

infant baptism in the New Testament households *except mere inference*? Let us enlighten the *Advocate* a little by teaching it how to argue its question. Dr. A. T. Bledsol, one of the brightest lights that ever shone in the Methodist Church before his death, writing in the *Methodist Quarterly Review* on this subject says: "It is an article of our faith that the baptism of young children (infants) is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable to the institutions of Christ. But yet with all our searching, we have been unable to find, in the New Testament, a single express declaration or word, in favor of infant baptism. We justify the rite, therefore, solely on the ground of *logical inference*, and not on any express word of Christ or his Apostles. This may perhaps be deemed by some of our readers a strange position for a Pedobaptist. It is by no means, however, a singular opinion. Hundreds of learned Pedobaptists have come to the same conclusion; especially since the New Testament has been subjected to a closer, more conscientious, and more candid exegesis, than was formerly practiced by controversialists." Again Dr. Bledsol says: "but what we wish in this connection, to emphasize most particularly, is the wonderful contrast between the silence of Christ and the everlasting clamors of his Church. Though he uttered *not one express word* on the subject of infant baptism, yet on this very subject, have his professed followers filled the world with sound and fury. The Apostles imitated his example. This is the united voice of all enlightened scholarship, not only in the M. E. Church, but in all Christendom; and the weakness and the fossilized condition of the *Advocate* will be both laughed at and pitied by sensible people. It has never tried to do any thing save to catch at some little side issue about which it tries to make a great ado. Both the object and folly of such a course is apparent to all. If its space is so very precious it can not be filled with a discussion of these fundamental doctrines and practices of its Church, then why does it fill it with false issues and spiteful misrepresentation? It has strictly and studiously avoided letting its readers see a line we have written, and from what it writes its readers could never so much as guess what the issue between us is! Its whole object is to throw dust into the air

and blind the eyes of the people.

But our contemporary rests on the belief of others since the days of the Apostles. That is, it believes in and practices infant baptism and sprinkling simply because sevenths of the people do so! We suppose this is the only argument it has to offer! Now we ask the *Advocate* to show us one case of infant baptism or even an allusion to it nearer than two hundred years to Christ and the Apostles. Also one case of sprinkling or pouring before A. D. 251. As we said before, so say we again, if the *Advocate* can not defend its dogmatism and does not wish to be put to the test, it should not print them in the first place. Let us be done with throwing dust.

#### Selections and Comments.

CONVERSION.—The *Christian at Work* prints this note:

Dr. Leonard W. Bacon says that "among intelligent theologians, at least outside the Baptist communion," he knows of none who holds that "every true disciple must know the time and circumstances of his conversion, and be able to give account of them." We know of no intelligent theologians of any denomination who hold to any such nonsense. We think better of the Baptists than Dr. Bacon seems to.

If the word "conversion" is used to mean some mysterious change wrought on the heart by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit in connection with seeing a light or hearing a voice from heaven, then we undertake to say that no living man is now able or ever has been to know and give an account of the time and circumstances of his conversion. There are no such conversions to Christ. But if it means a conversion such as we find in the New Testament, which was not completed without *obedience*, then to say that one does not know when he was converted is equivalent to saying that he does not know when he gave up sin and was baptized into Jesus Christ.

CALVINISM.—The truth is that Calvinism has introduced into the Christian religion more new absurdities than its leader had purged it of old ones. Our Savior did not come into the world to save metaphysicians only. His doctrines are levelled to the simplest understanding; and it is only by banishing hierophantic mysteries and scholastic subtlety, which they may have nicknamed Christianity, and

getting back to the plain and unsophisticated precepts of Christ, that we become real Christians. The half information of Luther and Calvin did something toward restoration of his genuine doctrines; the present contest will, I hope, complete what they began, and place us where the Evangelists left us.—*Letter of Thomas Jefferson Recently brought to Light.*

THE RIGHT VERSUS THE CONVENTIONAL.—There are some folks who don't care a straw about the righteousness of a certain course providing it is "the correct thing to do." They have got their political ribbon, and they are just ready to swear themselves red in the face in defence of what their leaders say, without caring to consider whether it is right or no. Now we like loyalty and pat every man on the back who has the courage of his convictions; but let a man be a man, and not act like one of those wooden soldiers of our childhood, who moved in stiff precision according to the working of our fingers. Is it right, pure, honest, honorable, Christian? That is the question; ask that, brother, and don't draw your sword for any cause until the answer is satisfactory.—*Ec.*

#### Original Contributions.

##### THE GREAT IMAGE.

BY CRAIGIE SHARP.

Nebuchadnezzar's vision I find in thoughts by Uriah Smith's reference to the four great powers, the Babylonish, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman Empires, and if he would use as good reasoning all through as he does in the first three kingdoms he would understand the kingdom of God and his Christ. On page 52 he says: "We do not take it to be necessary that Babylon to be called a universal kingdom should have had ever class of people and every country in the world absolutely under its sway, for this was not in a strict sense the fact with any one of the kingdoms which are called in history universal kingdoms. Babylon never conquered Greece nor Rome, but Rome was founded before Babylon had risen to the climax of its power." So I suggest that reasoning in the same way that the little stone cut out of the mountain without hands, that is, Christ built or started his kingdom or church on earth before the complete downfall of the Roman Empire; but at

that time was started the nucleus which should grow till it should fill the whole world. Christ came in the days of the fourth or Roman Empire, gave to Peter the keys of the kingdom, and told him whatsoever he bound on earth should be bound in heaven, and whatsoever he loosed on earth should be loosed in heaven; we ask what was the use of giving Peter the keys if he never used them? We answer, he did use them on the day of Pentecost, where 300 were made subjects of Christ's kingdom, and at the house of Cornelius, taking in Jews and Gentiles, and it has been growing ever since, and is now becoming the great mountain that shall fill the whole earth. I do not differ with Mr. Smith on the four kingdoms, but as each of the four kingdoms existed for a time before it overpowered its predecessor I argue that Christ's kingdom has existed for over eighteen hundred years and will exist until the last enemy is destroyed, which is death, then will be used the two keys which Christ gave to Peter. On page 89 we agree that the kingdom was in the future, at the time the Lord instituted the supper (Matt. 26: 26); but as John the Baptist preached the kingdom was at hand, just about to be ushered in; also we agree it was not set up before his ascension (Acts 1: 6,) but that it was started (Acts 2) and was set up on the day of Pentecost after his ascension, and that flesh and blood can enter the kingdom of Christ; but that it can not enter the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15: 50). This last passage, the kingdom of God, is what awaits those who are found faithful in the kingdom of Christ on earth, who are fighting to overcome the flesh and the devil. The gospel of Jesus Christ is now being preached and now is the time to enter in through the door, which is Christ. At the end will be proclaimed the everlasting gospel which will be at the time that Christ shall have conquered all things and delivers the kingdom to the Father God; then will be gathered home all the faithful soldiers who have come up through much tribulation, and though they may have received many scars in battle to overcome sin, then shall they return home to the kingdom of God to go out no more to battle with sin, stay at home with God to enjoy perpetual peace after the last enemy has been destroyed, which is death. The ground that