

A
HISTORY
OF
OLD LANDMARKISM.

BY
LIVINGSTON T. MAYS.

BY FELLOW STUDENTS,

THE REV. *
* * * * * BYRON H. BENTON.
*

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PREFACE.

The historian's task is always difficult. It is especially so when he undertakes to write the history, not of a nation or of an individual, but of a system of philosophy or doctrine, for theories and faiths are not so tangible as the ordinary objects of historical research. If he enters a new field of enquiry his work is yet harder because, having none to guide him, he must explore unknown regions, frequently finding no reward. Still another burden is added if he treats of a controversial subject, for then * * * not only necessary for him to adduce facts but he must also bring forward * * * * * All these of course difficulties have been * * * with in * * * preparation of this history and it is hoped that an appreciation of their magnitude will cause a charitable view to be taken of the following pages.

TO

The vast number of quotations in this thesis may at first excite surprise, but nearly all of them are gleaned from documents contemporary with the events of which they speak and are MY FELLOW - STUDENT, more from the inside, which is far better than the description of an outsider who could scarcely convey himself into an atmosphere of half a century ago. I hope that this sketch will appeal even, at least, to THE REVEREND BYRON H. DEMENT, who are on several questions which now divide Southern Baptists.

Louisville, Kentucky, March 21st * * * * *

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P R E F A C E .

The historian's task is always difficult. It is especially so when he undertakes to write the history, not of a nation or of an individual, but of a system of philosophy or doctrine, for theories and faiths are not so tangible as the ordinary subjects of historical research. If he enters a new field of enquiry his work is yet harder because, having none to guide him, he must explore unknown regions, frequently finding no reward. Still another burden is added if he treats of a controversial subject, for then it is not only necessary for him to adduce facts but he must also bring forward documentary proof of each statement. All three of these difficulties have been met with in the preparation of this history and it is hoped that an appreciation of their magnitude will cause a charitable view to be taken of the following pages.

The vast number of quotations in this thesis may at first excite surprise, but nearly all of them are gleaned from documents contemporary with the events of which they speak and are useful in giving a picture from the inside, which is far better than the description of an outsider who could scarcely convey himself into an atmosphere of half a century ago. I hope that this sketch will cause some, at least, who differ among themselves to see eye to eye on several questions which now divide Southern Baptists.

Louisville, Kentucky, March 31st, 1900.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N .

If the churches which our Saviour and His apostles instituted had continued to practice and teach all the things "whatsoever" He "commanded" them, there could be no such thing as a history of doctrines. But even God's elect are so prone to err that we find them divided in faith from the days of Christ until now. Our Lord Himself, while in the world, had to guard His people lest Pharise^aeism should enter among them, and immediately after His ascension the churches were shaken to their very foundations by the assaults of Judaism. Before they had recovered from this attack, Docetic Gnosticism had crept into many congregations. It seemed for a while that the refining power of persecution would purify God's people but even this gave rise to an objectional^{ble} form of Chiliasm. When persecution ceased the churches rapidly declined from the teachings of the New Testament and many of them became the nucleus of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Others kept a purer doctrine; yet for many centuries history speaks of none except the Catholics with any certain and distinct voice.

In the seventeenth century we find our Baptist forefathers in England earnestly discussing the question of church succession, seeming to be about equally divided on the subject. About this time many Arminian sentiments found entrance into the Baptist churches, which were not dispelled without great effort. None of these differences caused a direct and lasting division in the denomination. The next controversy was over the question of missions and since it affected men's greed as well as their theological beliefs the lines were very distinctly drawn and division ensued. The "reformation" of Alexander Campbell made great inroads on our churches, yet his movement should not be considered as a division of the Baptists but as a separate enterprise.

So when the Baptist churches of the South became engaged in a violent controversy in the middle of the nineteenth century it was no new experience to them, but rather history repeating itself. This disposition to controversy in our denomination from time immemorial may be accounted for by the existence of three principles in every normal Baptist--- human nature, individual liberty in matters of faith, love of the truth. The wrangling tendency is to be deplored, yet fear of strife should lead no one to give up the truth. Athanasius stood against the world and saw it filled with dissension when he could have made peace by yielding; but he remained firm for the divinity of Christ, and conquered. There is none to say that he should have yielded for the sake of peace. Luther brought about the Reformation by agitation and controversy, and most leaders of God's people have had to fight their way out of the darkness into the light. It is not then an evil spirit but God ^{who} which raises up men to resist the encroachments of error and to restore true doctrines when they have been forgotten.

The landmark controversy in comparison with others which the Baptist denomination has experienced did not include such vital issues as some, yet it was carried on with most intense zeal and involved nearly all Southern Baptists to such an extent that at one time a division of the denomination seemed imminent. It is remarkable that for more than fifty years its issues have been discussed with more or less earnestness without any decisive stand, in regard to it, being taken by the denomination as a whole. Some of the questions involved bid fair to remain another half of a century, if not as long as there are Baptists.

Recently, interest has been awakened in landmarkism by the Whitsitt controversy which has given rise to discussion of various aspects of the doctrine. The fact that two prominent Baptists are now preparing biographies of Dr. J. R. Graves is evidence of wide interest in the question.

CHAPTER I.

DEFINITION OF OLD LANDMARKISM.

The term "Landmarkism" has a very uncertain meaning to many, even of the most intelligent Baptists, and it is difficult indeed to get a satisfactory definition of it, for those who speak most confidently on the subject differ among themselves. It is necessary, however, to decide what landmarkism is before we write a history of it. Hence, we shall examine the definitions of several who are most capable of knowing.

Dr. T. T. Eaton says: "Then, (twenty years ago), a Landmarker was one who believed that Pedo-baptist ministers should not be invited to occupy Baptist pulpits. Today a Landmarker is one who rejects alien immersion and believes that Baptists have existed since the days of John the Baptist."*

Dr. J. B. Gambrell says: "The essence of landmarkism is that the gospel ministry is an institution of a gospel church, and that all authority for the spread of the gospel is vested in the churches as executives of Christ."§

Dr. B. H. Carroll says: "Old Landmarkism refers to pulpit affiliation; its author's position being that Baptist preachers should not receive ministers of other denominations into our pulpits nor go into theirs in such a way as to give quasi acknowledgement to their ministerial office."**

These quotations speak of landmarkism in its narrowest sense as first propagated in J. M. Pendleton's tract, entitled, "An Old Landmark Re-set", in which he says: "Is there any authority to preach which does not come through a church and if Pedo-baptist ministers are not in Christian churches have they any right to preach?" §§ On this premise he proceeds to show that Baptists should not

* "Western Recorder"- May 11, 1899. ✓
§ "The Baptist Standard," Texas, June 29, 1899. ✓
** MSS. Letter, Oct. 26, 1899. ✓
§§ "An Old Landmark Re-set" - p.10.

practice pulpit affiliation with them lest they should endorse them as gospel preachers and their churches as churches of Christ. It was not long after this tract was written until a number of other doctrines clustered around this one as corollaries to it and soon became a part of it. The term "Methodism" once meant a movement toward stricter and more spiritual life in the Episcopal Church, but no one would say that this is all that Methodism means today. Neither should it be said that the matter of pulpit affiliation is all there is to the landmark question. Hence, the following definitions of eminent men, including J. R. Graves himself, give a better idea of what the expression meant after the landmark movement had developed:

The eminent historian, Dr. A. H. Newman, says: "The distinguishing features of the Old Landmark system are the zealous advocacy of Baptist apostolic succession, insistence on the necessity of a properly authorized administrator of baptism to the validity of the ordinance and consequent refusal to recognize as valid, baptism administered by a Pedo-baptist, and refusal to recognize Pedo-baptist ministers as preachers of the gospel."*

Dr. B. F. Riley, in his history of the Baptists in the Southern States, gives a similar definition, except that he adds that Old Landmarkism involves a "denial that Pedo-baptist organizations are churches," and afterwards included "non-intercommunion".

We give two other definitions, one by Dr. Geo. A. Lofton who knew the leaders in the controversy and was in the midst of it for a time, the other by Dr. J. R. Graves, the real author of the Old Landmark movement. §

* History of the Baptists ^{Chas. in} of the United States, (vol. II), p. 495.

§ Dr. Graves propagated Old Landmarkism years before Pendleton wrote his tract. See Chapter IV.

Dr. Lofton says that Dr. Pendleton's tract was "an argument against pulpit affiliation upon the ground of the unscriptural order, office and ordinances of the Pedo-baptist churches and meant among Baptists no alien pulpit, no alien immersion, no alien communion, no alien ordination. Dr. Pendleton based his argument solely on the Scriptural position of the Baptists versus the anti-scriptural position of the Pedo-baptists. Early in the movement Dr. Graves began to agitate the question of church succession which became an adjunct to the landmark position and was intended to imply, according to Matthew 16:18 confirmed by history, an orderly, orthodox, unbroken succession of Baptist churches from Christ until now."*

Better than any of these definitions is that of J. R. Graves which we give fully because the question of the meaning of Landmarkism is the most disputed point in this history. He says, "Many believe that simple opposition to inviting Pedo-baptists into our pulpits is the whole of it, while the title of the tract (Dr. Pendleton's) indicates that that was only one of the landmarks of our fathers." § The following is a list of the ten landmarks, as given by him:

- "1. As Baptists we are to stand for the supreme authority of the New Testament as our only rule of faith and practice.
- "2. The ordinances of Christ, as He enjoined them.
- "3. A spiritual and regenerated church.
- "4. To protest and to use all our influence against the recognition on the part of Baptists of human societies as scriptural churches by affiliation, ministerial or ecclesiastical, or an alliance or cooperation that is susceptible of being construed . . . into a recognition of their ecclesiastical or ministerial equality with Baptist churches.

* MSS. Letter, Nov. 1899. ✓

§ "Old Landmarkism," p.xiii.

"5. To preserve and perpetuate the doctrine of the divine origin and sanctity of the churches of Christ and the unbroken continuity of Christ's kingdom (churches) from the days of John the Baptist until now, according to the words of Christ.

"6. To perpetuate the divine, inalienable, and sole prerogative of a Christian church, to preach the gospel of the Son of God, to select and ordain her own officers, to control absolutely her own ordinances.

"7. To preserve and perpetuate the scriptural design of baptism and its validity and recognition only when scripturally administered by a gospel church.

"8. To preserve and perpetuate the true design and symbols of the Lord's Supper as a local church ordinance,

"9. To preserve and perpetuate the doctrine of a divinely called and scripturally qualified and ordained ministry.

"10. To preserve and perpetuate the primitive fealty and faithfulness to the truth."

