

The Cooneyites or "Dippers"

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By Rev. Canon Armstrong

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**The Cooneyites or "Dippers"
BY
The Rev. Canon Armstrong, B.A. (T.C.D.)
Rector of Templeberry, Diocese of Killaloe**

"Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." (Acts XX.30)

"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." (I Thes v.21)

"From all false doctrine, heresy and schism, Good Lord deliver us." (Litany)

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PREFACE.

It is very necessary that our people should be warned against the pernicious teaching of these so-called "Pilgrims," who come amongst us with their mouths full of Scriptural phrases and pious words, seeking "to draw away disciples after them."

While the writer realizes his treatment of the subject to be very inadequate, he yet hopes it may serve this purpose.

The Cooneyites openly avow that their object is to uproot and destroy the Church (which they do not allow to be a true Christian Church), and to set up their own system in its stead.

It follows that any one of us who, knowing this, gives help or countenance to them is false to his Christian profession, and a traitor to his Church.

Mark well St. John's warning to his converts:—

"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed. For he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John i. 10-11).

S. C. ARMSTRONG

Rectory,
Templeberry,
Templemore.

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The Cooneyites, or "Dippers.

CHAPTER I.

INFANT BAPTISM.

Theology has been the fruitful source of much fierce contention, especially in cases of innovations or changes in matters of doctrine, or even of rites and ceremonies.

In the very infancy of the Christian Church the question as to under what conditions the Gentiles were to be admitted, gave rise to much discussion, and even necessitated the holding of a Council at Jerusalem to settle it (Acts xv). The eating meat and drinking wine which had been laid on the altars of the gods, and sold afterwards by the priests in the markets; the observing of Jewish feasts and holy days; these, and such like questions, caused such differences of opinion that St. Paul thought it necessary to write to his converts about them, and give his advice thereon.

Passing on from the New Testament to the historical records of the progress of Christianity in the first few centuries, we find that many questions caused such strife that schism often resulted.

Now, when we bear in mind the importance and significance of Christian Baptism, we must of necessity conclude that, *if infant Baptism did not exist from the very beginning in the Church*, we shall find ample evidence of a wide and bitter difference of opinion as to the lawfulness of such a fundamental and far-reaching change.

We search the pages of the New Testament in vain for the slightest trace of any controversy on the subject, and we conclude that *Infant Baptism was certainly not an innovation of New Testament times*—which bring us down to the end of the first century.

In the three centuries following we have an ever-increasing stream of writings by the Fathers—as they are called—of the Christian Church, as well as by schismatics and heretics.

The learned Dr. Wall made a most complete and impartial search into all the available writings of the first four centuries for every reference to the subject of *Infant Baptism*. (1)

He gives every statement to be found in the writings of Clemens Romanus, Hermes, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Cyprian, Gregory, Basil, Ambrose, Jerome, and many others, as well as in the Decrees of Councils—a long list extending from before the death of St. John to the end of the fourth century.

And what is the result of a careful scrutiny of these passages?

There is not one sentence, nay, not one word in which we can discover the smallest trace of there being or ever having been, a question of the introduction of Infant Baptism into the Church.

Moreover in all those 400 years there is to be found only one man (Tertullian) who advised delay in baptizing infants, while at the same time, mark well, speaking of Infant Baptism as the recognized rule of the Church, nowhere suggesting that it was an innovation, or denying its efficacy.

He held many other peculiar notions, such as that unmarried persons should not be baptized, and fell into the heresy of the Montanists, who said that a man named Montanus was the Holy Spirit.

He subsequently founded a sect of his own. This man is *the only champion of their opinions whom the objectors to Infant Baptism can find in the first four centuries*—and, indeed, they may well be proud of him!

It would be quite superfluous to carry on the enquiry further, for it cannot be gainsaid that from the end of the fourth century on Infant Baptism was the universal and unquestioned rule of all Christian Churches.

I do not see how any intelligent, candid person, who weighs these simple facts, can avoid coming to the conclusion that *Infant Baptism has existed in the Christian Church from the first, and therefore was ordained by our Lord Himself*.

We find other and independent proofs of this in the New Testament.

Our Lord's commission to His Apostles to baptize is given in Mark xvi. 15, 16, and Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

The Revised Version (R.V.) of the New Testament is allowed on all sides to be a more accurate translation than the Authorized Version (A.V.), so I shall quote from it. "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark).

The objector to Infant Baptism says that here, "believeth" is put before "baptized," and that there fore no one is fit for baptism until he believes—and that an infant is incapable of this.

Any Greek scholar will tell you that the words in the original will not warrant such a conclusion.

