

**California Landmarkism.**

Ours are the only papers that can afford to give both sides of controverted questions. The following is from a paper called the *Herald of Truth*, and generally breathes a kind spirit:

We are indebted to Rev. C. H. Mattoon, of Albany, Oregon, and had we the space desired, we would give his letter in full. We confess the difficulty of any one's historically slipping without his notice. We yet hold, however, that the first Baptist church in the country was the one founded by Roger Williams, in March, 1639, in Providence, R. I., all controversy to the contrary notwithstanding. Of course there was a Baptist church in Newport, R. I., years before the one in Swansea, Mass. It was foolish to say otherwise.

BROTHER MATTOON represents *Landmarkism* to us as follows. He says:

"Landmarkers do not hold that no baptism is held to be valid except the immersion of a believer by a Baptist administrator, as Bro. Gage alleges, 'but that no baptism is valid, except by the authority of a gospel church, and if you choose to say that no church is a gospel church but a Baptist church, all right. In other words, it is church authority, and not ministerial, that gives validity to baptism. The immersion of a believer, even by a Baptist minister without the authority of a church, would not be received by a consistent Landmarker.' Moreover, Brother Mattoon states that 'neither Dr. J. R. Graves, nor any other intelligent Landmarker, refuses pulpit affiliation with other than Baptist ministers on the ground of the perverted church polity represented by them,' as Brother Gage affirms, 'but on the ground that their churches not being gospel churches, they have no ordination.' 'Will Brother Gage,' Brother Mattoon asks, 'invite an unordained man—as a minister—to preach in his pulpit? Are the ordinations of Pedobaptists valid?'"

We are glad to have these statements from an Oregon Landmarker. They seem to us to set forth clearly the ground upon which to conduct a fair discussion. Two or three questions occur to us in passing. Is it to be conceded that the validity of baptism rests on church authority? If so, we ask where is the venerable Oncken's baptism to be placed, who, at his own request, with six others, were baptized in the Elbe, in Germany, April 22, 1834, by Dr. Barnes Sears, and who were all the next day constituted into a church, with Oncken as pastor.—*Missionary Jubilee Volume*, p. 223. We believe a minister has a right to baptize, irrespective of a church, but that for reasons of prudence and counsel, it is unwise for him to exercise his right apart from the approval of the people he serves.

We hold that statements like the following, which we cut from our neighbor, *The Evangel*, deserve notice:

"No minister, since the death of the last one of the Apostles, has ever acted under the Great Commission. That was an extraordinary apostolic commission given to them, and to none others, and limited to the age in which they lived. The Jewish age overlapped the Christian dispensation, by about thirty years. Hence the Great Commission expired by limitation with the apostolic office. 'Christ made his apostles his ministers plenipotentiary in his church and kingdom, and appointed no successors to them. They were to preach the gospel to all the then known nations, and he promised to be with them to the end of the age—the then present Jewish age.'"

Holding, as we understand this paper to do, to the Landmarkism of Dr. J. R. Graves, respecting the authority of a gospel church only, as giving validity to baptism and to ordination, its editor affirms that

"There is no precedent in the New Testament to justify the irregular baptism performed by modern missionaries."

But how does all this read to those to whom the premise is not made out that the authority of baptism inheres in a gospel church, so called, alone, and to those who are not at all clear that the Commission was given to eleven only. That Commission was probably given to more than a hundred, possibly to five hundred, and its authority was probably conferred on them all to preach the Gospel. This restriction of baptismal authority to a church, seems to us to savor of Papal privileges and rights, and not of liberty, wherewith Christ makes all his people free. Besides the promise of the Savior's presence was no more limited to the Jewish age, or to the term of thirty years after his death, than the prediction of the final harvest at the end of the world is to be limited to that age. In each the Greek is *aiōnos*. "The harvest is the end of the world." Is that at the end of the Jewish age also? We ask as an inquirer only, and yet as one whose interest in truth is serious.

Can it be that the Commission which has been called *great*, is after all so small as to be exhausted of authority in the second generation of the first Christian century? Was that Commission apostolic simply as belonging to no others? No. It laid the burden of the world's evangelization upon Christians for all time, and sustains them by the unending solace of the Master's presence and power."

It is to be regretted that our Baptist brethren cannot settle these questions, and be at peace at least among themselves. Mr. Benedict, the celebrated author of the history of the Baptists, takes the ground here taken, as to the first Baptist church in America. Drs. Ray, Graves, and others say no. They say Roger Williams was not a Baptist at all.

I do not see that this matters much, however; for Mr. Benedict, I. N. Brown, author of the Encyclopedia of religious knowledge, and others of their ablest men, all fail to find any Baptist church in the old country, or anywhere, before 1522, if I remember correctly. All they claim is, that certain people all along back to the apostles—including the Waldenses—resembled the Baptists. This is true. They resembled several families or kinds of Baptists—and they also resembled Methodists and Presbyterians as well, and as much! They especially resembled *Christians*!