He adds: "Not the belief and advocacy of one or two of these principles, but the cordial reception of all of them constitutes a full, Old Landmark Baptist."* Of the above, 4,5, 6, 7, and 8 are distinctively Landmark doctrines, with the possible exception of 7.

A. C. Dayton, in "Theodosia Ernest," 1857, agrees with the ideas of J. R. Graves.

A comparison of these definitions shows a practical unanimity as to the meaning of Old Landmarkism. The first two do not go as far as the others but they evidently viewed it only as set forth in Pendleton's tract and not as it afterward appeared. Several editions of the tract contained appendices by Dr. Graves, setting forth peculiarities other than non-pulpit-affiliation.

* "Old Landmarkism", p.139 ff.

Dr. Pendleton based all his argument on the fact that Pedo-baptist societies were not in accord with New Testament teachings. Graves, Dayton, Orchard, Ray, and others, while using Pendleton's argument, insisted especially on church continuity, proved by interpreting Matthew 16:18 as a figure of speech, the word "church" being used by synecdoche to signify the local church as an institution which should continue through all time. This interpretation was corroborated by historical inquiries. Hence, church succession became a part of Old Landmarkism and (their publications) teemed with articles on that subject.* Dr. Graves and his followers, feeling the inadequacy of the historical proof of succession, were led more and more to emphasize the importance of a scriptural promise of church continuity. This forced them to reject the ancient Baptist doctrine that there is a universal, invisible, spiritual church[§] in order that they might apply to the local church as an institution all the promises made in regard to the invisible church. Although the founders of Old Landmarkism did not adopt this peculiarity it eventually became a part of that system of doctrines. In truth, it is essential to its consistency and unity.

The rejection of alien immersion on the ground that the church administering the ordinance had no succession from the apostles is a landmark doctrine.** Hence, many Baptists think that if we give up the idea that we have succession we will have to endorse alien immersion and even practice open com-

* See "Tennessee Baptist" Oct.26, 1854; Jan.20,27; Feb.3; Mch.3; May 5; June 2, and June 9, 1855. Also, "Theodosia Ernest", vol.II, pp.97-104. Also, "Old Landmarkism", pp.25-121. Also, Orchard's History of the Baptists.

§ "Old Landmarkism", Chapter III, especially p.39. Also, "Theodosia Ernest," vol.II, pp.97ff.

**

"Had such a work as Orchard's History of the Baptists been put into his hands, Dr. *** would have seen where Baptists obtained a valid baptism."

--J. R. Graves, in "Tennessee Baptist" Mch.10, 1855.

munion. Those who are not landmarkers say that this is dangerous ground, for the vast difference of opinion as to the teaching of history and as to the interpretation of Matthew 16:18 makes it very unwise to base any doctrine or practice on the succession idea, which many Baptists have never accepted and others are relinquishing. Therefore, many object to alien immersion and open communion on other grounds.*

*
NOTE:- Some reject alien immersion on grounds of its inexpediency and irregularity, but others have a more serious objection to it. Baptists believe that baptism has no real efficacy in itself but is purely a symbol. Christ instituted it to teach certain truths. If it is administered in such a manner and in such an atmosphere as to prohibit it from setting forth these truths, it is not proper baptism for it has failed to fulfill the very object for which God instituted it. The Bible plainly teaches that this ordinance is intended to show the belief of the person baptized in a buried and risen Saviour; also that the candidate is dead to sin and alive to righteousness. We may add to this purification or cleansing, which some passages seem to teach.

Now it is evident from this definition of the purpose of baptism that alien immersion never fulfills the true design of the ordinance. Take for instance the case of a person immersed in a Methodist or Presbyterian church, both of which deny that baptism sets forth the burial and resurrection of Christ or the death to sin and resurrection to a life of righteousness on the part of the candidate, but claim that it only symbolizes purification. The immersion of this man has symbolized only one thing,--- purification, for this is the well-known teaching of these denominations in regard to baptism. Every beholder of the act who has been taught by them and not by Baptists sees no teaching of burial and resurrection here; although he does see a burial and resurrection he is taught that this signifies nothing and that the only symbolism is embraced in the element water and teaches only cleansing. Hence, two of the main objects of baptism are not attained by this act.

Then take the case of a person immersed into a Campbellite church. By this act he says to the world that he believes, not in Christ as a complete Saviour, but in the water as a helper in salvation. Again, he does not symbolize that he is dead to sin and alive to righteousness but claims that in this act the death to sin and the newness of life are consummated. Then he says that this water washes his sins away and does not simply typify his cleansing by the blood of Christ. Hence, we see that here, too, the symbolism of baptism is entirely missed. It is well to bear in mind that the sole object of baptism is to picture certain truths. If alien immersion fails to do this it fails in the very thing for which baptism was ordained.

That would not be the Lord's Supper which used wine and bread, yet denied that the wine typified the blood and the bread the body of Christ and claimed that the only object of the Supper was to yield obedience and devotion to the Lord. Such a Supper would miss the object for which God ordained it, i. e., to be a memorial of Christ's broken body and shed blood. Even so an immersion which outwardly conforms to the Scripture model, yet fails in its spirit to be a setting forth of a memorial of the burial and resurrection of Christ as well as a type of the burial and resurrection of the candidate is

Dr. Graves had an idea of the kingdom which was not shared by all of his associates and is not inseparable from Old Landmarkism; but it undoubtedly had an influence on that system of doctrine. He held that the visible kingdom was an institution composed of all the local Baptist churches existing on earth at any one time. It was denied that this idea was similar to the Roman Catholic idea of the church, i.e., that all of the Catholics of the world considered as a whole constitute the kingdom of God on earth. The only difference between the two theories, however, lies in the fact that Dr. Graves insisted on the independence of the local churches, which the Catholics denied, and called the sum total "the kingdom" instead of "the church." His idea of church succession also was similar to that of the Catholics and in many particulars he applied it as they did to the doctrine and practice of the churches. These facts have made the Landmark Baptists liable to the charge of Romanizing tendencies.

While nearly all Pedo-baptists have some of the marks of Rome, it has been the proud boast of Baptists that they have kept themselves pure from Catholicism. It is indeed true that our confessions of faith, as well as the majority of individuals in the denomination, have always been free from such tendencies. Yet in view of the above facts it must be admitted that some of the traditions of Rome have found lodgement in the minds of more than a few Baptists.

not valid baptism; it has failed in the prime object for which God ordained the ordinance.

As to restricted communion, if alien immersion is rejected, there is nothing to prevent Baptists from clinging to the Scripture example of confining the Supper to the baptized. But there are other considerations which have bearing on this question which are pointed out by Dr. E. C. Dargan in his "Ecclesiology" pages 378f: "The Supper is the highest privilege of church membership. Why then should it be given to those to whom church membership would be denied? Membership would be denied to any person claiming to be baptized, who did not first make a confession of faith before the church, satisfying the church that he was a true believer and had been regularly baptized and was now admitted by formal vote of the body itself. This is the essential point in the whole Baptist contention for restricted communion. Being a church ordinance it requires regular church membership. X

After this review of the subject the essential principles of landmarkism are easily understood, but in order that the features which distinguish landmark Baptists from regular Baptists may be readily grasped, the following table is incorporated in this chapter:

THE ATTITUDE

OF THE VARIOUS CLASSES OF BAPTISTS TO THE PECULIARITIES OF OLD LANDMARKISM.

Extreme Landmarkers	Moderate Landmarkers	Strict Baptists	Ultra-Liberals
Church continuity based on Matthew 16:18 and history.	Same as Extreme Landmarkers.	A sentiment not unfavorable to the acceptance of the idea that there have been Baptists in all ages, provided adequate scriptural or historical evidence can be produced.	Denial of Baptist church continuity in any form.
Denial of the universal, invisible, spiritual church.	Same as Extreme Landmarkers.	Belief in universal invisible, spiritual church.*	Same as the Strict Baptists.
Baptist local churches compose the kingdom of God and the bride of Christ, having succession from the apostles until now and being in accord with New Testament principles.‡	Baptist local churches are the only churches being in accord with the New Testament and having succession from the apostles.	Baptist local churches are in essential accord with the New Testament model, while other congregations of Christians vary to a greater or less extent from this model and in the strictest sense are not churches. But from the fact that they are assemblies of Christians, in the broadest sense they may be called churches, yet imperfect churches.	All evangelical religious bodies are churches.

* Dr. T. T. Eaton gives perhaps the clearest statement that we have of this disputed doctrine: "Since all the redeemed are 'called out' from the world we find the term applied to them collectively; e.g., 'On this rock I will build my church'(Matt.xvi.18); 'Christ is the head of the church;' 'as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it'(Eph.v.23,25). 'The church,'as the bride of Christ includes all who are saved,of all ages and lands."---"Faith of the Baptists",p.7. (Dr. Eaton has recently stated that he made the reference to Matt.xvi.18 not intentionally but "mechanically."

<p>Non-recognition of Pedo-baptist preachers as gospel ministers by pulpit affiliation or in any other way, on the principle that they are not baptized, do not preach a pure gospel and their ordinations are from churches without succession and not in accord with the New Testament. Also, a denial of their right to preach at all.</p>	<p>Practically the same as Extreme Landmarkers, except that pulpit affiliation is practiced in the most extreme cases.</p>	<p>A refusal to affiliate as a rule with Pedo-baptists on grounds of expediency alone, there being occasions when it is expedient.</p>	<p>Pedo-baptist preachers regarded as practically on an equal footing with Baptist preachers.</p>
<p>A rejection of alien immersion because it is administered by a church not in accord with the New Testament and having no succession from the apostolic churches.</p>	<p>Same as Extreme Landmarkers.</p>	<p>A rejection of alien immersion because it is not always believer's baptism and because the teaching of the administrator and the environment of the administration destroy to a large extent the God-ordained symbolism of baptism, and because it is inexpedient to recognize it, causing dissension, irregularity, etc.</p>	<p>Endorsement and acceptance of alien immersion.</p>
<p>Communion restricted to the members of the local Baptist church administering the ordinance i.e., non-intercommunion.*</p>	<p>Communion restricted to members of Baptist churches.</p>	<p>Communion restricted to members of Baptist churches.</p>	<p>Open communion.§</p>

* See "Intercommunion" (Graves).

§ See Note on page 49.

It is evident after this lengthy consideration of the subject that all the doctrines of Old Landmarkism may be traced to the extreme emphasis it puts on the importance of the local Baptist churches as the perpetuated institution of Christ, constituting His kingdom and being His bride.* To the anti-landmarker this is undue emphasis; to the landmarker it is only due emphasis; he says "let the bride of Christ be magnified!" The answer comes, "Let not the bride exalt herself but let Christ be magnified!"

