historical sketches. He wrote the above in 1848, doubtless, or early in 1849, as he died early in the spring of that year. He says at that time, that the question was a “new-comer.” This is conclusive evidence that the practice of receiving alien immersion is of recent date.

CHAPTER XI.

Kentucky Baptists.

✓ Kentucky has of late years been something of a battle ground on this and kindred questions. Many rash statements have been indulged in. It has been called "proscription"⁷ to make regular Baptist baptism a test of fellowship and orthodoxy in a Baptist church. That such was not a product of Kentucky, but was imported from Tennessee about sixty years ago, before which time it was not known in Kentucky. That prior to that time, the Baptists of Kentucky held that the reception of alien immersion should be no bar to fellowship and that probably the prevailing sentiment favored the reception of alien immersion. That "the question did not come before Associations, but was discussed and settled in the churches." No authorities or recorded instances are cited to make good the above statements. I shall give all I am able to find on both sides and the reader can judge for himself where the proof lies.

✓ The older Associations of Upper and Central Kentucky adopted the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, which has already been extensively discussed. In the Southern and Western part they adopted an abridged Confession, embracing the same doctrines of the Philadelphia Confession, but in a much shorter form. The Little River Association was constituted in 1813 and adopted a Confession which has this article:

"We believe that no ministers have a right to the

administration of the ordinances, only such as are regularly baptized, called, and come under the imposition of hands by the presbytery."

Such were the Articles of Faith of West Kentucky Baptists.

Now, if the reader will go with us, we will look into the practice of Kentucky Baptists as they applied these principles.

Elkhorn, the oldest Association in the State, constituted in 1785, has this to say: In 1802 a query from South Elkhorn: "What constitutes valid baptism? Answer: The administrator ought to have been baptized himself by immersion, legally called to preach the gospel (and), ordained as the Scriptures dictate; and the candidate for baptism should make a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, and be baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, by dipping the whole body in water." Spencer's History of Kentucky Baptists, Vol. 2, p. 16.

This was reaffirmed in 1822. Ibid, p. 19.

Salem is the second oldest Association in the State, constituted a little later in the same year (1785) of Elkhorn, and includes the two oldest churches in the State. In 1797 this old Association passed the following:

"The Association advises the churches to discountenance Ruben Smith from either preaching or administering the ordinances among them, unless he unite himself with some church. This Elder Smith had been a member of a small church called Strode's Creek, Clark county. The church had been dissolved. He had moved to what is now Spencer county, and had failed to unite with any church." Here was a regular Baptist preacher (presumably holding a church letter, as that is the way churches dissolve) denied the privilege of administering the ordinances and preaching as well, because he would not file his

membership in the church where he lived. Was this a test of fellowship? See Spencer's Hist., Vol. 2, p. 49.

From the same Association in 1812, in answer to a query from Little Union church, they say:

"We believe each church is the most proper tribunal to determine the qualifications of her members, and that baptism is not rightly administered by any one except a regularly ordained minister." Ibid., p. 53.

Tate's Creek Association was constituted in 1793. In 1801 they passed the following:

"Query: Is an immersion performed by a Pedobaptist Scriptural? Answer: No." Spencer's History, Vol. 2, p. 91

North District Association was constituted in 1802, and in 1830 she put forth the following declaration:

"*Mode of Baptism.* The administrator, an ordained preacher, and the person to be baptized standing in the water of suitable depth, the minister, in an audible voice, pronounces the baptismal words; then lays the person to be baptized backwards into the water, until the body is covered, or overwhelmed with water, then raising the person to his or her feet." Spencer's Hist., Vol. 2, p. 124.

The North Bend Association, was constituted in 1803 and in 1822 we have the following:

"Query, from Licking (church): Whether that is gospel baptism which is not administered by an ordained Baptist minister, to a believer, by immersion?

"Answer: We believe that baptism, only a gospel one, which is received by immersion on a profession of faith, and administered by one who has been so baptized himself, believing that to be the only Scriptural mode, and duly authorized to administer that ordinance." Ibid, pp. 144, 145.

