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Distinctions Between Campbellites and Baptists.

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The term Campbellites is not here used as a term of reproach, nor is it meant to be in any sense discourteous. It is used as the only name in vogue which can clearly distinguish the body of Christians to whom this term is understood to apply. The term Christian applies to all sincere believers in Christ. The term disciple applies to all learners in his school. The exclusive appropriation of these terms to distinguish others from ourselves, implies an arrogant assumption to which the conscientious believer can not accede. It is true the claim is made that in the use of these terms there is a strict adherence to scriptural usage. But this claim is fallacious. While the terms "disciple" and "Christian" are both in the Bible, so is the name "Baptist." But the designations "Disciple Church" and "Christian Church," even "Church of Christ," are not in the Bible; literally these are all as unscriptural as the title "Baptist Church." The New Testament never qualifies the word church by way of discrimination, except to distinguish between different local bodies (as the "church in Jerusalem," "at Antioch," etc.). The unqualified word "church" is the designation which the Bible employs. Besides, these titles are indefinite, and do not and can not designate. And we who claim to be Christian can not acquiesce in the exclusive assumption by others of these titles, without admitting an invidious reflection upon ourselves. Baptists are Christians, at least they are as likely to be as others; Baptists are disciples of Christ, and Bap-

tist Churches are Churches of Christ, if there are any such.

A certain lady was said to have "left the Church of God and joined the Baptists." The statement had a very quizzical look until it was explained that she had exchanged her relations with the Winebrethrenarians for a place in a Baptist Church, under the conviction that she thus accepted a more complete conformity to the Bible pattern of the "church of God." If it should now be said that Mr. A. had left the Baptists and joined the Disciples of Christ, or Mr. B. had left the Church of Christ and joined a Baptist Church, would not loyal, truth-loving Baptists have reason to repudiate the invidious implication? Surely it is not expected of me in this paper, to point out distinctions between Baptists and Christians—between Baptists and Disciples of Christ—between a Baptist Church and a Church of Christ. We shall not stultify ourselves by admitting any such distinctions.

When we employ the name "Campbellite," we have a designation that is distinctive, and one which everybody at once understands. There is a propriety in the use of this term to denote the party embracing the views of Alexander Campbell, of Bethany, W. Va. "Mr. Campbell is the author and most eminent proclaimer of these peculiar doctrines." He was the recognized founder and organizer of this distinct body of religious people. They arose under his labors, and gathered around his leadership in the early part of the present

century, "in Western Pennsylvania and the contiguous parts of Virginia and Ohio," and thence spreading into Kentucky and Tennessee. He organized at first an isolated congregation as the Brush Run Church, called "The Christian Association." Subsequently, rejecting infant baptism, and being immersed upon profession of his faith, he induced his Brush Run Church to follow him in seeking connection with the Baptist denomination. For several years the principles of Mr. Campbell's "reformation" were disseminated within this connection, until in 1832, the Baptists in Virginia and elsewhere formally withdrew fellowship from the individuals and churches holding his views.

From this time forward, in spite of his intense and indignant aversion to sectarianism, in spite of his disavowal of any purpose to "add to the catalogue of new sects," Mr. Campbell became the leader of a sect. The adherents of the "current reformation" were a sect, in the sense defined by any English dictionary. For they were, as Webster defines, "a body of persons who have separated from others in virtue of some special doctrine or set of doctrines which they hold in common." Besides, "they had all the attributes, and eminently the spirit of a sect," in the very same view which Mr. Campbell himself attached to the term. "Of this sect," says Dr. Jeter, "Mr. Campbell was the head—not by appointment nor in form, but in fact and by merit. His learning, zeal, energy and influence clearly marked him out for the position; and it was accorded to him without dissent, without envy, heartily and almost unconsciously. The sect was the product of his own labor. It bore strikingly the impress of his own character. . . . His word was the law of the 'reformation,' and it derived its force from the unwavering conviction among all the reformers that it was in perfect harmony with the word of God. From Maine to Georgia, and from the Atlantic Coast to the Far West, the same words and phrases were

current among them; and every portion of the circulating medium bore the unmistakable impress of the Bethany mint." Though thirty years have passed away since Dr. Jeter wrote these words, they are just as true and as suitable to-day as ever. Although there is apparent at present a more evangelical drift, yet the whole system as it exists to-day, with all its doctrines and arguments and defenses, is fully set forth in Mr. Campbell's own writings. It is true to-day, as ever, that the body bears much of the impress of Mr. Campbell's character; and all their statements and arguments and controversies and current forms of expression still bear "the unmistakable impress of the Bethany mint."