* NOTE:- This is at the root of the strenuous opposition of landmarkers to the doctrine of the universal spiritual church for they wish to apply to the local churches all that the New Testament says of Christ's invisible church.

... that has been formed in the past. Thus, Luther's movement was called the Reformation. And when John Calvin and Alexander Campbell wished to propagate their peculiar views they each called their respective enterprises reformations and their followers reformers.

Reformers have ten followers where inventors have one. Hence, the propagators of Old Landmark doctrines were wise in calling them old and in searching the pages of history for proof of its antiquity. J. H. Pendleton's tract on this subject was purposely entitled, "An Old Landmark Re-vert" as a denial in advance that the doctrine was new. The first edition of the tract contained an appendix by Dr. Graves for the purpose of proving the antiquity of landmarkism. An increased number of pages on the same phase of the subject were added in subsequent editions, while "The Tennessee Baptist" and "Old Landmarkism" occupied scores of pages to it. The principal argument brought forward was the fact that Baptists in ancient times were so regarded and persecuted by others that it would be improbable that they would practice anything resembling affiliation with them. Consequently it was inferred that they were Landmarkers and this inference was stated as a positive and irrefutable fact.

In the first stages of Christianity there was only one denomination; hence, we have no opportunity of seeing the appearance of early Christians or seeing

CHAPTER II.

IS OLD LANDMARKISM OLD ?

Only the foolish accept things because they are new nor is it wise to accept things simply because they are old. Yet that which has stood the test of time is not rejected without proof of its worthlessness while the new is not accepted unless it brings with it evidence of its worth. Hence, the conservative majority of mankind give greater credence to the old than to the new. Therefore, it is nearly always the first task of a leader of a movement to establish a claim that his theory is old and his movement a reformation -- a reforming of something that has been formed in the past. Thus, Luther's movement was called the Reformation. And when John Calvin and Alexander Campbell wished to propagate their peculiar views they each called their respective enterprises reformations and their followers reformers.

Reformers have ten followers where inventors have one. Hence, the propagators of Old Landmark doctrines were wise in calling them old and in searching the pages of history for proof of ^{their} its antiquity. J. M. Pendleton's tract on this subject was purposely entitled, "An Old Landmark Re-set" as a denial in advance that the doctrine was new. The first edition of the tract contained an appendix by Dr. Graves for the purpose of proving the antiquity of landmarkism. An increased number of pages on the same phase of the subject were added to subsequent editions, while "The Tennessee Baptist" and "Old Landmarkism" devoted scores of pages to it. The principle^d argument brought forward was the fact that Baptists in ancient times were so regarded and persecuted by others that it would be improbable that they would practice pulpit affiliation with them. Consequently it was inferred that they were Landmarkers and this inference was stated as a positive and irrefutable fact.

In the first stages of Christianity there was only one denomination; hence, we have no opportunity of knowing the opinions of early Christians on pulpit

affiliation. But we find that they did not agree with Old Landmark Baptists in one important particular, for they believed that there was a universal, invisible spiritual church. This is made clear by the teaching of Christ and the apostles and the apostolic fathers. Christ said: "On this rock I will build my church"* (Matt.16:18); see Broadus, Gill, Dagg and all Baptist commentators in loco. Paul says: "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for it . . . that he might present the church to himself a glorious church"[§](Eph.5:25-27.) Again, "The general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven"^{**} (Heb.12:23.)

Ignatius, who lived before 150 A.D., wrote: "That he might set a standard for all ages through His resurrection to all His holy and faithful followers, whether among Jews or Gentiles, in the one body of His church."^{§§} (Epistle to the Smyrnaeans, I.2.) Again, "He is the door of our Father by which enter in Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the prophets and the apostles and the church."^{***} (Epistle to the Philadelphians, chap.IX.)

* Matt.16:18:- ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν

§ Eph.5:25-27:- ὁ χριστὸς ἡγάπησεν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ ἑαυτὸν παρέδωκεν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ ἑνδοξόν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, ἵνα παραστήσῃ

** Heb.12:23:- πανηγύρει καὶ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρωτοτόκων ἀπογεγραμμένων ἐν οὐρανοῖς

§§ Ep.to Smyrnaeans, I.2:- ἵνα ἀσῆ σύσσημον εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας διὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας καὶ πιστοὺς αὐτοῦ εἴτε ἐν Ἰουδαίῳ εἴτε ἐν ἔθνεσιν ἐν ἐνὶ σώματι τῆς ἐκκλησίας αὐτοῦ.

*** Ep. to Philadelphians, ch.IX:- αὐτὸς ὢν θύρα τοῦ πατρὸς δι' ἧς εἰσέρχονται Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ καὶ οἱ προφῆται καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι καὶ ἡ ἐκκλησία

Anastasius Sinaita says of Papias, who lived about 100 A.D., "Taking occasion from Papias of Hierapolis, the illustrious, a disciple of the apostles who leaned on the bosom of Christ, and Clemens and Pantaenus, the priest of the Alexandrians, and the wise Ammonius, the ancient and first expositors who agreed with each other, who understood the work of six days as referring to Christ and the whole church." *

The Didache, between 150 and 200 A.D., contains the following: "Remember, O Lord, thy church to deliver her from all evil and to perfect her in Thy love, and gather her together from the four winds, sanctified for Thy kingdom which thou didst prepare for her." §

The Shepherd of Hermas, written about the middle of the second century, says of the old woman seen in a vision: "It is the church . . . she was created first of all . . . and for her sake was the world made." **
Again, "The tower which you see being built is the church (literally, I am the church.)" §§

* λαβόντες τὰς ἀφοεμὰς ἐκ Παπίου τοῦ πάνυ τοῦ
Τεραπαλίτου τοῦ ἐν τῷ ἐπισηθίῳ φοιτήσαντος, καὶ
Κλήμεντος, Πανταίνου τῆς Ἀλεξανδρείων ἱερέως καὶ
Ἀμμωνίου σοφωτάτου τῶν ἀεκαίων καὶ πρώτων
συνώδων ἐξηγητῶν, εἰς κείτὸν καὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν
πᾶσαν τὴν ἐξαήμερον κοησάντων

§ Didache x.5:- μνήσθητι, Κύριε, τῆς ἐκκλησίας σου,
τοῦ εὐσαθεῖαι αὐτὴν ἀπὸ πάντος πονηροῦ καὶ
τελειῶσαι αὐτὴν ἐν τῇ ἀγαπῇ σου, καὶ συναζο
αὐτὴν ἀπὸ τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων, τὴν ἰ
ἀγιασθεῖσαν εἰς τὴν σὴν βασιλείαν ἣν
ἠτοίμασας αὐτῇ.

** Shepherd of Hermas chap. iv. (vision two:-) ἡ ἐκκλησία --- πάντω
πρώτη ἐκτίσθη ---, καὶ δια ταύτην
ὁ κόσμος κατητίσθη.

Shepherd of Hermas, chap. 3 of vision three:- ὁ μὲν πύργος ὃν
βλέπεις οἰκοδομούμενον, ἐγὼ εἰμι
ἡ ἐκκλησία.

From this period forward no body of Christians has denied the doctrine of the universal invisible church except the Catholics and Episcopalians.*

The first clear historical evidence of opposition to pulpit affiliation is the case of William Kiffin of whom Crosby says: "He joined himself to the church of Mr. John Spilsbury, but a difference arising about permitting persons to preach among them that had not been baptized by immersion, they parted by consent, yet kept good correspondence."[§] But this does not necessarily prove that he was a Landmarker for at that time in England some were called Baptists who did not practice immersion,** and it was therefore very necessary to insist on its importance. Few even of the most extremely liberal Baptists of today would be in favor of recognizing as a Baptist minister a preacher who had not been baptized; yet it was probably this very thing that Kiffin refused to do.

The Cathari, Paterines, Grecian Conventicles, Waldenses, Wickliffites, Lollards, Bohemian Anabaptists, etc. are claimed as Landmarkers. The proof however is all of an inferential nature. On the other hand, Renier^{§§} says (chapter vi.) of the Paterines: "The papal preachers of the Catholic church whom they invited into their secret assemblies, such as Arnold of Brescia and Claud of Turin, contributed to their increase." This statement is corroborated by Muratori and Dupin.

* See G.F. Hambleton's thesis, "Sketch of the Interpretation of 'church' in Matthew 16:18."

§ Vol. III. p. 4.

** See "The English Baptist Reformation" (Lofton) and "A Question in Baptist History" (Whitsitt.)

§§ Quoted by S.H. Ford.

Kurtz, in speaking of the Cathari, says: "Bernard (Catholic) prevailed (among them) most by the power of his love, and subsequently learned Dominicans had more effect with their preaching and disputations."*

Francowitz wrote: "The Grecian Conventicles were often addressed by those popular Catholic preachers whom they invited among them."§

Robinson, in his "Ecclesiastical Researches", says: "Huss was not a Baptist but as his sermons were full of what are called Anabaptistical errors Wickliffites and Waldenses became his admirers and followers."**

Wickliff never left the Catholic church; yet Walden calls him "the leader of the Anabaptist sect." §§

Kurtz speaks of Wickliff's influence over the Lollards;*** while Ford affirms that the Paulicians and Montanists received the grandson of Heraclius as a preacher of the gospel. §§§ He also says that the Bohemian Baptists invited Stephen to preach for them but rejected his proposition of church union on the ground of some specified errors held by him.

Dr. Waller, speaking of landmarkism, says that Baptists who were persecuted in the dark days of Popery and when Presbyterianism had the ascendancy in England, never taught such doctrine (as landmarkism.)****

* Church History, §108:div.2.

§ "Ancient Landmarks of the Gospel Church"(Ford), p.76.

** Page 481.

§§ "Ancient Landmarks of the Gospel Church", p.79.

*** Church History, §119: div.1.

§§§ "Ancient Landmarks of the Gospel Church" p.77 and 79.

**** "Western Recorder", Sept.20, 1854. ✓

At a meeting of over one hundred churches in London A.D.1689 the following question was put before the body, "Whether baptized believers are not at liberty to hear any sober, pious men of the Independent and Presbyterian persuasion, when they have no opportunity to attend on the preaching of the Word in their own assemblies or have no other to preach to them?" * Answered in the affirmative, reference being made to Acts 18:24 ff.

During this period the Baptists of England thoroughly discussed the question of church succession and baptismal succession. A few of them were somewhat similar to the Landmark Baptists of the present century. After due consideration however, they rejected the succession dogma as a characteristic of Rome and the Episcopacy.