"Belief" and "Disbelief" are the great leading subjects here spoken of, and, in order to produce the proper emphasis, the word translated "believeth" *must* stand where it does.

Although English is not nearly so sensitive in this way, a simple example will, I think, make the Greek construction clear:

Suppose the manager of a school says to his teacher, "The scholar that is *diligent* and is enrolled shall be rewarded, but he that is *idle* shall be punished." The manager is here laying down a rule for the rewarding of the diligent, and the punishment of the idle boys in his school. The reference to enrolling is simply to exclude from the operation of the rule any boy whose name has not yet been placed on the roll. No one would be so foolish as to think that because the word "diligent" is put before "enrolled" the manager meant that a boy must show diligence before being enrolled!

Much less, on account of the peculiarity of the Greek construction, could our Lord's words be taken as *proof that a person had to believe before being baptized*.

But supposing a manager, who was founding a new school, said to the teachers he had engaged, "Go ye into all the parish, and make scholars of all the children, enrolling them and instructing them"—we should at once conclude, no matter how ignorant we might be of school regulations, that the way for a boy to become a scholar *of that school was first to have his name put on the roll, and thento be instructed by the teachers—the two present participles, "enrolling" and "instructing," being explanatory of the command, "make scholars."*

Now we have *an exactly parallel construction* in Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples (2) of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you."

These two present participles, "baptizing" and "teaching," are explanatory of the command, "make disciples"—there is first the initiatory rite, baptism, and then the subsequent teaching.

This is the process of ordinary discipleship laid down for all time in our Lord's words, and we follow it strictly in admitting the infants of Christian parents into the Christian Covenant, and teaching them, as they grow up, to observe all things whatsoever the Lord commanded to be taught.

Of course, in the early Church, when *adult converts* were made, from among Jews or Heathen, instruction preceded the baptism, and our missionaries now follow the same practice.

But this instruction was evidently of a very elementary kind, and baptism was administered at once on a simple profession of belief in one true God and His Son Jesus Christ.

As an instance of this, take the case of Cornelius (Acts x.). When Peter arrived at his house he found his household assembled with "many that were come together."

Peter in a few words preached the Gospel unto them. And "while Peter yet spake" (v. 44.), or as he "began to speak" (xi. 15), "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word."

By this visible outpouring of the Holy Spirit, God made known to His Apostle that the Gentiles were to be admitted into the Church, and so they, having received the inward and spiritual gift, needed only the outward and visible sign which the Lord had commanded, and they were baptized in His Name. "Then prayed they him (Peter), to tarry certain days,"—no doubt *to instruct them in the doctrines of Christianity, after they had been baptized.*

We see the same short and elementary preparation for baptism in the case of the jailor of Philippi and his household. The earthquake was at midnight. The jailor brought Paul and Silas out of the inner prison. They spake unto him the Word of the Lord. The jailor took them, "the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, *immediately*" (Acts xvi. 33). (3)

Thus we see that, *even in the case of adults, the teaching of the Doctrines of Christianity* (except a mere elementary declaration of the Gospel), *came after baptism, not before.*

Having thus seen that our *Lord's Commission to Baptize does not in any way exclude the Baptism of Infants*, let us now proceed to the proof that *it most certainly includes it.*

To be in a position to judge how the Apostles would interpret their Lord's command to "baptize all the nations," we must bear in mind these facts:

Baptism was no new rite, unknown to the Jews. It was (as we learn from Jewish writers) in common use amongst them in receiving proselytes from the heathen.

It was customary to baptize men, women, and children (including infants)—the men being circumcised as well. (4)

Add to this the further fact that infants were received into the old Covenant at eight day's old, and it must appear *absolutely certain that not only was there no need at all of any special command from our Lord to baptize infants, but that the Apostles would most certainly baptize them if He did not expressly forbid it to be done.*

In that case we should have found a command of His to this effect:

"You know that from the time of your forefathers, infants have been received into the Old Covenant. You also are accustomed to see the infants of the Gentiles received by baptism.

"When I am gone away from you, and ye go forth to preach the Gospel to all nations, beware lest ye do as ye have seen done. Infants are to be excluded from the New Covenant."

Can we imagine Him who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me," and "took them up in His arms and blessed them," speaking thus? At all events He never did.

And so, when our opponents ask us for a direct command of our Lord's to baptize infants, we can answer, "It is included in the general term, 'all the nations,' 'every creature.' In *that* is summed up all male and female, old and young, bond and free, for so would most certainly the Apostles understand it. We see how St. Peter did so, when, on the Day of Pentecost, he cried, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you *and to your children*, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. *We challenge you to produce our Lord's prohibition—if he gave one.*

In order to endeavour to prove that Infant Baptism did not exist in the early Church they are fond of saying that there is no record of the administration of the rite to any infant.