The evils of sectarianism, we must admit, they have not exaggerated. Our protest against its spirit is as decided and earnest as theirs. But the remedy is to be sought in something deeper than a name. Among the parties that arose at Corinth, the so-called Christ party was as severely censured by the apostle as the Apollos or the Cephas party. The sectarian spirit may hide under the specious plea, "I am of Christ," as well as anywhere else. The most unsectarian name, so called, may become the watchword and rallying-cry of the most intolerant of sects. The attempt to cure sectarianism by a so-called unsectarian name, results only in adding another to the list of party names which divide the Christian world. Much, therefore, as we may deplore sectarian divisions, still, since sects do and will continue to exist, it is necessary to distinguish them by designations that are distinct. And until some better term can be derived from something distinctive in their principles, the people of whom we are speaking are most naturally denoted, without ambiguity and without discourtesy, by the well-known name of the founder and chief expounder of the system.

Between these people and Baptists there are differences, not merely trivial, but on points that are vital. It is important that

these distinctions between us should be clearly understood. This is important for two principal reasons: First, To correct a popular misapprehension of our position in the Christian world. The impression has widely prevailed that we are closely related to each other, or indeed practically alike. The fact that both parties reject infant baptism, and agree in the act of baptism, leads to the impression that we are alike in other respects, and hence we are often popularly confounded, and doctrines against which we earnestly protest have been attributed to us for their sakes. Secondly, It is important to our denominational integrity, because it is so often the policy of the Campbellite leaders themselves to keep these distinctions out of sight in their efforts to proselyte from our ranks. It is a common thing for Baptists who are supposed to be pliable, to be urged to unite with their churches on the ground that there is really no important difference between them and Baptists. This specious plea, so manifestly disingenuous, is a very common style of argument. Of course this assertion is of itself a virtual condemnation of the whole Campbellite movement. If, indeed, there are no principles in which they differ from Baptists—principles important to be propagated—then their separate denominational existence is an unjustifiable schism. Since there is no difference, let them abandon their separate organization, and enter the existing Baptist churches, and contend with them and within them for the faith once delivered to the saints. Why organize another body with no distinctive principles to maintain and propagate? But there are differences between us which are vital, upon questions around which the most intense controversies have raged for over sixty years, points held by them in disagreement from us with a tenacity which is seldom exceeded. To speak of these differences as of trifling importance, is only to deceive.

It is my purpose not to argue and defend the positions which we hold in dis-

tinction from them, but simply to state the differences, clearly and fairly, in a few of the most essential points.

It is not easy to present any statement of the doctrinal views of the "Disciples" which will remain unchallenged. Many things in Mr. Campbell's controversial writings are obscure, some statements seem evasive, some contradictory. The same is true of more recent writers of this school. And when, for any reason, formal statements of doctrine have been put forth, they have usually been couched in language which is ambiguous and evasive; and without reading between the lines, it is not always easy to get at the exact position that is taken. There seem to be two principal sources of this obscurity:

First, The Campbellites have always declared war to the death against all creeds and confessions of faith.

In their opposition to creeds as authoritative and binding on the conscience, they do not so much differ from us, as they misunderstand or misrepresent our position. We also do not believe in human creeds as authoritative and binding on the conscience. In their professed repudiation of creeds as terms of fellowship, their claim for themselves is fallacious and absurd. "Every intelligent Christian has a creed, written or unwritten. There are certain facts, truths and principles which he believes and maintains. . . . He may or may not write these articles of his belief, but they are equally his creed, and equally efficacious in controlling his conduct, whether they be written or unwritten." The same is true of a church. "They have, and of necessity must have, a creed; it . . . may comprehend many articles or few, may be written or traditional—and this creed is their bond of union. This remark is as true of the churches calling themselves Disciples as of any churches in Christendom. They profess, indeed, to make the Bible their creed; but there is a grand fallacy in this claim. It is not the Scriptures objectively, but sub-

jectively considered—the Scriptures as they are understood, interpreted and maintained by themselves—that form the basis of their union. There are certain points of Scripture doctrine, in which they agree, and by which they are identified.” [Quoted in substance from Dr. Jeter’s “Campbellism Examined,” pp. 34, 35.] Their common interpretation of the Scriptures is their creed; and, as with others, their creed is the real basis of their fellowship.