In the Confession of the Seven Baptist Churches in London, A.D.1644, the validity of baptism is not dependent on succession. The testimony of John Spilsbury corroborates this, for in his treatise "Concerning the Lawful Subjects of Baptism", (1652) he says: "There is no succession under the New Testament but what is spiritual by faith in the Word of God." Lofton says that Smith, Helwys and Marten give similar testimony.

In the eighteenth century the same spirit prevailed and we find Robert Robinson, the most prominent scholar and leader of the Baptists of that period, saying: "Uninterrupted succession is a specious lure set by sophistry into which all parties have fallen and it hath happened to spiritual genealogists as it hath to others who have traced natural descents: both have wadded together twigs of any kind to fill remote chasms. This doctrine is necessary only to such churches as regulate their faith and practice by tradition and for their use it was first invented!" §

*

Ivimey's History of the English Baptists, p.494.

§

"Ecclesiastical Researches," (1792), p.475 f. ✓

We have now shown that landmark doctrines are not old in Europe. It remains for us to see if they are new in America. The line of demarcation between moderate landmarkers and strict Baptists is so uncertain that it is difficult to proceed with confidence in examining this question. Evidence which seems conclusive to one may be regarded as very deficient by another, especially if he is of opposite belief. For instance: in the back of Pendleton's famous tract J.R. Graves says* that the first Baptist Association formed in America was undoubtedly a landmark body, and quotes as proof the following question and answer which were before that body in 1734: "Whether we may accept and take a minister of a different persuasion at our appointed meetings? Answered in the negative, unless the church sees cause upon some particular occasion." The fact that the rule was suspended on particular occasions shows that it was not considered a matter of principle but merely a question of expediency. The most extreme anti-landmarkers do not practice pulpit affiliation as a rule but only when they see "cause ^{up} on some particular occasion."

Spencer H. Cone says, in 1845, that the First Baptist church of New York had rejected alien immersion for one hundred years and that in 1821 the New York Association recorded its opinion that Baptist churches should not receive alien immersion because it brought about uneasiness, inconvenience, disunion, etc., and because Pedo-baptist administrators are unknown in the Holy Scripture. § This seems to be landmarkism but the rejection of alien immersion is not exclusively a landmark doctrine, being so only when its rejection is based on certain principles. **

From the fact that Pedo-baptists before the days of Alexander Campbell seldom immersed any one, the alien immersion question rarely came before Baptist churches; consequently they did not all have well-defined ideas on the subject.

* "An Old Landmark Re-set", p.34.

§ Quoted in "Old Landmarkism", p.208.

** See Chapter I., p.8.

In the majority of cases, however, it seems that alien immersion was accepted. J. R. Graves quotes from Semple's History of the Virginia Baptists an account of the Ketocton Association of Virginia pronouncing Pedo-baptist immersion invalid and adds: "I have shown in what light the fathers of Virginia Baptists without exception treated Pedo-baptists and their immersions."* Yet Semple's History says on the very page from which he quotes: "Their proceeding on this occasion was more strict than that of any other Association. The question had been before most of the Associations and in every other instance they left it to the conscience of the party to be rebaptized or not."[§]

The Georgia Baptists decided likewise. ⁽³⁾ Even in Mississippi we find that the first persons baptized there were immersed by Richard Curtis, who was not a regularly ordained minister.** The baptism of Roger Williams was irregular and the regularity of the baptism of a large number of the first Baptists of New England is by no means a settled question. Notwithstanding these facts it is nevertheless true that the more strict churches in America have as a rule insisted on the necessity of a fully qualified administrator to the validity of the ordinance of baptism. It is a matter of dispute whether this always or even at any time involved adherence to landmark principles; yet it displays at least a tendency in that direction.

As to the question of pulpit affiliation much decisive evidence exists to show almost conclusively that few, if any, before the day of Pendleton and Graves took a decided stand against it. Instances of failures to invite Pedo-baptists

* "Old Landmarkism", pp.201-203. ✓

§ Page 391. ✓

** Riley's History of the Baptists in the Southern States, p.42.

to seats in associations etc. do not necessarily furnish proof to the contrary.*

Since this is a mooted point some substantial testimony is in order here. John Waller of Virginia is claimed as a landmark Baptist because he was cast into prison in 1774 for preaching Baptist doctrine.[§] But his grandson, the scholarly John L. Waller, D.D., who was born only seven years after the death of his grandfather, says in the "Western Recorder" (Sept. 20, 1854): "Nor did the Baptists of Virginia when persecuted in every way that ingenuity could invent or malice inflict, by Puritan and Episcopalian bigotry, assert these new (landmark) issues." Again, we find Dr. Henry Holcome^b served jointly the Baptist and Presbyterian pulpits at Savannah, Georgia, in 1799. ** Moreover, Backus' History of the Baptists of New England, chapter IX, gives several instances of Pede-baptist preachers being invited into Baptist pulpits, yet records no opposition to it.

Of course, during the period of persecution there was little opportunity for Baptists to exchange fraternal courtesies with others; but as soon as it ceased they frequently affiliated with Methodists especially and took part in the revivals of Wesley and Whitfield with great enthusiasm. Indeed, it is to be doubted whether any man of their own denomination ever influenced Baptists as much as Whitfield, a Pede-baptist.^{§§} For he was the leader of a great revival movement in which the doctrines of Calvinism were prominent and multitudes of Baptists who were tinctured with Arminianism and in a low spiritual condition were through his influence brought to the truth and filled with new zeal.

* This was frequently done for fear that things said in the Association might seem discourteous to Pede-baptists and cause needless friction; or because their presence might deter free expression of opinion on the part of Baptists.

§ A large part of the effort to prove the antiquity of old landmarkism consists in inferring that every Baptist persecuted by Pede-baptists would be so incensed toward them that it would be impossible for him to treat them with fraternal courtesy.

** Riley's History of Southern Baptists, p.143.

§§ Benedict's History of the Baptists, (1813), p.274 f.

One of the strongest evidences against the antiquity of landmarkism is the fact that the peculiar doctrine of the church which was so essential to the system was new among Baptists. Their denial of the universal, invisible, spiritual church and their peculiar interpretation of Matthew 16:18 are not found in any Baptist Confessions of Faith. The greatest commentators of the denomination, Gill, Wayland, Jeter, Shaver, Waller, Manly, Boyce, Broadus, Dagg and all others are against them. This goes far to prove that old-fashioned Baptists were not landmarkers.

It was freely admitted by J. R. Graves that for a score or more of years before his agitation of the subject landmark principles were not observed. His effort to prove that they were widely held prior to that time was not a success. While one of the grounds upon which he urged the acceptance of his views was their antiquity one of the principal arguments brought against them was their newness. Some of the best scholars of the denomination ridiculed the idea of their antiquity.

After all of these facts have been considered it is reasonably certain that old landmarkism was not old in the days of Pendleton and Graves.

CHAPTER III.

THE ORIGIN OF OLD LANDMARKISM.

All movements exist in the thoughts of one or more men before they have place in the world's history. The true story, however, of any enterprise must begin not in the mind of its author but in the causes which led him to conceive certain ideas and develop them into living issues. The world will never know what it has lost of weal or woe by the authors of great schemes being prevented by the lack of courage or the hand of death from launching their reformations or innovations into its whirlpool of events.

It is not difficult to discover the causes which led its propagators to conceive of the landmark doctrine, neither is it hard to decide whether they had the opportunity and courage to disseminate their views.

Most Baptists of all ages have as a rule held to restricted communion. They have given as their principal reason for it the sound argument that since the New Testament gives examples of baptized people and no others partaking of the Lord's Supper, and since the general trend of its teaching is to the end that only the baptized have a right to partake of it, therefore unimmersed people are not properly qualified to approach the Lord's table. This reason was perfectly satisfactory and seemed to them to be incontrovertible. But during the first half of the nineteenth century events ^{occurred} transpired which seemed to undermine this breastwork of the Baptists. For the discussion of the scripturalness of immersion led an increasing number of Pedo-baptists to practice it. In addition to this the movement of Alexander Campbell produced large numbers of immersed people who were not Baptists. The question then arose, if Baptists practice restricted communion because they claim that only properly baptized persons are qualified to partake of the Lord's Supper, why do they refuse to commune with immersed Pedo-baptists? To many this was a hard question. Pedo-baptists, with ill-concealed joy, said that it showed the truth of their old contention that Baptists held to "close communion" because they were bigoted and selfish, and not because

of devotion to New Testament principles. In a few cases Baptists weakened in the face of this formidable charge and became open-unionists. Others replied that many of these immersed persons did not have believers' baptism and that even those who were Christians at the time of their immersion could not urge it as valid baptism, for being administered by Pedo-baptists it was an endorsement of their errors and failed in many particulars to fulfill the design for which Christ instituted the ordinance. (See note on page 8.) On these grounds they refused to recognize the validity of their baptism and consequent right to the Lord's table. Others, while not denying the validity of alien immersion, still clung to restricted communion in the interests of church order, fellowship, discipline, expediency, etc. But the minds of some of the leaders of the denomination were not at all satisfied by these answers and thought that they left low places in the Baptist fence. "The Tennessee Baptist" of February 24, 1855, said, "Why should my neighbor quarrel with me because I wish to put the eleventh rail on my fence and he thinks ten sufficient to keep out the unruly stock?"

J. R. Graves explicitly states that one of the main objects of propagating his theories was to give Baptists a solid basis on which to rest restricted communion. He did not think that the ordinary arguments used by his brethren were at all conclusive. In his opinion consistency was a jewel which Baptists never possessed until they received it as a gift from his hand. For he says: "I was the first man in Tennessee and the first editor on this continent who advocated the policy of strictly and consistently carrying out in practice those principles which Baptists in all ages have professed to believe!" * (Emphasis ours.)

Consistency is a jewel, not when it is accord simply with past actions and belief, but when it is accord with the truth. It was a saying of Bismarck's that "Consistency is the clog of men who do not advance." Another has said, "Consistency is a virtue of fools." These two proverbs are aimed at that weakness of human nature which leads men to try to square present conduct by past action; whereas we should endeavor to live today inconsistently with our imperfect life

* "Old Landmarkism," p. xiv.

of yesterday, by perfecting the imperfect, completing the incomplete.