Uncandid writers may claim more; but the best of them do not. And this argument—if it is an argument—proves far too much for the claims of Landmark Baptistism—far too much. And as they cannot trace their church more than a fourth or fifth of the way back to the apostles, they may as well commence it with Roger Williams as any one else. *It is certain it did not begin with the apostles.* They were not Baptists, in the modern sense, and they planted no Baptist churches—though the churches they formed did resemble Baptist churches—and others also—and I really wish the resemblance was even greater. It would have to be far greater before *identity* could be claimed.

As to the authority to baptize, I could wish they had appealed to the Scriptures. In historic matters we appeal to history, but in this we should enquire for Bible authority.

To aid in this I would enquire:

1. Where, in the Holy Scriptures, was any particular class of men appointed or ordained to immerse? I do not know. I can find where certain persons were sent to preach, and to set in order the churches; but nothing is said of their baptizing.

2. To particularize who ordained Philip to baptize? I do not know. The church at Jerusalem ordained him to the work of a *deacon*—that is, to serve the church in Jerusalem in taking care of the poor, &c.—not to preach or to baptize. Yet he did preach and baptize. Where did he get his authority?

3. If ordination is necessary to preaching and baptizing, where was Paul ordained before he went to Antioch, and by whom? Who can answer? He had been preaching, and no doubt baptizing, for about nine years, and was then ordained as a missionary by the Antioch church, which he had built up. Did he act without authority before, or whence his authority?

4. If these were special cases, may we not have special cases now?

We ordain—or the church selects and ordains men to go out as missionaries; and we favor their baptizing *ordinarily*. But the real, or absolute necessity for their doing; or the alleging that, under no circumstances, is baptism valid, without formal ordination, we cannot maintain.

And as Christian churches and Baptist churches only resemble, and are not always and necessarily the same; so *Christian baptism* and *Baptist baptism* may only resemble, and may not be always exactly the same.

But I say these things in kindness—not for controversy; and I will be glad to learn, and to aid others in these matters.

C. K.

—If a man's moral tendency is in the right direction, he is indeed happier than if good thoughts and right actions are exceptional with him. But when one has been tempted, and has resisted the temptation and has finally triumphed, and done the thing which he ought to do, let him not give himself up to useless regrets that he was ever tempted at all, or that his path to final victory was not unswerving from the outset. The devil is pretty sure to reserve his chief inducements until the last moment; and therefore it happens that men are the most irresolute or obstinate, or violent, or cruel, or blasphemous and injurious, like the unconverted Saul, at the very moment that precedes their final banishment of the right and the true. This rule extends from the smallest affairs to the greatest; and much mischief is wrought by neglecting to remember it. Yielding to temptation is wrong; temptation itself is not wrong; and in a true sense the act itself and not its preliminaries, is the measure of the victory. One of our presidents once wrote and sent to Congress a message which was generally considered one of his most creditable acts, on the very day when he had written and destroyed a message taking directly opposite ground. Therefore he was measured by what he wrote, not by what he had destroyed; and the same is true of each of our victories over temptation.—*We are known by what we do, not by what we might have done.* For this reason that man is wise who does not waste his strength in lamenting over sins he nearly committed, but who saves it for his fight against those he is in danger of committing; for he may be sure that at the very last moment the greatest struggle is likely to be demanded.—*S. S. Times.*

—Presbyterian doctrine and discipline are not in favor with the government of Austria. Two months ago the gendarmes entered a congregation in Bohemia, took the names of all the males present, who were fined, and the minister five times more than the members, and on a succeeding Sunday took down again the names and doubled the fines. Persecution for assembling for divine worship in the heart of Europe is a strange thing.

—A lump of fresh quicklime the size of a walnut dropped into a pint of water and allowed to stand all night, the water being then poured off from the sediment and mixed with a quarter of a pint of the best vinegar, forms the best wash for scurf in the head. It is to be applied to the roots of the hair.

A SURE REMEDY.—Just before going to bed each night, let every boy sit down and think over the day that has just closed, and if he remembers any falsehood or bad word he has said, let him take a piece of common brown soap, and wash out his mouth with great care and thoroughness. We knew of a mother who tried this remedy with her young son, who was addicted to lying, and it worked well.

HE LIKED THEM.—"Well, Harry, how did you like the preserved cherries?" Harry (on his fifth birthday, had preserved crystallized fruits for the first time). "Oh, auntie, I liked them so much that if I could have made a hole in my throat I'd have taken them out and eaten them over again."

—The great bridge over the Frith of Forth will have two suspension spans of 1,600 feet each, and its entire length will be about 7,860 feet. When it is finished there will be an unbroken line of railway from London to Wick, in the north of Scotland.

—Dr. Verner White, of Liverpool, has made up a table showing that in Great Britain and Ireland where the growth of Roman Catholicism is such a bugbear, the proportion of Roman Catholics fell from 27 percent of the whole population in 1841 to 18 per cent. in 1871. The Protestants have gained and the Roman Catholics have lost. In this country, owing to the immense immigration, the percentage of the Catholics to the whole population has increased, but not in as rapid a ratio as that of the Methodists, Baptists, or Disciples.

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