In a “statement of the distinctive features” of Campbellism, entitled “Our Position,” by Mr. Isaac Errett (ch. ii. 3), we find the following on the question of creeds: “We repudiate all human authoritative creeds. We object not to publishing for information, what we believe and practice, in whole or in part, as circumstances may demand, with the reasons therefor; but we stoutly refuse to accept any such statement as authoritative, or as a term of fellowship, since Jesus Christ alone is Lord of the conscience, and his word alone can rightfully bind us.” Except one clause, “as a term of fellowship,” Baptists would indorse this statement. But is there indeed no statement of belief which is practically made by the Campbellites a term of fellowship? The very next paragraph of the paper above quoted cites a short confession of faith which is declared to be a “basis and bond of Christian fellowship.” “Nor have we any term or bond of fellowship but faith in this divine Redeemer, and obedience to him. . . . Faith in the unequivocal testimonies concerning Jesus—his incarnation, life, teachings, sufferings, death for sin, resurrection, exaltation and divine sovereignty and priesthood—and obedience to the plain commands he has given us are with us, therefore, the basis and bond of Christian fellowship.” Here, then, is a summary of doctrine which is a bond of union. There are, then, certain truths concerning Jesus, regarded by them as “unequivocal testimonies” of the Scriptures, the belief and practical acceptance of which constitutes the

“basis and bond of Christian fellowship.” This creed of the Disciples “concerning Jesus” is a term of fellowship. And in fact it is notorious that there are nowhere to be found any stouter sticklers for a creed than these same disciples of no creed. Yet this avowed opposition to definite and formal summaries of doctrine leads to a vague method of expression which involves much obscurity and evasion.

Secondly, Mr. Campbell made it a point to repudiate all accepted theological terms and all forms of speech in common use expressive of religious ideas. He stigmatized many of these as “philosophical speculations,” “scholastic terms,” “creed phraseology,” etc. This aversion to common terms of religious speech leaves much uncertainty with respect to the ideas which the rejected terms commonly express. On the other hand, many familiar religious terms are employed with meanings entirely different from those commonly attached to them. Hence statements which in form seem to be orthodox, when the terms employed are understood, are found to express what they do not seem to express. Faith, repentance, regeneration, conversion, justification, salvation—these terms are employed, but in the dialect of Campbellism they have meanings entirely different from those which they have in the common understanding. With them faith is little more than a cold assent to testimony. “A man believes in Christ,” said Mr. Campbell, “in the same way and as easily as I believe the well-attested history of General Washington.” It is little more than a mere intellectual act. With us it is a cordial consent to and reception of the truth, which is a principle of spiritual life. It is an affection of the heart, a self-surrender of the soul to God. With them repentance is simply or mainly an outward act of reformation, a turning around. With us it is a complex internal experience, involving a change of the heart, including a deep sense of personal guilt, a loathing of sin and a godly sorrow for it. Much indefiniteness

and ambiguity arise from the perverted meanings in which terms in common use are employed.

But let us notice a few leading points in which the distinctions between Baptists and Campbellites are most manifest and most essential.

1. THE AGENCY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CONVERSION. This subject belongs to the very heart of the gospel. The belief of the reality and efficiency of the Spirit's influence is essential to spiritual religion. It is exceedingly difficult to state the Campbellite position on this vital subject in terms which will be admitted to be just. They themselves have never framed a statement of their views on this point, which they have not in other relations contradicted. They have defined their position in terms which are obscure, varying and evasive. Amidst the jumble of confused statements which their writings contain, let us try to reach a fair and just understanding of their views.

So far as Mr. Campbell's writings are concerned, Dr. Jeter's summary of his position may be accepted as fairly stated: "I understand Mr. Campbell to maintain that the influence of the Spirit in the work of conversion is limited, and of necessity, to the simple presentation of arguments, motives, truth, to the minds of men, by means of words and other signs—that all the power of the Spirit in the conversion of men is in moral suasion." The influence of the Spirit on the heart is precisely the same as that of an orator over his hearers, which "is not exerted by the entrance of his spirit into them, but 'by words uttered by the tongue, by ideas communicated to' their minds." "As the moral power of man is in his arguments, so is the moral power of the Spirit of God in his arguments." The Spirit's agency ceased when he had indited the written word. There is no direct, immediate, supernatural power exerted on the human spirit by the Spirit of God. Dr. Jeter thus clearly and concisely states the point at issue: "Mr. Camp-

bell maintains that all the converting power of the Holy Spirit is in the arguments or motives which he presents to the mind in the written word. On this point I take issue with him. I maintain that there is an influence of the Spirit, internal, mighty and efficacious, differing from moral suasion, but ordinarily exerted through the inspired word, in the conversion of sinners." [Camp. Ex pp. 123, 125.]