It is a grave mistake to shrink from the advocacy of a true principle because it seems inconsistent with something we have taught in the past. It is far better to acknowledge that we have erred in our first belief or to show that two truths that seem to be irreconcilable may yet be true; e.g., free-will and election. It is just as great a mistake to rush precipitately to the advocacy of some idea in order to bolster up a cherished doctrine which seems to be suffering under attack. This was the very thing that the landmarkers did. In a time when the air was full of controversy they felt that a Baptist doctrine was in danger and conceived of the landmark system as necessary to their denomination if it maintained a consistent position on the communion question; the following quotations are sufficient evidence of this:

J. M. Pendleton says: "It is often said by Pedo-baptists that Baptists act inconsistently in inviting their ministers to preach with them, while they fail to bid them welcome to the Lord's table. I acknowledge the inconsistency for this charge of inconsistency defies refutation and the only way to dispose of it is to take away the foundation on which it rests. The Baptist argument on communion is paralyzed whenever Pedo-Baptists can say 'You invite our ministers into your pulpits, but you do not invite us to commune with you.'" *

Along the same line J. R. Graves writes: "I am free to say that could I be convinced that Pedo-baptist and Campbellite societies are evangelical churches, and could conscientiously invite their ministers into my pulpit, and granting the general practice of inviting members of all sister churches to the table is Scriptural, I would with the next dip of my pen proclaim myself an open-unionist." **
Again, "Fifty years from this writing the Baptists of America will be either old landmarkers or open-unionists." ***

* "An Old Landmark Re-set." p. 15.

** "Old Landmarkism." p. 220.

*** "Old Landmarkism." p. 221.

Other reasons than the above might be given for the origin of landmarkism, such as the prevalence of the spirit of controversy on the one hand and an increasing looseness of views by some Baptists on the other hand. But if we carefully review the whole field it becomes evident that the communion question was the main cause of the landmark movement.

It was the conception of the landmarkers that the only consistent ground for Baptists to occupy was to hold that Baptist local churches were the exclusive possessors and guardians of the ordinances and all church privileges, that they and they only held them by direct succession from Christ and His apostles, that they constituted the "kingdom of God" and "the Bride of Christ;" consequently, only members of Baptist churches, members of the kingdom, were to partake of the Lord's Supper, an ordinance of the kingdom. This logically involved a denial of all claims of Pedo-baptists to have the right to baptize, ordain or preach. These denials were emphasized and the cry was "No alien communion," "No alien pulpit," "No alien baptism!" Most Southern Baptists were opposed to open communion and to alien immersion; consequently the controversy raged around the question of pulpit affiliation which casual observers have considered the whole of the landmark question, while in reality it is only the conning-tower of a submarine torpedo-boat. Beneath the surface lie the weightier matters of church succession and denial of the doctrine of the universal, invisible, spiritual church.* For a while only the conning-tower was visible; of late years, however, attention has been detracted from it by the whole boat rising to the surface. This formidable craft has a way of appearing in Baptist waters at the most unexpected times and places. In order that it may be recognized wherever it appears, we have written the three preceding chapters concerning its origin and character. The next chapter will detail its launching and trial trip.

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Dr. Graves says, in "Old Landmarkism" p.xiii, "Many believe that simple opposition to inviting ministers into our pulpits is the whole of it, (landmarkism.)..... while that was only one of the landmarks of our fathers."

diverted
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Amos 4:13

CHAPTER IV.

THE INITIAL STEPS OF THE LANDMARK MOVEMENT.

In 1846, J. R. Graves took charge of "The Tennessee Baptist," published at Nashville, and began agitating the question of the propriety of Baptists recognizing by any act, ecclesiastical or ministerial, Pedo-Baptist societies and preachers as churches and ministers of Christ. This agitation gave rise to the convention which met at Cotton Grove, in west Tennessee, June 24th, 1851; it was composed "of all Baptists willing to accept the teachings of Christ and his apostles in reference to these matters." This Convention passed the famous Cotton Grove * resolutions, offered by J. R. Graves. They are as follows:

"1. Can Baptists consistently with their principles or with the Scripture recognize those societies not organized according to the pattern of the Jerusalem church but possessing different government, different officers, a different class of members, different ordinances, doctrines and practices, as churches of Christ?

"2. Ought they to be called gospel churches or churches in a religious sense?

"3. Can we consistently recognize the ministers of such irregular and unscriptural bodies as gospel ministers?

"4. Is it not virtually recognizing them as official ministers to invite them into our pulpits?"

"5. Can we consistently address as brethren, (emphasis ours), those professing Christianity who not only have not the doctrine of Christ and walk not according to His commandments, but are arrayed in direct and bitter opposition to them?" *

These resolutions were widely discussed in denominational papers, especially the "Tennessee Baptist."

Shortly after this, Dr. Graves assisted Dr. J. M. Pendleton in conducting a revival meeting at Bowling Green, Kentucky, and during their stay together led him to thinking his way. As a result, in 1854, Dr. Pendleton, at the request of Dr. Graves, prepared an article entitled, "An Old Landmark Re-set," which was

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published in the "Tennessee Baptist," and soon after appeared in tract form.

This treatise fell like a bombshell among Baptists; for according to J. R. Graves, "Pulpit affiliation, reception of alien immersion and inviting Pedo-baptists to seats in associations and conventions were general throughout the South." Consequently this vigorous attack on the denominational practice met with scathing criticisms which had the effect of causing it to be widely read and have increasing influence on Southern Baptist doctrine and practice. So great was the interest in it that the first edition was soon exhausted and another edition was printed in 1856, followed by others in 1857 and 1869 respectively. Interest recently revived in the subject by the Whitsitt controversy has produced an edition printed at Fulton, Ky. All of these editions had extended appendices by Dr. Graves, insisting on Baptist church continuity and the antiquity of the landmark doctrine.

For years these issues occupied nearly all of the space in "The Tennessee Baptist," which had the largest list of subscribers of any Baptist weekly in the world. * With these facilities for their propagation, it is no wonder that the landmark views were widely disseminated. Other facts also tended to make them popular. In the southwest at this time society was in that bustling, formative state which is conducive to a spirit of controversy. ** Debates between the different sects were frequent and fervid. Such an atmosphere as this was the normal element of the leader of this movement. "His challenging tone coupled with his ready utterance and forcible diction won easily for him the popular ear and eye;" he accepted invitations to visit conventions and associations throughout the whole South where he urged his views with convincing argument and moving eloquence. Again, the very characteristics of landmarkism which made it distasteful to many Baptists caused it to be readily embraced by others, for its whole trend adminis-

* "Tennessee Baptist," Sept. 3, 1859.

** Out of fourteen articles in the "Tennessee Baptist" of Feb. 26, 1854, eleven were controversial. Out of twenty-six books advertised by the S.-W. Pub. House, twenty-one were on controversial subjects.

tered to the pride of Baptists that consolation which is sweet to all mortals. For from one standpoint, its foundation principle was the emphatic declaration of the expression "WE ARE THE PEOPLE," "We are the church", "We are the kingdom", "We are the Bride", "We have church succession."

All of these things conspired together to sweep like wild-fire throughout the South and Southwest. They were discussed in the associations and were the subject of resolutions in churches and the cause of changes of pastorates. Out of them grew vigorous attacks on denominational agents and boards which did not favor them. A flood of tracts contributed to the controversy and a deluge of newspaper articles added ~~fuel to the flames.~~ *intensity to the agitation.*

The landmarkers supported their contention by a series of forcible arguments. They argued that "the kingdom of God " or "kingdom of heaven" in the New Testament sense is a visible institution, composed solely of local Baptist churches, and that the kingdom embraces all the churches* and could be used as a synonymous term with denomination (applied to Baptists.) ** It was said of Christ's use of the word "kingdom", "It was a visible earthly organization He spoke of, His church." *** Again it was contended that the term church or "ecclesia had but one literal meaning in the Greek, that of a local organization. Apparent exceptions are where it is used figuratively by synecdoche.!" § Of the universal, invisible, spiritual church theory Dr. Graves said that it was "too preposterously absurd to be put forth by men who have any respect for the divine founder of the church." §§ Consequently the word church in Matthew 16:18 was said to be used by synecdoche to represent the local church as an institution, so that the passage taught church succession.

* "Old Landmarkism." p. 32 f.

** " " " p. 82.

*** " " " p. 33.

§ " " " p. 39.

§§ " " " p. 19.

The pages of history were industriously perused for the sake of finding corroboration of this interpretation of Scripture. And so satisfactory did the result seem to Dr. Graves that he said, "Not those who affirm but those who deny the continuity of the kingdom (churches) of Christ, are to be pitied for their ignorance or their prejudice." * On these principles was built an iron fence between Baptists and other Christians as being outside of the church and visible kingdom of Jesus Christ and unworthy of any fraternal recognition. Not only was their right to be called churches and to administer the ordinances denied, but also the right of their ministers to preach was earnestly assailed. The contention being that there is no scriptural authority to preach which does not come through a church of Christ and that Pedo-baptist ministers are not in Christian churches and therefore have no right to preach. § Again, their privilege was questioned of acting under a commission "some of the injunctions of which they totally disregarded." Objection was made even to calling any Christians brethren who were not Baptists (see page 27.)

The more conservative element of the denomination, under the leadership of Drs. Everts, Jeter, Ford and others, combatted these extreme positions through the columns of the "Religious Herald," "Western Recorder," "Christian Index" and other journals. They labored to show that the position, that the churches and the kingdom and the Bride of Christ were identical, was untenable and that the peculiar interpretation of Matthew 16:18 was not correct, neither was the historical evidence brought forward conclusive enough to base upon it the doctrine of church succession and its corollaries. They further argued that if these premises were granted -- and many granted one or more of them -- it would not necessarily follow that pulpit affiliation violated any of them for it would remain to be proved that inviting a man into your pulpit involved an endorsement of all his doctrines.

* "Old Landmarkism." p. 128.

§ "An Old Landmark Re-set." p.10. Also "Old Landmarkism". p. 45.

One of the most forceful treatises from the conservative side was a pamphlet by S. H. Ford, entitled, "Ancient Landmarks of the Gospel Church Unmoved and Unmovable," in which he takes the position that preaching and prayer are not church ordinances for they existed before the establishment of churches by Christ; that to make them church ordinances is to admit the Pedo-baptist idea that Israel is the Old Testament church. He says: "Official preaching did not originate with the church but existed before it and outside of it; and therefore never was and is not now confined to those who are within the visible boundary lines of the city. All within the sacred confines may proclaim the joyful sound; all without, who dwell in their suburban villages and around which they have built their own walls, and which they may think are parts of the city itself, these, though not regular citizens, not members of a Gospel church, may nevertheless say 'Come!' The Spirit and the Bride --that is, the church, the city proper -- may say come; 'and let him that heareth say, Come.' 'Let him that heareth say, Come' is the commission to every soul whose heart has been attracted and melted beneath the melody of the joyful sound, 'say, Come.' In the strong language of the great Carson; 'The deadly heresy which confines the preaching of the Gospel to office conveyed by a certain succession is an infernal machine for destroying the souls of men . . . the Scripture knows nothing of such a succession.'"