It would have been *very strange* if we had any *direct* mention of an infant being baptized, but I think we have *indirect* evidence enough to satisfy any unprejudiced judgment.

We must remember that the Apostles went forth to preach Jesus Christ to those who knew Him not. Their great work was to proclaim the Gospel, not to be seeking for converts in order to baptize them and their families.

St. Paul says, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel." (5)

Of course, no infant would be baptized unless one parent at least first became a Christian.

We would naturally expect, therefore, that most of the early cases of Baptisms would be of adults, and *very occasionally of their households as well*.

The evidence here in our favour is extraordinarily strong.

I have seen it stated thus: "We have four recorded cases of whole households being baptized. Surely, there must have been infants or little children in some of these."

That way of putting the argument is indeed very strong, but the facts warrant it being put in a *much stronger form*.

When we examine the records of Baptisms in the New Testament, we find that *wherever it was possible to baptize the household of a convert it was done*.

All the recorded cases of Christian Baptism, with one exception, are to be found in the book of "the Acts."

The first is that of the 3,000 on the Day of Pentecost. These people appear to have been foreign Jews come together from their distant homes to the Feast at Jerusalem, as the Law commanded, and the custom was (see Lev. xxiii. 15, and Acts ii. 10). There could not have been any "households" baptized in this case.

Then we have an account of the baptizing of some of the inhabitants of a city called Samaria, who for a long time past had given heed to one Simon a sorcerer, but became converted through the preaching of Philip. These, of course, were *all adults* ("both men and women"—Acts viii. 12), and there is no reference to children or households.

Then Simon himself, although not sincerely converted, was baptized. We do not expect to hear of any household in his case!

The next is that of the Ethiopian Eunuch, as he was returning from Jerusalem to his far away home (Acts viii)

Then we have the baptism of Saul as he lay sick in Damascus—his home was in distant Tarsus (Acts ix.).

Next comes the case of Cornelius and his friends. As Peter preached, the Holy Ghost fell on *all them who were gathered together* to hear him, and *they were baptized* (Acts x). We, surely, do not expect to hear of any infants being present on that occasion!

The next *three* records of converts being baptized are peculiar in that they tell us of the *baptisms of the heads of families living where they were converted to Christianity*.

These are the first instances where we could expect to hear of families being received into the Church at the same time as the head. And in each of the three cases it so came about.

Lydia was a native of Thyatira, but had settled in Philippi, where she heard Paul preach and turned to the Lord. "And she was baptized, *and her house hold*" (Acts xvi. 15).

In the same chapter we read of the jailor of Philippi's conversion. He lived, no doubt, in the prison, and *he and all his were baptized immediately*" (Acts xvi. 33).

The third of these is that of Crispus, the chief ruler of the Synagogue at Corinth, he "believed in the Lord *with all his house*."

It is said also that "many of the Corinthians hear ing, believed, and were baptized," but naturally no mention is made of their families (Acts xviii. 8).

There is one more case recorded in the Acts, that of *twelve men, who had been baptized unto John's baptism*, and who were baptized with Christian baptism when Paul explained to them the difference between the two—the result being that they received the Holy Ghost.

We do not expect to meet with any infants in this case.

There is only one other passage where the baptisms of Christians are recorded. This is 1 Corinthians, chapter i. St. Paul is upbraiding the Corinthians with the party spirit prevailing among them, one saying that Paul was his leader, another Apollos, another Cephas, another Christ. He thanks God that He had so ordered it that he, Paul, had not baptized many of them lest any might say he had baptized in his own name, to glorify himself. (He had left the administration of baptism to others of his company and performed it himself very rarely.) He says here that he had baptized "none of you but Crispus and Gaius...and the household of Stephanas."

We have seen (Acts xviii.) that "Crispus *and all his household* believed," so *there is only this one case of an individual (Gaius) left, and about him we know nothing*.

I have gone carefully through these records of Chris tian baptism, as I think it is very important to show that, as I have already said, in every case where we could possibly expect it, there is mention made of the receiving into the Church by Holy Baptism the families of those who became Christians.

We learn from this fact that it was the ordinary rule to baptize the families of converts—when *they could be reached*—which is exactly what we should expect when we previously recognize that Infant Baptism is of Divine appointment.