Mr. M. E. Lard, in his review of Jeter's "Campbellism Examined," is a recognized and accepted expounder of the system. He undertakes to explain and defend Mr. Campbell's teachings. Let us turn to Mr. Lard's position on the work of the Holy Spirit. He thus states the proposition to be maintained: "The Holy Spirit operates in conversion through the truth only." We should take issue with this proposition on the ground of the qualifying word "only," which unduly limits the agency of the Spirit. Leave out this one word, and we should accept the statement. But if we follow Mr. Lard in the development and defense of his proposition, we shall find ourselves still in irreconcilable antagonism with him. For he adduces in support of this proposition fourteen different arguments. But, strange to say, every one of the fourteen arguments flatly contradicts the proposition and denies that the Spirit itself operates at all in conversion. Every one of these arguments is framed expressly to prove that the truth alone is efficient in conversion, and that the Holy Spirit has, except indirectly in the inditement of the truth, nothing whatever to do with it [See these arguments quoted in Mr. Williams' "Campbellism Exposed," ch. iii.] Mr. Lard's position then plainly is that the Holy Spirit, having once inspired the written word, ceased his active agency, and the only sense in which it is proper to say that the Spirit operates through the word, is that he is the author of the arguments that affect the sinner's heart. All the power exercised in conversion resides in

the truth itself. The efficiency is not in the Spirit, but in the word alone. "But what do we mean," says Mr. Lard, "when we say the Spirit operates through the truth? We mean that it operates by the truth; that is, that divine truth is itself the vital power by which in all cases the Spirit effects conversion; in other words, that the Spirit spends on the mind of the sinner in conversion no influence except such as resides in the truth as divine, as of the Spirit." Again, he says: "According to Mr. Campbell's theory, conversion is in every case effected by the influence of the Spirit; but then comes the question, What influence is meant? He denies that it is an influence distinct from and above the truth, and maintains that the truth itself is that influence." To quote the comment of Mr. Williams on these extracts: "Now, what is the meaning of this? Does it not show that while Mr. Campbell and Mr. Lard talk like other men about conversion being effected by the influence of the Holy Spirit, they have a meaning of their own? When Mr. Campbell says, 'Conversion is effected by the influence of the Spirit,' he means it is effected by the truth, which is itself that influence. And when Mr. Lard says, 'The Holy Spirit operates through the truth in conversion,' he means the truth itself operates! Their propositions assert his agency, their arguments deny it."

This, then, is the true Campbellite position on the influence of the Spirit; and in harmony with this theory must be interpreted all statements and expressions which may seem to have a more evangelical import. Thus, when the Campbellites of Ohio, in their address to the Ohio Baptist Convention, in 1871, declared in guarded language, "We believe, too, that this Divine Spirit is the agent in regeneration and conversion," we must understand this agency to have consisted only in the original inditement of the written word, the arguments which are to move the sinner. It is no acknowledgment of the present, direct, efficacious influence of the Spirit

upon the sinner's heart, moving him and helping him to believe, and personally originating the new life in his soul. In an article on "Disciples of Christ" in the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopædia, written by Mr. F. D. Power, of Washington, (and in such a work we would expect the greatest precision in statement) we find the following: "Recognizing the agency of the Holy Spirit in conversion, they repudiate all theories of special spiritual operations outside of the word, but demand that the sinner shall hear, believe, repent and obey the gospel, trusting God to do the rest." It appears then that this "agency of the Holy Spirit in conversion" is limited to the furnishing of arguments; and to "repudiate all theories of special spiritual operations outside of the word" means to teach that the only divine influence present in conversion is such as resides in the word itself; it means to deny the personal presence of the Spirit in the heart effecting this great moral change.

They "repudiate all theories" and speculations, indeed! And yet this Campbellite theory of the Spirit's work is itself a sheer speculative assumption that the Spirit can operate on the heart only by argument and persuasion. It is a theory of conversion unsupported by a word of Scripture, and expressed in terms themselves unscriptural. The real personal influence of the Holy Spirit in conversion is not a mere theory, but a revealed truth which experience confirms, and which can not be surrendered or obscured without danger to vital godliness. Baptists, of necessity, must oppose the tendencies of this error with uncompromising firmness.

It should be further noticed that this Campbellite theory of conversion implies a very low view of the divine majesty of the Holy Spirit, and a low view of the degree and inveteracy of human depravity; in both these points there is a vital difference between them and Baptists.