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Others referred to the fact that Paul rejoiced that the Gospel was preached, though it was through envy and strife; and to our Saviour's condemnation of John's wishing to forbid others to do the work of the Gospel because they followed not with them. Drs. Everts, Waller and Jeter also wrote series of articles on the subject which were in turn answered by leaders on the other side.

In addition to these vigorous yet dignified discussions we find "anti-land-markers" as well as their opponents using extreme arguments and expressions. "The Western Recorder"[§] called landmarkism "High Churchism".

*

"Ancient Landmarks of the Gospel Church." pp.64, 66.

§

Jan.10, 1855.

*
 "The South-Western Baptist" accuses the landmark brethren of teaching "that it is better to be systematically damned than irregularly saved," and adds: "This is the very conclusion to which high-churchism always conducts its votaries." Again, it calls the system of doctrine "the new theology."[§] Another charges Dr. Graves with putting three new planks in the old Baptist platform: "High Church Episcopal views on pulpit communion, Chiliasm and Opposition to conventions and boards."^{**}

both
 Much also was said on each side of the question of church succession and the validity of alien immersion. The latter was only an incident to the landmark doctrine and was rejected by all landmarkers and many of their opponents, yet on different grounds. In addition to these a number of minor issues were involved in the controversy. In fact, it can scarcely be doubted that a majority of the sermons preached among the Baptists in the South at this time, at least touched on the current discussion. All of these far-reaching influences had their center at Nashville, Tennessee, and it was here that the most serious consequences were realized. The First Baptist Church of this city, which had scarcely recovered from the shock that it received from Campbellism, was called upon to pass through a similar trial from landmarkism. From thence dissension spread throughout the South and even entered the Southern Baptist Convention.

* "South-Western Baptist", Dec. 24, 1857. ✓
 § " " " Dec. 10, 1857. ✓

CHAPTER V.

DISSENSION AND DIVISION.

It is not surprising that the vast amount of religious controversy that raged just previous to the civil war caused division. The wonder is that it did not do untold injury. Storms frequently do great harm, yet they have beneficial effects by clarifying the atmosphere and ridding the forest of unsound trees.. It is the purpose of this chapter to notice some of the harmful effects of this storm of controversy, reserving the more pleasing features for another occasion.

J. R. Graves was a member of the First Baptist Church of Nashville, Tennessee, of which R. B. C. Howell was pastor. Several members of the Bible Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, then located at Nashville, were also members here. When the landmark controversy was near its height strenuous efforts were made by Dr. Graves and A. C. Dayton to induce the First Church and the Bible Board with its publications and agents to favor their movement. These efforts having failed, they changed from appeals to demands, which also met with emphatic and earnest refusals. Consequently two parties grew up in the First Church, one composed of Dr. Graves and his followers, the other composed of Dr. Howell and the remainder of the church. Very naturally those who sympathized with his peculiar views sided with Dr. Graves, so that the landmarkers were on one side and the anti-landmarkers were on the other. This condition of affairs caused the breach to widen. Another factor also had influence on the situation. This occurred just before the war when excitement on the slavery question was at its height and the feeling of enmity between the North and South was intense. Now it happened that J. R. Graves, A. C. Dayton and nearly every one who sympathized with them in the Nashville Church were Northern people, while the remainder of the church was composed principally of slaveholders. This fact added much to the rancor between the parties. Two living witnesses who were members of the church at the time of the difficulty say that one of the main reasons that influenced them and many others to be so determined in their opposition to Dr. Graves and his coadjutors was that they were styled "Yankees."

As a natural result of this state of affairs, acrid criticisms on the pastor of the church and members of the Bible Board ensued. The "Tennessee Baptist" and its editor led in this respect and sometimes indulged in extreme statements which were not always verified before they were published. The members of the First Church were incensed at these attacks on their pastor and recriminated. So matters went from bad to worse until Dr. Graves was summoned before the church to answer the following charges against him:

- "1. He has sought to injure R. B. C. Howell by bringing him into conflict with A. C. Dayton.
- "2. He has endeavored to distract and divide the church.
- "3. He has uttered and published against R. B. C. Howell, the pastor of this church, sundry foul and atrocious libels.
- "4. He has at various times attacked, slandered and abused members and brethren of high character belonging to our denomination throughout the country, in his paper.
- "5. He has uttered and published nine wilful and deliberate falsehoods."*

In reply to the summons he asked for time to prepare for trial; two weeks, then three were given, making five weeks. When he appeared it was evident that he had not been preparing for trial but perfecting his schism. He ignored the charges against him and denounced the church as no church and declared that he and his party were the church, refusing again to appear before the church. He said that the charges were against his private character and that the church had not followed the Scripture dealing in regard to such offences, and that therefore the church could not try him; for not being in Scriptural order it was not a Scriptural church. He cited as a precedent the fact that the minority of the membership had declared themselves the church twenty years before when the majority became followers of Alexander Campbell. Rev. A. C. Dayton then read the following declaration:

* The "Baptist Standard", Nashville, Jan. 8, 1859, gives a full report of the Graves trial.

"We withdraw ourselves from the majority which has departed from the law of Christ and we declare ourselves the regular and Scriptural church of our Lord Jesus Christ worshipping in this place, and in His name claim for ourselves as His true and proper church all rights, privileges and authority, which are by His word conferred upon His church."

After the reading of the resolution, twenty-three withdrew and afterward formed the Spring Street Church. Twenty others subsequently joined with them.

The First Church, however, continued the trial and on November 10, 1858, by a unanimous vote expelled J. R. Graves from the membership of the church and deposed him from the Gospel ministry. A short time afterward the remainder of the seceding party were also expelled.

Although doctrinal differences were not the only cause of this division, yet it cannot be doubted that the landmark issue was in reality the foundation of it.* "The Tennessee Baptist" said: "It was a plot to destroy Old Landmark men and principles." § But just at this time many claimed that it was merely a matter of orderly church practice and that the church had not acted according to the New Testament injunction in the trial. It is remarkable, however, that nearly all landmarkers were absolutely certain that the First Church acted disorderly in the matter, while the anti-landmarkers were equally sure that the majority was right and the minority wrong. It is a sad fact, nevertheless a fact, that even religious people when engaged in controversy indulge in personalities and come to doubt the veracity and moral character of their opponents. The parties involved and the issues at stake were so prominent that the affair excited much interest throughout the South, especially in the neighboring churches,** and associations. The expected crop of resolutions appeared and the denominational papers teemed with them. The following is a fair sample:

* "Banner & Baptist", May 31, 1860.

§ "Tennessee Baptist," March 12, 1859.

** The church at Jackson, Tenn., was split on landmarkism a few months after this. See "Baptist Standard", Jan. 22, 1859.

"RESOLVED, that we regard the charges preferred in the First Baptist Church, Nashville, against Elder J. R. Graves, as the last expiring throes of envy, malice and the darkest passions of the human heart (which is desperately wicked) and chagrin, deep mortification and bitter disappointment of the parties engaged in this unholy and wicked attempt to alienate him from the affections of his brethren."

Before the trial was completed the General Association of Tennessee and North Alabama met and the Spring Street Church applied with messengers as the real First Church of Nashville. The landmark influence was so great here that the Association denounced Dr. Howell and the First Church and endorsed Dr. Graves and the Spring Street Church. This added new fuel to the flames and instead of intimidating Dr. Howell and his church it made them more aggressive, so that on the following month, Nov. 8th, the long continued trial was completed and the entire forty-three who had gone into Spring Street Church were excluded. It was claimed that twenty of this number were connected with the "Tennessee Baptist", South-Western Publishing House and Board of the Sunday School Union, in all of which Dr. Graves had an interest. Notwithstanding their endorsement by the General Association, the members of the Spring Street Church felt that this direct exclusion from the First Church was a stigma upon them which should be erased. Hence, a council was called to meet in Nashville, March 1859. This council was composed of prominent men and was summoned as an impartial body. But Dr. Howell and the First Church said that they had no knowledge of it except from hearsay and that it was entirely an ex parte affair; so they refused to take any notice of it. The council, however, proceeded to consider the whole matter, having before them the testimony and arguments of one side only. After due deliberation, resolutions were adopted endorsing Dr. Graves and his following as the real First Baptist Church of Nashville and condemning Dr. Howell and the majority as having violated the New Testament principles of orderly church practice. § They further held that the

* "Tennessee Baptist", Oct. 12, 1858.
§ "Baptist Standard," Nashville, March 10, 1860.

acceptance of the pastorate of this church by R. B. C. Howell was in pursuance of a "foul conspiracy" to destroy J. R. Graves.

Shortly after the adjournment of this council the deacons of Spring Street Church sent a letter to each of the members-elect of the Southern Baptist Convention which was soon to meet in Richmond, Virginia, opposing the reëlection of R. B. C. Howell to the Presidency of that body. It was so much in accord with the methods and spirit of the times that we make a quotation from it:

"It would be a daring act in the Biennial Convention to override the decision of the General Association or local Associations of any state, to pronounce any church in regular or good order, that had been almost unanimously disfellowshipped by the General or District Associations of a state. Will you aid in placing the Convention in this attitude before the denomination? By securing the election of Elder Howell and the reëlection of most of his male members as a Bible Board they will claim that the Biennial Convention has . . . endorsed the disorderly party as a regular church. Elder Howell and his party have nothing to lose, while the Convention has everything to lose -- the support of the masses in the Southwest, perhaps of the whole South."

Signed by the deacons of Spring Street Church, who add: "All this is strongly advocated by the "Mississippi Baptist," "Texas Baptist," "Western Recorder," and "Tennessee Baptist."*

This circular shows the vast magnitude of the grievance of the followers of the landmark champion as seen by their own eyes. The implied threat of rending the Convention was not entirely new for Dr. Graves had assured them several months before that "the rending of the Southern Baptist Convention next spring would not necessarily divide the denomination."[§] The circular did not have the desired effect, for when the Convention met Dr. Howell was reëlected to the Presidency of the body but declined to accept it under the circumstances. The Convention also discountenanced the landmark contingency by reappointing members of the First

Church on the Bible Board and by dropping the names of the few that had been on it

* "Baptist Standard", Nashville, March 10, 1860.

§ "Tennessee Baptist," Nov. 6, 1858.

who were now members of the Spring Street Church. To this discrimination J. M. Pendleton seriously objected and offered a resolution to the effect that in the appointment of the Bible Board at Nashville the Convention had "no intention to express an opinion one way or the other in regard to the Nashville affair."