The Long Run Association was constituted in 1803,

and in 1824 the following query from Union Springs (church):

“Is it consistent with gospel order for any church, which is a member of this Association to invite and permit a preacher to administer the ordinances to them, who is not in union with us, and denies the doctrines on which we are constituted? The Association simply answered, “No.” Spencer’s History, Vol 2, p. 163.

Russell’s Creek Association was constituted in 1804, and in 1871 they passed the following:

“*Resolved*, That the Association does not consider any person baptized unless he has been immersed in water, in the name of the Trinity, by the authority of a regularly organized Baptist church.” Ibid, p. 203.

Stockton’s Valley Association was constituted in 1805, and in the minutes of 1806 we find the following:

“If a person has been baptized by a minister in disorder, have we any right to receive such person, on such baptism? No.” Ibid, p. 213.

Again: “Query from Casey’s Fork church: What shall be done with persons suing for fellowship with us, upon the baptism of other denominations, and not complying with the order of the Baptists? Answer: We advise that such persons should be baptized in an orderly manner, agreeable to the order of the Baptist church.” p. 215.

This last action was taken in 1816, A. D. And in 1874, “It was decided that baptism is valid only when the subject is a believer, the administrator one authorized by a Scriptural church, the element water, the formula that given in the commission, and the action immersion.” p. 218.

Gasper River Association was constituted in 1812, and at the same meeting at which it was constituted the following query and answer is found:

“Shall members baptized by a minister in disorder be received as regular members in orderly churches?

“Answer: We think not.” Spencer’s Hist., Vol. 2, p. 253.

Little River Association was constituted in 1813, and in 1818 they gave out the following:

“Query from Salem church: What shall be done in the reception of a member dismissed from a church not in our faith and order, but he having faith in his baptism?

“Answer: We advise the church to receive him on a profession of his faith in Christ, and baptize him agreeably to our order.” Spencer’s Hist., Vol. 2, p. 270.

Franklin Association was constituted in 1815, and in 1830 they passed the following:

“We wish it to be distinctly understood that all persons aiming to prostrate our constitutions and the union by declaiming against creeds or by sapping and ruining the pillars of our constitutions, by innovations on our faith, customs, and usages, ought to find no place in our pulpits, or at our communion tables. Our members should plainly understand that by approaching any table set by those people (Campbellites) to commune they would thereby forfeit the fellowship of all Regular or United Baptist churches.” Ibid, p. 292.

South Concord Association was constituted in 1825, and in 1860 “it counseled the churches not to receive Pedo-baptist immersions.” Ibid, p. 391.

Sulphur Fork Association was constituted in 1826, and “In 1858 the subject of receiving alien baptism was taken up, and a resolution was adopted requesting all the churches to take the matter under consideration, and report their conclusion to the next Association. The following year a somewhat lengthy and very able report, written by B. T. Taylor, advising the

rejection of all alien baptisms was adopted by the Association. The general practice of the churches has been in accord with this report." Spencer's Hist., p. 407.

West Union Association was constituted in 1834, and "In 1846 the subject of alien baptism was brought before the body. The churches were advised to receive no applicants for membership, except they had been legally baptized by a Baptist minister."

A new church at Blandville petitioned for membership in the Association in 1851. It was ascertained that the young church had received into its membership a Campbellite woman, without baptizing her. The church was received into the body, only on her acknowledging that she had unintentionally departed from Baptist principles, and promising not to repeat the unlawful act. The following resolution was also adopted:

"*Resolved*, That if any of the churches of this Association shall persist in such practice, it will become the unpleasant duty of this Association to withdraw from such churches. This resolution was re-adopted in 1858." See Hist. Ky. Bap., Vol. 2, p. 477.

By reference to page 474 it will be seen that this Association made it a test of fellowship, in 1844, for one of her churches to allow a member of a different denomination to commune at her table for a single time, much less the reception into permanent communion.