(1.) A LOW VIEW OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.—
With all evangelical Christians Baptists

have always held in high veneration the Holy Spirit as a personal subsistence in the triune Godhead. "Christianity," says Dr. Hodge, "would not be what it is without this sense of dependence on the Spirit, and this love and reverence for his person." But when all the converting power of the Holy Spirit is identified with the moral influence residing in the truth itself, when the Holy Spirit is made to recede behind his own instruments, and is limited in power to moral suasion, when he is allowed no present, active, internal agency in effectuating what is wrought in the sinner's heart in turning to God, then he is virtually robbed of his distinct, divine dignity. And it seems significant that whenever Campbellite writers touch the question of the Spirit's nature, they speak evasively, or, while admitting in terms the orthodox doctrine, so qualify their language as to neutralize the force of their admissions.

Thus Mr. Lard, in a statement which he says "may be said to exhaust the sum of human knowledge respecting the Spirit," makes no express mention whatever of his *divinity*. And, though professing to believe that the Holy Spirit is "a person in the sublimest sense of the word," yet sadly diminishes the sublimity of the sense by uniformly using the neuter pronoun "it" in every reference he makes to this supreme person. This style of speech is wholly unscriptural, and quite inconsistent with a clear, reverential belief in either the divinity or personality of the Holy Spirit.

Again, Mr. Errett, in the tract "Our Position," in chapter one, among points of agreement with "the parties known as evangelical," puts down "the revelation of God, especially in the New Testament, in the tri-personality of Father, Son and Holy Spirit." But in chapter ii. 2, under points of difference, he forthwith qualifies this in the following language:

"While accepting fully and unequivocally the Scripture statements concerning

what is usually called the trinity of persons in the Godhead, we repudiate alike the philosophical and theological speculations of Trinitarians and Unitarians, and all unauthorized forms of speech on a question which transcends human reason, and on which it becomes us to speak 'in words which the Holy Spirit teacheth.' Seeing how many needless and ruinous strifes have been kindled among sincere believers by attempts to define the indefinable, and make tests of fellowship of human forms of speech which lack divine authority, we have determined to eschew all such mischievous speculations and arbitrary terms of fellowship, and to insist only on the 'form of sound words' given to us in the Scriptures concerning the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

Now, in all candor, if this expresses any definite idea, what is that idea? One thing is clear; this qualifying paragraph sweeps entirely away, or covers with impenetrable doubt, the foregoing terms of agreement. Every defining, interpreting expression is repudiated, and we are left to ask: What does he understand to be the meaning of these "Scripture statements" "concerning the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit"? Will any one capable of interpreting English tell us from the above language what *is* this Campbellite "position" on the trinity, or "tri-personality" of the Godhead? Do they indeed "fully and unequivocally" agree with the well-known evangelical belief in the divinity of the Holy Spirit? Do they, and in what sense do they worship him as coequal with Christ and the Father? We have no clear unequivocal declaration on this point.

To find another citation that ought to be conclusive, let us turn to the correspondence between the Ohio Christian Missionary Society and the Ohio Baptist Convention of 1870-71. It was the object of the Campbellites in these communications to make out a substantial and important agreement with Baptists, such as

to form the basis of the friendly co-operation which they sought. And here, if anywhere, we should expect the points of agreement to be stated with as little qualification as possible. In their second address, presented in 1871, in replying to certain points of difference which had been submitted by the Committee of the Baptist Convention, we find the following, with regard to the Holy Spirit: "How any one can doubt the divine personality of the Holy Spirit, who consents to be baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do not understand." Certainly, in terms, this seems like an agreement with the Baptist faith. But, as we proceed with the paragraph, we are, in the very next sentence, met with a significant caution against "admitting stereotyped creed-phrasology . . . in speaking of anything so ineffably mysterious and incomprehensible as the mode of the divine existence, or the relations of Father, Son and Holy Spirit." All defining terms, though of well-understood import in the common acceptance, are rejected as vague, irreverent and presumptuous speculations, and the final conclusion is: "When we say, then, that we have no doubt about 'the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit,' we say it *in accommodation to your style*, and *to remove a doubt* that seems to be implied in the address of your Committee; but we should object to propounding any dogma concerning the Holy Spirit in any uninspired terms whatever as a test of faith or of fellowship."