This was laid on the table by a two-thirds majority. He then offered a protest against the appointment of the members of the Bible Board, signed by himself and a large number of Tennesseans; this caused a heated discussion. He finally agreed to withdraw it, provided his resolution be withdrawn and the motion to lay on the table be ^{repealed} ~~expurgated~~ from the minutes. *

From this time forward the leaders of the landmark movement saw that the Southern Baptist Convention would not favor them; hence, they began to criticize and oppose its work. At this very meeting Dr. Graves made a long speech against the methods of the Mission Boards of the Convention. This spirit grew until opposition to the Convention and advocacy of Dr. Graves and his following were "so identical that they seemed parts of the same question."[§] An examination of the files of the "Tennessee Baptist" and "Landmark Banner & Cherokee Baptist" of Georgia reveals a great similarity between their attitude to the mission work of the Southern Baptist Convention and their attitude of those papers in Texas which are now opposing the mission work of the Texas State Convention. There is found no direct objection to the Convention per se, or to missions, but numerous adverse criticisms on men and methods. In consequence of these criticisms churches and even associations withheld contributions from the Convention and passed resolutions condemning its attitude. In August, 1859, the Concord Association, Tennessee, endorsed Dr. Graves and denounced his opponents. About the same time the Rehoboth Association, of Georgia, practically severed its connection with the Southern Baptist Convention and the "Landmark Banner & Cherokee Baptist" praised and upheld its action. A few months later Bethel Association, Kentucky, passed reso-

* "Baptist Standard," Nashville, May 21, 1859.

§ "Southwestern Baptist", March 1, 1860.

lutions on the subject and stated that it would withhold contributions from one of the Boards of the Convention.* Numerous examples of the same character could be given.

The discord did not decrease as the weeks went by, for when the General Association of East Tennessee met resolutions were offered by the landmark element which were discussed at length and with bitterness, but utterly failed to be passed. A resolution was then offered to dissolve the Association; this also failed. Whereupon the minority withdrew, saying that they left the body "redeemed, regenerated, disenthralled."

Again these questions came up before the General Association of Middle Tennessee and North Alabama, the second time in the fall of 1859. The body endorsed the action of the previous year. When members of this Association visited the East Alabama Convention they were refused seats because of this very matter. §

Not only in Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia and Alabama was dissension caused by these issues, but also in Mississippi, Arkansas, Texas and other states. A division of the Baptist denomination seemed imminent at this time.** In a leading editorial in the "Tennessee Baptist", Dr. Graves discussed the question of a split in the denomination but was somewhat inclined to oppose it. The "Baptist Standard" of April 7, 1860 said: "the crisis has arrived." A writer in the "Banner & Baptist" said: "Every one is led to believe that a serious and irreconcilable difficulty is forming in the bosom of the great Baptist family."*** Again, it was

* Minutes Bethel Association, 1860.

§ "Banner & Baptist"- Aug. 23, 1860.

** NOTE:-

This deplorable condition of Southern Baptists must not all be laid upon Landmarkism yet all of it can be laid on Landmarkers, for almost without exception those who opposed the Southern Baptist Convention were landmarkers. But in some cases the opposition was based on "Crawfordism" or Gospel Mission tendencies rather than on landmark principles. In other instances personal admiration for Drs. Graves, Dayton, Pendleton and others was the prime motive. Nevertheless, landmarkism was the great cause of strife.

*** Oct. 26, 1859.

* of 2 uses

said, "If certain men and measures were pressed upon the churches division would result."* The editor of the "Banner & Baptist" wrote: "Facts, stubborn facts, go very far toward raising the belief that the landmark elements are at the bottom of the proposition for division. Nearly all on one side have been violent anti-landmark men. In the order of a kind providence those known as Landmark Baptists are in a tolerable condition to act independently under Christ. They have a fair share of the papers already in full blast; there are also publishing houses which can furnish reading to our children and all classes of our friends." The following words of Dr. R. C. Burleson show a similar state of things in the South-west: "It is painfully evident that a cautious but powerful effort is being made to array Texas Baptists against the Southern Baptist Convention."[§]

The above opinions of the denominational press give only a faint idea of the gravity of the situation. The spirit of dissension affected the inner life of the churches to such an extent that the missionary and revival spirit was almost crushed out in many localities, especially in Tennessee.** In parts of Georgia also the same state of affairs existed. In those sections where the "Tennessee Baptist" was read a contemporary witness styled the churches under its influence "opposition Baptists". The following extracts of the minutes of Concord Association, which was the home association of Dr. Graves, leaves no doubt as to the influence of the landmark agitation in and around Nashville: "In the majority of our churches there have been no revivals."

"Indian Missions: nothing is being done in this department of Christian labor."

"Bible distribution: The Association is not actively engaged in this work."

"State Missions: The Association has given \$90.40 to this work during the year."

* "Landmark Banner & Cherokee Baptist", Feb. 2, 1860.

§ "Baptist Standard", Nashville, May 12, 1860. ✓

** "Contributions to the Convention have been cut off. Tennessee is doing nothing." "Southwestern Baptist," March 1, 1860.

"Sunday School report: There is less interest manifested in the Sunday School within the bounds of Concord Association than at any other portion of the South."*

Undoubtedly during the year preceding the war the great landmark controversy seemed to be producing most serious consequences and reached its climax. Each succeeding month added new intensity to the strife among brethren. Indeed the threatened division of Southern Baptists was imminent. It seemed that no human wisdom could prevent it, but "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." By a strange providence the division among fellow Christians was diverted by strife between fellow-countrymen. The clouds of denominational disunion were overshadowed by the deeper gloom of a nation rent in twain. The voice of the debater and controversialist was drowned by the yelping of "the dogs of war."

*

Minutes Concord Association, August, 1860.

CHAPTER VI.

WAR THE CAUSE OF PEACE.

It is a physical law that each of two objects cannot be respectively above the other at the same time. It is likewise a psychological law that only one prominent thought can be uppermost in a man's mind at one time. Shrewd rulers are cognizant of this fact and when their kingdoms are rent by political dissension they frequently cause a diversion by stirring up a quarrel with some foreign power. Thus peace at home is obtained by war abroad. About the only periods of internal peace that ancient Greece ever knew were caused by the invasions of "barbarian" hosts and as soon as the Persians were driven back civil strife was renewed with old-time vigor. Even in America we have witnessed like results, for the war with Spain did more to unite the North and South than any other event that has occurred since the days of the Confederacy.

Among the multitude of evils that were involved in the Civil War there were some good things. Not the least of the latter was that it caused Southern Baptists to ignore their differences and to forget many personal dislikes which had almost grown into enmities. From 1861 to 1865 was no time to magnify the difference between landmarkers and antilandmarkers. It was a time for brethren to stand together. Over their parched corn and rye coffee they spoke not of the foibles of their fellow-Christians but of the fate of father, brother or son on the battlefield. Those few who kept up the controversy found no listeners.

The approach of the Federal army caused Dr. Graves to discontinue the publication of "The Tennessee Baptist" and to flee further South. There he employed his marvellous abilities in supplying the soldiers with New Testaments. A number of Baptist weeklies were forced to discontinue several times during the war on account of lack of paper, caused by the blockade. A reader of the files of some religious(?) papers a few years preceding the war, wonders if it would not have been better if paper had given out three or four years before it did.

CHAPTER VII.

Many Associations and Conventions were almost broken up and when a few Baptists did meet together it was not to call each other heretics, but to unite in prayer to their Heavenly Father that he would deliver their land from the horrors of war. So many things conspired to break up preaching services that the people became so hungry for the Word of God that ideas on pulpit affiliation did not prevent them from welcoming the Gospel even from Peco-baptist lips.

The afflictions of war had such an effect in welding them together that it is scarcely within the range of possibilities for a serious division to occur among Southern Baptists. A similar beneficial effect is observed among all Christians of the South. The spirit of bitter controversy has given way to a more conservative and commendable denominational comity. It is not the province of the historian to interpret Providence. But is it not possible that an All-Wise Father used the war to chastise his children that they might learn "to love one another?" *

* Dr. Graves said in the first issue of "The Baptist", after the close of the war, "Nor will old personalities be revived by me. I say to every brother from whom I have differed, or whom I may have wronged, let us bury all the past at the foot of the cross, and let past animosities be changed to love by the wondrous alchemy, that blood which cleanseth all sins, and henceforth let our ambition be to do the most for Christ."

CHAPTER VII.

READJUSTMENT AND NEW ISSUES.

The close of the war left Baptist affairs in a prostrate condition: churches had been broken up, houses of worship had been burned, endowments of schools had been lost, contributions to missionary enterprises had almost ceased and every aspect of the work needed revival. J. R. Graves returned to Tennessee and located at Memphis where he revived the "Tennessee Baptist" under the name of "The Baptist." But he and his coadjutors did not continue their opposition to the Southern Baptist Convention and its Boards. On the other hand, they fell in line with denominational enterprises. Nevertheless, they continued the landmark agitation, yet with abated vigor. "The Baptist" soon had a subscription list equal to any journal in the denomination. A publication society was also formed at Memphis and placed under the control of landmark Baptists. Through these agencies their doctrines were kept before the denomination. Nearly all of the space of "The Baptist" was taken up in doctrinal discussions. The publications of their society were of like character. Consequently, only a few years had elapsed after the downfall of the Confederacy before something like the old-time interest had been awakened in the landmark issues. Yet, in 1866, Dr. R. B. C. Howell was elected Vice-President of the Southern Baptist Convention without any special disturbance being caused thereby.

In 1872 the State Convention of Georgia passed resolutions which had a decided landmark tinge; Mississippi followed suit, and West Tennessee, Louisiana and Arkansas took action in the same direction. In none of these cases, however, was the controversy bitter, neither did any divisions occur. Again, some interest was aroused in the question in Illinois and we find in "The Baptist" of May 17, 1873, an announcement of a Landmark Convention to be organized in that State; but this movement never amounted to anything of consequence.

About this time an attack was made on the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, on the ground that Dr. Williams was teaching that alien immersion was valid baptism. A correspondent of "The Baptist"* opposed the Seminary for several reasons,

the principal of which was that "there were doctrines taught in the Seminary against which four or five State Conventions had earnestly protested; whereupon, the "Religious Herald" observed, "No State Convention has a right to add any new article to the Confession of Faith. If it is to be amended let it not be done by the hasty vote of a Convention assembled for another purpose!"* This opposition increased rapidly and was quite ^{strong} aggravating at the time from the fact that Dr. Boyce was making desperate efforts to increase the endowment of the Seminary. Dr. Boyce wrote a series of articles in the Mississippi department of "The Baptist"[§] in answer to the objections which had been made to the institution. He did not argue the alien immersion question but said that if any State Conventions had protested against the teachings of the Seminary he had knowledge of only two, Georgia and Mississippi, and they had not notified the Trustees of such action, from which he inferred that it was very doubtful whether they intended to lead to any action of the Board of Trustees. The matter was finally settled by transferring Dr. Williams from the chair of Church Government and Pastoral Duties to the chair of Systematic Theology where it was no longer necessary for him to express his opinion on alien immersion.