Little Bethel Association was constituted in 1836, and in their proceedings for 1854 we have this:

"The subject of alien baptism was brought before the body in 1854 by a query from Liberty church. The question was answered as follows: 'We advise the churches in our Association not to receive any into their communion, who shall not have been baptized

by a regularly ordained Baptist minister." Ky. Bap. Hist., Vol. 2, p. 492.

Liberty Association was constituted in 1840, and in 1867 we have the following:

"Whereas, Some Baptist churches have recognized the validity of Pedo-baptist and Campbellite immersions by receiving members from those congregations without re-immersing them.

"Therefore, Resolved, That we advise and counsel our brethren of Liberty Association that they abstain from this error, and that they fail not to enter their protest against the recognition of such immersions." See Hist. Ky. Bap., by Spencer, Vol. 2, p. 522.

Greenup Association was constituted in 1841, and in 1880 they passed the following:

"Resolved, That we will not correspond with other Associations who will receive alien immersions." Ibid, p. 547.

Freedom Association was constituted in 1843 and in 1845 we find "them advising the churches 'that they had better not receive members from other denominations without administering baptism.'" Hist. Ky. Bap., Vol. 2, p. 559.

North Concord Association was constituted in 1843 and "In 1873 the body expressed its sentiments on the subject of alien baptism as follows:

"Resolved, That we will not receive, nor fellowship churches that do receive members from other denominations without rebaptizing them." Spencer's Hist., Vol. 2, p. 564.

Daviess County Association was constituted in 1844, and in 1847 some churches asked the Association's advice on the reception of alien baptism, and here is their answer:

"Resolved, That while we disclaim all right to make laws for the government of the churches, we return as answer to Buck Creek and Station churches, that

we advise the churches not to receive members from Pedo-baptists or Reformers, upon their baptism."

Again, in 1871:

"*Resolved*, That this Association does not consider any person baptized, unless he has been immersed in water in the name of the Trinity by the authority of a regularly organized Baptist church."

"*Resolved*, That immersion in water, under authority of a gospel church, is essential to Christian baptism, and pre-requisite to membership in a gospel church; that no one has the right to recognize any organization, or body as a gospel church, the members of which have not these qualifications; that membership and fellowship in a gospel church are essential pre-requisites to a seat at the Lord's Table." Ibid, p. 566.

Lynn Camp Association was constituted in 1868, and at their first meeting adopted a written constitution, which has this article:

14th. "We, as an Association, will not receive, nor hold in our union, churches that receive members from other denominations without baptism." Hist. Ky. Bap., Vol. 2, p. 626.

Rockcastle Association was constituted in 1871. "In 1880, the following query from Mt. Pisgah church was presented to the Association: Is alien immersion valid baptism?"

Answer: "*Resolved*, That this Association advise her churches not to receive alien baptism." Hist. Ky. Bap., Vol. 2, p. 637.

We have given the united testimony of twenty-two Associations in Kentucky. These Associations are distributed over the entire State, and their testimony covers the entire history of the State upon this question.

In all our research we have been able to discover only two recorded instances of the réception of alien

immersion, in the State prior to the middle of last century, and in both these the Association disapproved it. From what we have been able to gather, this is the sum :

For more than fifty years after the coming of Baptists to the State, the denomination, in the State, stood as a unit in opposition to the reception of alien immersion, while in a few instances little uninformed churches would receive it. But these few irregularities were corrected by the prevailing sentiment of the brotherhood at large. No man of prominence in the State ever advocated alien immersion, so far as we have been able to learn, until near the middle of last century. The first one of this class to favor alien immersion was John L. Waller, and his first published statement, so far as I have seen, was in 1846; and it was not an advocacy of alien immersion, but a plea for liberty in the matter. In fact John L. Waller was *not an avowed alien immersionist*. He wrote three noted articles published in the *Western Baptist Review* of June, 1846; March, 1848; August, 1848. John L. Waller introduces the last one of these three articles thus: "Thus called upon (referring to a former article) with much reluctance we responded to the request, declaring at the same time that it was a question of great difficulty, and upon which, after a thorough examination of all the premises, we seriously distrusted the accuracy of our own conclusions." Vol. 3, p. 461.