Here again the qualification wholly nullifies the admission. It is plainly implied that in the sense, at least in which Baptists hold to the deity and personality of the Spirit, they do not concur. If they consent to use these, or any similar terms, it is "in accommodation to our style," and "to remove a doubt," while they reserve to these forms of expression a meaning of their own, different from the common understanding. We must say that this style of *accommodation* does not remove

our *doubt*, and we still desire to know in what sense they believe in the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit. They seem to say in effect: "As we want to be friendly, we will admit it for the sake of accommodation, but in reality *we do not believe it.*"

These citations are fair specimens of their style of statement on this point. If there has ever yet been published by any writer of this school a clear, positive, *unqualified* admission of the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit, the present writer has not seen it.

(2.) A SUPERFICIAL NOTION OF HUMAN DEPRAVITY.—The Scriptures plainly represent the heart of man as alienated from God and depraved, destitute of holiness and spiritual life. There exists a sinful aversion to God so central and inveterate that nothing but the power of the Holy Spirit can overcome it and dispose the sinner to repent, and make him susceptible to the truth. According to the Campbellite theory, there exists no need of any influence in conversion above the truth itself. This theory leads inevitably to the rejection of the doctrine of depravity in any true or intelligible sense of the term. Human nature is not strictly depraved, but only peccable. Depravity is reduced to a mere unfortunate *frailty* or *weakness*, which is not sin, which is more deserving of pity than blame, and which does not render the sinner insensible to the truth, without the power of the Holy Spirit. A few brief citations from Mr. Lard will clearly justify this statement of their view. "The very thing which we utterly deny is that any degree or form of depravity exists in the human heart which renders the sinner incapable of conversion by the truth." He expressly denies the existence of a "term [of depravity] which renders an influence distinct from and above the truth necessary to conversion." "We inherit no form of depravity so inveterate as to affect the perfect freedom of the human will, close the human heart

against the truth, or render a man insusceptible of being moved by motives; in a word, no form which renders him incapable of being converted by the simple, unaided light and force of divine truth." It would seem, then, that the sinner is not so averse to God and to holiness, but that he may convert himself, or the *truth* may convert him. Sin does not "close the heart against the truth." There is no inherent sinful opposition to God in the human heart constituting such an obstacle as to need a distinct divine influence to overcome it.

A theory of conversion which leads to such low views of the divine personality of the Holy Spirit, and which so extenuates the enormity of sin, and rests upon such superficial notions of man's inveterate sinfulness and alienation from God, is utterly irreconcilable with sound Baptist views of gospel truth. Such a system of teaching must inevitably foster self-confidence and pride, and can not be promotive of evangelical piety.

3. THE RELATION OF BAPTISM TO REGENERATION. It is not easy to bring order out of the chaos of confused and varying statements which appear in the writings of the "reformers" on this subject. Amidst it all, however, one thing is clear: in their view baptism sustains such a relation to regeneration that regeneration can not be complete without it. Mr. Campbell himself, over and over again, expressly and unmistakably identified or confounded baptism with regeneration. He maintained that "baptism is itself regeneration, and the only personal regeneration." Let me quote a few sentences from his writings: "To call the receiving of any spirit, or any influence or energy, or any operation on the heart of man, regeneration, is an abuse of all speech, as well as a departure from the diction of the Holy Spirit, who calls nothing personal regeneration except the act of immersion." Again, "They who gladly received the word were that day immersed—or, in other words, that same day were

converted or regenerated, or obeyed the gospel. These expressions, in the apostolic style, when applied to persons coming into the kingdom, denote the same act." Again, "No person was said to be converted until he was immersed, and all persons who were immersed were said to be converted." Again, "Whatever the act of faith may be, it necessarily becomes the line of discrimination between the two states. . . . On the one side they are pardoned, justified, sanctified, reconciled, adopted and saved; on the other they are in a state of condemnation. This act is sometimes called immersion, regeneration, conversion" (no difference which). Surely this not only identifies baptism with regeneration, but makes baptism also a sanctifying and saving ordinance, if it is possible to express this idea at all in English words. But Mr. Lard comes forward to expound Mr. Campbell's language, and to acquit him of the charge of teaching baptismal regeneration, which such language seems to justify. He puts this modified construction upon Mr. Campbell's teaching: he says the doctrine is this—"1st, That regeneration and the new birth are identical; 2d, That the new birth consists of two parts, to-wit: being begotten or quickened, and being baptized; 3d, That therefore baptism is not regeneration, *i. e.*, the whole of it." Baptism, he goes on to say, is only a "part," and the "last part" of regeneration. In the address of the Ohio Christian Missionary Society to the Ohio Baptist Convention, before quoted, it is said: "It (regeneration) includes, therefore, all that is comprehended in faith, repentance and baptism—and so far as it is expressive of birth, it belongs more properly to the last of these than to either of the former." "The change from a sinner to a Christian, from an alien to a citizen of the kingdom," etc., is not "complete without baptism," but "this consummates the change." This, then, is the more recent and approved form of statement: baptism, according to the Campbellite view, is the consummating act in the proc-