It has been shown that not all opponents of alien immersion are landmark Baptists. But in this agitation in regard to the teachings of the Seminary they were the most prominent and to them belongs the credit or discredit of ridding it of, what was to them and many others, a harmful doctrine. They were pacified by the concession that was made, yet there remained in their hearts a secret mistrust of the Seminary, which has revealed itself more than once. Indeed, it must be confessed that the dogmas peculiar to landmarkism are not found in the Seminary Confession of Faith, nor in any of the creeds of Baptists. It is remarkable that in the face of this fact landmarkers insist on calling all other members of the denomination "unsound Baptists."^{**}

* Apr. 16, 1874.

§ Apr. 18, 1874.

** NOTE:- An editor recently said of a prominent historian, who had undermined the idea of an unbroken chain of immersions back to the apostles, "He never knew a day in his life when he was a sound Baptist." The editor received his baptism at the hands of the Hardshell Baptists (opponents of human free agency and missions) and was satisfied with it. The question arises, if succession is necessary, is not

The Memphis "Baptist" found a valuable ally in "The Mississippi Baptist Record" and its versatile editor, Dr. J. B. Gambrell.* Dr. Gambrell used his polished pen in the cause of landmarkism without indulging in the personal thrusts and extreme statements which for many years seemed identical with that cause. In 1877 he engaged in a protracted discussion with J. B. Jeter on the merits and demerits of pulpit affiliation. These two giants said everything that was worth saying on their respective sides of the question. The debate was published in both "The Mississippi Baptist Record" and the "Religious Herald" and being conducted in a thorough manner and in an admirable spirit did much to clarify the subject under consideration.

While Dr. Gambrell was giving a milder aspect to old landmarkism, Dr. Graves was carrying it to an extreme. It has been shown that the essence of this system of doctrine is an undue emphasis put upon the importance and independence of local Baptist churches. Attention has also been called to the fact that it was the aim of Dr. Graves to construct an iron-clad argument for restricted communion. A resultant of these two facts was the idea of non-intercommunion. It was argued that if one church had to recognize at the Lord's Table those who were members of other churches and under the discipline of other churches, it was not entirely independent of them. Again, stress was laid on the affirmation that a church should invite none to partake of the Supper who were not subject to its discipline. These two contentions were thought to furnish two good and consistent reasons for restricted communion, which would lose their consistency if Baptist local churches practiced intercommunion. A third argument in support of the theory was based on

succession of right ideas about human free agency and missions just as important as succession of right ideas on baptism? The fact that the Methodists do more for the cause of Christ in a month than the Primitive Baptists have done in the whole period of their existence, illustrates the comparative importance of these doctrines. If succession means anything, it must be a succession of orthodoxy in every respect, -- not merely of one ordinance to the neglect of many of the fundamental truths of Christianity.

* It is thought that Dr. Gambrell has of late modified his views with respect to old landmarkism.

Dr. Graves' interpretation of the symbolism of the Lord's Supper. He contended that one loaf and one cup symbolized one church as a unit partaking of Christ. This argument had a similar relation to that of the other two to the restricted communion controversy. The non-intercommunion idea is not strictly speaking essential to old landmarkism but may be regarded as an adjunct to it. Few of the leading men who had stood by Dr. Graves through his career hitherto followed him in this new departure. Even to him it was new, as the following extract from the minutes of Concord Association, 1867, testifies:

"RESOLVED, that in the future, at each session of this body, on the Lord's Day the Lord's Supper be administered."

"William C. Buck, Matthew Hillsman and J.R. Graves preached; after which J.W. Bower concluded the communion service. J. R. Graves, Moderator."

The succeeding year J.R. Graves aided in the administration of such a communion service.*

It has been affirmed that Dr. Graves got his non-intercommunion idea from an Illinois Association and from S.P. Williams' circular on the subject. It is difficult to determine, however, whether he got it from them or they from him. But whoever invented it, he propagated it with all the means at his disposal and convinced some, at least, in almost every old landmark Baptist church in the Southwest. The result was not pleasant to contemplate. In many cases individuals would refuse to commune with their church as long as it practiced intercommunion. In other cases where the dissatisfied element was large the church would go for months and even years without celebrating the Lord's Supper. Some churches were split on the question.† The evil effects of this doctrine were soon observed and it eventually passed into comparative desuetude.**

* Ford's Repository, Nov. 1899.

† All three of these results have come under the personal observation of the author in one Association in Texas.

** Dr. Graves was misled as to the popularity of this doctrine. He said, "The heavy drift of sentiment throughout the whole South and the great West and Southwest is strongly in favor of Baptist churches . . . restricting the participation of the Supper to the local church celebrating it." Old Landmarkism, p. xvi.

After the advancement of this new adjunct to his system of doctrine the landmark champion seemed to lose something of his old-time controversial spirit. The last years of his life were spent in delivering his wonderfully eloquent "Chair talks" on the subjects of Salvation by Grace, the Institution and Nature of the Church, and the Second Coming of Christ.* These addresses tended to modify the polemical spirit of his followers.

Subsequent to the death of Dr. Graves there was little agitation of landmark principles until the spring of 1896, when the Whitsitt Controversy caused a thorough discussion of the question of church succession and of the doctrine of the Church. § Dr. Whitsitt proclaimed that he had discovered that prior to 1641 there was a period in which "the Baptists" of England did not practice immersion. This statement created such a stir in the Baptist family that it left no room to doubt whether landmarkism was dead. It was not claimed that any article of any Baptist Confession of Faith was endangered by Dr. Whitsitt's position, nor that any Bible doctrine was called in question, except the teaching of Matthew 16:18 when given the peculiar landmark interpretation. It is true that some thought the importance of immersion was minimized by Dr. Whitsitt. This arose from reading biased papers which were not as careful as they should have been to state clearly Dr. Whitsitt's position. The whole question of Baptist church succession was opened by this incident, but special attention was paid to the history of the English Baptists of the seventeenth century. In the latter stages of the controversy it became evident that the advocates of succession could not make out an irrefragible chain. Consequently they began to lay great stress on Matthew 16:18, interpreting it like^{as} Dr. Graves had done and using the same arguments in support of their exegesis. While in the heat of the controversy it was denied, it cannot now be gain-

* The last book of importance that Dr. Graves wrote was "The Seven Dispensations", which was not, strictly speaking, a landmark document.

§

Reference to Chapters I and II will show that church succession and denial of the universal invisible church are characteristics of old landmarkism.

said that only two doctrinal points were involved in the Whitsitt controversy. Both of these were distinctly landmark doctrines, one, church succession; the other, certain ideas of the church. Where landmarkism was strongest, there was opposition to Dr. Whitsitt the most intense. The Baptist State Conventions of Kentucky, Arkansas, Texas, Mississippi and Louisiana passed resolutions condemning the position taken by him. The matter never came to a vote before the Southern Baptist Convention. The Board of Trustees always sustained Dr. Whitsitt. Dr. Hatcher said that Dr. Whitsitt would have remained President of the Seminary, if he had not of his own accord offered his resignation.

A full discussion of the Whitsitt controversy is not called for in this thesis. Yet it must be considered as showing the extent of the landmark doctrines. It plainly showed that something like one half of Southern Baptists are tinctured with landmarkism. Another thing that was manifested by the Whitsitt controversy was that, if we except a few advocates of church succession in England, old landmark Baptists are confined for the most part to half a dozen states in the southern portion of the United States.*

If error in regard to succession and the universal spiritual church will lead to serious evils, our denomination in the South is not in an enviable position; for it appears to be almost evenly divided on these subjects.

* This statement is based on the attitude of the denominational journals in various sections, and on other data.

CONCLUSION.

Old landmarkism was conceived in debate,* born in strife,§ waxed strong in dissension** and flourishes in controversy. §§ Yet this alone does not condemn it. When Israel was troubled there were two theories as to the evil: "the Ahab theory, and the Elijah theory." "And it came to pass when Ahab saw Elijah that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered and said, I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord."*** An admixture of an acid with an alkali causes fomentation; so does an admixture of error with truth. He who mixes error with truth causes commotion and is blameworthy. He who brings truth to error, light into the darkness, likewise causes commotion, but is worthy of honor. The question naturally arises here, was the landmark controversy error attacking truth or truth attacking error? The anti-landmark Baptist replies that it was the former; the landmark Baptist that it was the latter; while a plain, unprejudiced Baptist might answer that it was neither, but a combination of the two.

In the days of Pendleton and Graves there were in the Baptist denomination some tendencies toward extreme looseness in doctrinal matters. Landmarkism met these with the opposite extreme and the two extremes have tended to destroy each other. The result has been in some respects beneficial, for although the landmark doctrines may not be orthodox, yet to landmarkism is due most of the credit for the fact that Southern Baptists are more strictly orthodox than any other large body of Baptists in the world. §§§

* See Chapter III.

§ " " IV.

** " " V.

§§ " " VII.

*** I Kings xviii: 17 f.

§§§ NOTE:- Prof. Norman Fox, Morristown, N.J., recently sent out eleven hundred letters to Baptist preachers in New England and Middle States, asking their opinion as to restricted communion. He received 310 replies; 103 favored restricted communion; 123 would give "wider welcome;" 84 would welcome baptized or unbaptized, church members or non-church members, just as to prayer-meeting.

--The Standard, Chicago, Dec. 9, 1899, p. 26.

The agitation of the subject has been very unhappy and has not yet ceased. When the question is finally settled the truth will be made evident to the good of the Baptist family. It is a reason for thankfulness that the more acute stages of the controversy have passed without lasting disruption, and there is hope that the final discussion which seems to be now in progress will be unaccompanied by bitterness.

The old landmark movement has left us an important lesson and an urgent duty. The lesson is, that we should not dissipate in endless controversy the Christian energies which should be exercised in leading the world to Christ; the duty is "to determine how we can harmonize the different elements of the denomination and how we can stop movements set going by Dr. Graves in two opposite directions -- an extreme doctrinal system and its opposite, denominational looseness."

The principal evils which flow out of landmarkism are bigotry and pride, which lead to contention and strife and cause the preaching of a practical Christianity to be neglected while the local churches are being lauded to the skies by their own voices. The local Baptist churches are ordained of God and are the most important institutions on earth today. But they have a greater mission than self-laudation. This thesis will not have been written in vain if it has shown the evil of the praise of self and denunciation of others to the neglect of the preaching of the Gospel of humility and love.

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