Near the close of this same last article, he says:

"We cheerfully admit, as we have heretofore admitted, that this is a question surrounded on all sides with difficulties. While we view the reasoning of "Fidus" as worse than logical gossamer, still we know that much may be said against the side of the question which we incline to favor." Vol 3, p. 474.

The very most that can be said for J. L. Waller's

position is that he was "inclined" and that with "serious distrust" to regard alien immersion as valid baptism.

We take the following from the *Baptist World*, written by the editor (J. N. Prestridge), which explains itself:

"The *Baptist World* stated that Dr. S. H. Ford was at one time a successionist and an alien immersionist upon what it considered undoubted evidence, but we do not question Mrs. S. R. Ford the right to speak for her husband. She says that 'it is a mistake,' and gives an incident in the Central church, Memphis, where Dr. Ford joined with the church in declining to receive a member on alien immersion." *Baptist World*, Feb. 11, 1909.

During this time A. D. Sears came on the stage, who was an alien immersionist. And at times since, there have appeared those who would practice the reception of alien immersion, or apologize for those who did. I close with the following:

"A letter from Dr. T. T. Eaton, June 19, 1903, states the case for Drs. Boyce and Broadus: 'Dr. Boyce was very emphatic and pronounced against receiving alien immersions. He baptized Dr. Weaver, though the latter was pastor of Chestnut Street church, because he had been received on a Methodist immersion. A man who claimed to have been converted before receiving immersion from a Disciple preacher applied to be received on that immersion into the Broadway church, in Louisville, of which Dr. J. L. Burrows was then pastor, and of which Dr. J. P. Boyce was a member. Dr. Burrows was willing to receive the man. Dr. Boyce opposed it and succeeded in defeating it. Over and over again have I heard Dr. Boyce say alien immersions ought not to be received.

"I was the pastor of Dr. John A. Broadus from May 1, 1881, until he died, in 1895, nearly fourteen

years. We were as intimate as that relationship suggests. I had not been in Louisville long until I asked him squarely whether he would favor our church receiving a case of alien immersion, and he answered squarely, No. Again and again, we talked over that and kindred subjects, and over and over again he told me that alien immersions ought not to be received." Sumpter Discussion, p. 134.

CHAPTER XII.

General Observations.

We will begin this chapter with a statement from the Confession of Faith of the Baptists of Canada, dated 1820, A. D., as follows:

“We believe that baptism and the Lord’s Supper are to be administered by lawfully ordained Elders only.” Hassell’s Church Hist., p. 884.

This quotation is given that the reader may see how Baptists stood on this question in the extreme North, even across the line in Canada, in the early part of last century. But must say that a deflection has taken place in much of the North and some of the South and west, as well.

We take the following from the *Baptist and Reflector* of April 8, 1909:

“In a debating society connected with the Fifth Avenue Baptist church, New York—we hesitate as to whether we should put ‘Baptist’ in the name or not—the following resolution was recently discussed:

“‘Resolved, That a Baptist church should not refuse membership to any person on the ground of difference of belief and practice concerning an ordinance.’

“A number of persons took the affirmative side of the question, while Dr. T. O. Conant, of the *Examiner*—all honor to him—and a lady took the negative. It is gratifying to report that when the vote was taken there were only twenty-five in the affirmative and forty-two in the negative. It certainly seems strange,

though, that twenty-five persons could be found—presumably members of a Baptist church—who would take the position that a Baptist church should receive a candidate for membership simply on a profession of faith in Christ, with or without baptism. Are such persons Baptists? Is the church in which such a question is an open question a Baptist church? We do not dispute the right of any one to his opinion, but we do dispute the right of any one to repudiate baptism and still remain a member of a Baptist church.”

Editor Folk further states that R. P. Johnston, the former pastor, held that baptism was not essential to church membership. Just what part C. F. Aked, the present pastor, takes we do not know. He, however, dedicates the babies, whatever that may mean. On this question Editor E. E. Folk has this to say: “Dr. C. F. Aked, recently imported from Liverpool, England, to become pastor of the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church, New York City, seems to take pleasure in running his plowshare through the accepted Christian beliefs and Baptist customs of this country as he has done both in sermons and magazine articles.”