ess of regeneration. If this is so, then regeneration can not be realized or "consummated" without baptism. Certainly, until regeneration is complete, salvation is impossible. Then baptism is necessary to salvation; and this is, after all, baptismal regeneration. Baptists hold, on the contrary, that the new birth must be a complete thing before any one has a right to be baptized; that baptism is a sign of the regenerating act of the Holy Spirit as an accomplished fact. Let us turn to a closely related topic.

4. THE RELATION OF BAPTISM TO THE REMISSION OF SINS, OR TO FORGIVENESS AND JUSTIFICATION. On this point, happily, there is no difficulty in understanding and stating the Campbellite position. There is no ambiguity, no discordance in their statements on this subject of baptismal remission, which, as Dr. Jeter says, is the "main pillar of Campbellism." The evangelical doctrine is that, "in virtue of the atonement of Christ, God freely and fully remits the sins of all those who heartily repent and cordially believe in Christ." With this Baptists agree, and with regard to baptism they hold it to be simply "a declarative act indicating that the remission of sins has already taken place." But Mr. Campbell maintained that penitent believers are forgiven not before, but in the very act of baptism. "I am bold to affirm," he says, "that every one of them who, in the belief of what the apostle spoke, was immersed, did, in the very instant in which he was put under water, receive the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit." All the modern followers of this reformer adopt exactly his position on this question, without any essential modification. Mr. Errett, in a statement of the Campbellite "position," which has been widely published of late, and was reprinted in the Cleveland papers in the time of President Garfield's career, puts it in this way: "In baptism he (the sinner) appropriates God's promise of forgiveness, relying on the divine testimonies. . . . He

thus lays hold of the promise of Christ, and appropriates it as his own. He does not merit it nor procure it nor earn it in being baptized; but he appropriates what the mercy of God has provided and offered in the gospel." Again, "We therefore teach the believing penitent to seek through baptism the divine assurance of the forgiveness of sins," etc. ["Our Position," ch. iii. 3 and ii. 8.] On the contrary, the Baptist position is that the believer must by faith appropriate God's promise of forgiveness, and he must do this before he is a fit subject for baptism. And we should not admit to baptism one who professed to seek it for such a purpose as this—seeking through this ordinance the forgiveness of his sins. Faith, and not immersion, is the appropriating act. Mr. Campbell says that "it is not faith, but an act resulting from faith, which changes our state." Or, in language which we may now sometimes hear, not faith but baptism "makes a man a Christian." We should reverse these propositions, and maintain that it is faith and not immersion that makes a man a Christian. Mr. Lard himself correctly states the difference between us on this point. We may accept his proposition assigned to us, and join issue with him in the light of the New Testament. He says: "Mr. Jeter maintains that a person's sins are remitted the instant he becomes a penitent believer, and consequently before and without baptism. From this we dissent. We maintain that the sinner, though a believer, is still required to repent and be baptized in order to the remission of his sins, and consequently they are not remitted before and without baptism."

With regard to the importance of the distinction between Baptists and Campbellites on these questions, I submit, with all seriousness, that baptism administered or received in order to the remission of sins is not baptism; immersion administered or received as a regenerating act, either as identical with or consummating regeneration, is not baptism; that this view

of the design of baptism is so radically subversive of the place and meaning assigned to it in the Scriptures as utterly to invalidate it. Baptism is the immersion of a believer, expressly as an emblem of regeneration and remission already accomplished in his experience. The immersion of an unbeliever is not baptism. The immersion of any one with the intent by this means to "make him a Christian" is not baptism. The immersion of one instructed to seek thereby the assurance of pardon and administered for this purpose, is not baptism. This is ritualism; and ritualism makes void the commandments of God. Immersion administered with such ritualistic design is no more valid for baptism than the sprinkling of an unconscious babe. On any just view of New Testament order a Mormon immersion is worth as much as this perverted rite. I do not see how we can escape from this conclusion. Whatever view we take of the qualifications of the administrator, surely a perversion in the very design of the act of baptism, must of necessity invalidate the act. The administration of a rite for a purpose so unknown to the Scriptures and so utterly contrary to their spirit can not consistently be accepted by Baptists as valid.

5. CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE Campbellites differ from Baptists upon the question—perhaps it were more proper to say the fact or the reality—of Christian experience. Conviction of sin, godly sorrow, faith in Christ, an obedient spirit, love, peace, joy and hope are elements of genuine Christian experience. All these are feelings of the heart. There is a sense of sin, a sense of pardon. All true Christians believe that the passage from death unto life is an experience of the heart, and that this experience is a reality. Baptists have always laid great stress upon the necessity of such an experience as prerequisite to baptism and membership in the church. It has been held that, by the nature of the case, an important evidence of the reality of such an experience is to be found in

the feelings. The things contained in this experience are such as must be matter of consciousness. Hence we require a relation of the candidate's experience before the church, in order that the church may have the benefit of this, among other sources of evidence, in judging of the reality of the work of grace in the heart, and, therefore, of the fitness of the candidate.

Now, all this is caricatured and ridiculed by the Campbellites. They call it a fiction and a farce. They characterize it as "seeking the evidence of acceptance with God in supernatural tokens or special revelations"—which, of course, it is not. Mr. Lard declares that the main point in such an experience is a fiction, and that the relation of it fosters superstition. The main point in the experience which he calls fiction is, he says, "the sense of forgiveness alleged to be felt by the party at the moment when his sins are supposed to be remitted;" and he adds, with bitter sarcasm, "in most cases we may suppose the unfortunate victim of this delusion may be sincere." The language employed by Mr. Campbell and his disciples to caricature and ridicule what true disciples of Christ value as their religious experience, often falls little short of blasphemy. Let a single specimen be given from Mr. Lard. "No good man of strong mind, and unwilling to be deceived, ever yet heard related what is popularly called a 'Christian experience,' without feeling himself deeply moved when that part of the farce was approached which was to elicit a declaration of the sense of forgiveness. It is difficult to say which is the greater—the pity of such a man for the deluded creature who sits before him on the inquisitorial bench, to be plied with silly questions which ignorance or impudence can put, or his disgust for the blind guide who conducts the process of torturing the feelings of a subdued and weeping sinner into every imaginable form that is false." I can not refrain from saying that the "man of strong mind, and unwilling to be deceived," or to deceive oth-

ers, who can write in this way of a Christian experience, surely does not know what it is. For his part, he has none whatever to relate. No one who has a Christian experience can possibly call it a "fiction" and a "farce," nor approach this holy place with such shocking irreverence. And yet this is the common way in which Campbellite preachers talk of this sacred subject of Christian testimony. Inquirers are taught that they need no experience; that this is superstition: only be immersed, and seek in this the assurance of pardon.

Now the essential difference between Campbellites and Baptists on this question of experience, pertains not merely to the relation of it before the church, but to the reality of the experience itself. Its reality the Campbellites do expressly deny. They denounce the "alleged" experience as a fiction and a farce—a superstition. Why should they require as preliminary to baptism any specific evidence of what they do not conceive to exist, or to be possible? There is no doubt that many members of Campbellite churches have for themselves a genuine Christian experience. But in this respect and to this extent they are not strictly Campbellites. The system makes no provision whatever for a Christian experience; nay, it even scouts the very idea of such a thing. However numerous the exceptions to any rule may be, men are not likely to be better than their creed. They are not likely to possess what their creed denies to exist. If they do not be-

lieve in a Christian experience, they are not likely to have one.

There are other important points of difference between Campbellites and Baptists. In fact, we agree only in the outward act of baptism, and in the rejection of infant baptism. In all other points we differ in doctrine and practice; in most we are at antipodes. In the design and the subjects of baptism, and therefore in what is essential to the rite; in the relation of the ordinances; even in the great doctrines of sin and redemption, we do not agree. I have sought, as fairly as possible, to describe these distinctions on only a few points, such as seem to me most vital. My object has been rather to define than to argue the questions at issue. The differences are important and irreconcilable, and ought to be understood. No good can result from concealment or evasion. Such teachings demand, not affiliation, but earnest protest as the solemn duty of Baptists. We must and do earnestly desire that union of all Christian people for which he prayed. We believe his prayer will be answered, and there will be a oneness in him who is the truth as well as the life. But this is to be brought about not by compromise, but by honest adherence to conviction and loyalty to Christ. The only union which is worth seeking is that unity of faith and knowledge, which is the goal of the divine discipline appointed "for the perfecting of the saints." (Eph. iv. 12, 13.) May this true unity be hastened in its time.