He also gives a lengthy quotation from the *Examiner*, whose editor, T. O. Conant, is a member of said church, and in which the dangers and fallacies of said performance are shown up in loyal fashion. See *Baptist and Reflector*, March 18, 1909.

We take the following from the *Western Recorder* of April 15, 1909:

“The Memorial Church of Christ, Baptist and Disciples, in parenthesis, has Prof. H. S. Willett, of Chicago University, Disciple, for pastor, and Rev. R. N. VanDoren, one of the editors of *The Standard*, a Baptist, as associate pastor. Is this a shrewd move to forestall criticism by ultra Baptists and Disciples in that organization? But after all, could an ultra Baptist be identified with such a body?”

It will be remembered that this body includes the Baptist and Campbellite churches, who went through the farce of uniting some time since.

Ever and anon, the question of the union of Baptists with some other denominations comes to the front and is discussed in our religious papers.

The *Baptist World*, for April 29, 1909, quotes the following from the *Examiner*, of New York:

“It is evident that there is a rapid growth of religious laxity throughout our land. The most urgent appeals are being made to Christian people, hitherto strongly conservative in their principles and practices, to abandon their strictness and unite with the liberal and ‘progressive’ ones in their views and activities. And many well-intentioned Christians, unwilling to be regarded as ‘narrow’ and ‘bigoted,’ and ‘extremely strict,’ have yielded to the clamor of the liberals, and are now far less strict in their beliefs and practices than they formerly were. That is called ‘progress,’ but it is a dangerous kind of progress.”

The *Examiner* certainly states an appalling truth. Why all this? Where did it originate? Where shall we look for the cause? It is easily answered. When a Baptist church surrenders her control and authority over the ordinances she opens the way for the incoming of all errors. If such a course is universally followed, it will in the end undenominationalize the Baptists and they will cease to be known as a separate people. This is both logically and historically true. History has abundantly demonstrated that the perpetuation of Baptists depends on their remaining an absolute, distinct and separate people. The reception of alien immersion is the entering wedge to their dissolution, and if universally adopted would certainly bring it about. It is the Pandora’s Box which would turn loose upon our denomination a flood of untold evils.

Allow some suggestions before closing. Taking all the Confessions of Faith which we have examined, both of Associations and churches, we do not call to mind a single one, prior to the middle of the last century, when the New Hampshire Confession was put forth, but what in some way qualifies the administrator of baptism. This is not true of the New Hampshire Confession of Faith. It does not say one word about the qualifications of the administrator. This is the Confession found in most all our church manuals, including Pendleton's Church Manual. This is the Confession being adopted by most of our churches, especially in the South.

Knowing how J. M. Pendleton stood on this question, that he has been dubbed by some as the father of Landmarkism, the churches and ministers take it for granted that he would not incorporate a Confession in his manual that was in any way lacking on this point, and then, not dreaming that it will ever be taken advantage of they simply adopt it as their own. The recent discussions upon this question, however, are enough to convince the most skeptical that the future historian will take advantage of this, and parade this Confession as an evidence that the Baptists of these times were indifferent on this question. The suggestions are:

First—That when we adopt the New Hampshire Confession of Faith, that an article be added on the qualifications of the administrator of the ordinances.

Second—That we spread a resolution on our church books declaring our position on this question.

Third—That our Associations occasionally adopt a resolution declaring their position on this question.

The historian can fully appreciate the necessity of these things. Even if your church is already organized, it is not too late to add an article to your Confession on this point.

Our task is done. These pages now go to the reader. The work may seem one sided, but we can assure the reader that it is no more so than the records justify. We have incorporated every recorded instance of the reception of alien immersion that has come under our eye.

And now, hoping that in the near future we shall all see, eye to eye, and this question shall cease to any longer disturb our Baptist Zion, we bid you farewell, till we shall meet beyond the storm clouds of ecclesiastical disturbance.