It is not a question of speculating whether there may, or may not have been even a solitary infant or child among these four families. These are but specimens (and more we could not have, as we have seen) of the rule of the Christian Church to baptize the household with the head.

With our opponents, it is otherwise. Beginning with the assumption that Infant Baptism was neither instituted by our Lord, nor practised by His Apostles, they are driven to argue that it is quite a common thing to find four "households" without so much as one infant, or child of tender years, amongst them, nor will they be convinced unless we can produce a specific instance of an infant being baptized.

That is what they ask us to do. They demand, in fact, that we should find such a verse as this in, say, the account given of the conversion of the jailor of Philippi: "He was baptized, he and all his immediately, namely his wife, aged 30 years, a son aged 10; and an infant daughter aged 10 months"—in fact, unless we can turn the Book of the Acts into a register of baptisms they will not be satisfied!

Could religious prejudice go further than this?

We need not wonder that there is no passage in the New Testament referring specially to the *subject of Infant Baptism*, because what the writers say of Baptism (and that is not much) is applicable to all who receive it, whatever their age and condition, and so they have nothing special to declare regarding Infant Baptism.

The reason why we find a good deal said on the subject in the writings of the ages that follow is, that from very early times the subject of original sin, and its forgiveness, came to be much discussed, and, as infants had no "actual" sin, the *effects of their Baptism* was a matter of frequent reference.

There are other arguments, and some of them of great force, made use of to combat the opinions of those who object to Infant Baptism, but I have not space for them here.

Let the above suffice. They are sufficient to my present purpose—which is *not* to try and convince those who would "not be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

A few words in answer to a question which will arise in a thoughtful mind—

"What is the cause of this fierce objection to Infant Baptism?"

The objection to infant Baptism arises from a total misunderstanding of what Baptism is.

If it was appointed to be a ceremony which a believer ought to undergo, as an outward and visible sign of his *conversion*, then it would follow, as a matter of course, that infants are not fit to be baptized, for they are incapable of conversion, which is a conscious turning from sin or carelessness to God.

The New Testament nowhere warrants such a doctrine of baptism. Its teaching is concisely stated in the Church Catechism. "In my baptism I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of heaven."

There is no change of character (such as conversion) implied in Baptism, but only a change of position and condition.

An infant is just as capable of this change as an adult. There is no necessity for me to say more on that point.

If any particular views on Baptism necessarily exclude the Baptism of infants, it is those views that are wrong, and must be corrected, and not the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles, nor the practice of Infant Baptism, which, we have every reason to believe, has existed, in the Christian Church from the very beginning.

"The gentle Saviour calls
Our children to His breast;
He folds them in His gracious arms;
Himself declares them blest.

"Forbid them not," He cries,
Nor scorn their humble claim;
The heirs of heaven are such as these,
For such as these I came."

Gladly we bring them, Lord,
Devoting them to Thee;
Imploring that, as we are Thine,
Thine may our offspring be. Amen."

—Church Hymnal, No. 372.

CHAPTER II.

"DIPPING."

With regard to the manner of the administration of Baptism also the Cooneyites follow the sect of the "Baptists," who hold that immersion (dipping under) is essential to the validity of Christian Baptism.

Hence they are popularly known as "Dippers," and they "dip" in the open air, even in the depth of winter. They are wont to sneer at what they call "baby sprinkling."

Now, although the term used by our Church is not "sprinkling," but "pouring" water upon the baptized person, we are not ashamed of the word "sprinkling," nor do we like it to be lightly treated, for it is always used in the Bible with a sacred meaning.

For instance, St. Paul speaks of the blood of our Saviour as the "blood of sprinkling" (Heb. xii. 24), and so does St. Peter (1 Peter i. 2).

From the writings of some of the early Christian "Fathers" we find that both "immersion", and "allusion" (pouring water on) were used. Immersion appears to have been, after a time at all events, the usual way, but in the case of sickness, haste, want of a quantity of water, or such like occasions, baptism of water on the face was counted sufficient. (5)

Many people think that in the Apostles' time the simple form of "pouring water on" was the ordinary method, and that it was only when Christian ritual began to be elaborated, "dipping," conducted with much pomp and ceremony, became the customary method.

I think we shall see reason, as we go on, to coincide in this opinion.

Now, while in warm climates, like those of Palestine or Southern Europe, immersion would, in ordinary cases, be quite safe, it cannot be denied that in cold countries like this it would often be attended by serious risk to health.

Believing that Baptism by "pouring water on" is equally valid we, therefore, use that method, although if God-parents desire a child to be "dipped," we are willing to "dip it in the water discreetly and warily," provided that we "be certified that the child may well endure it". (7) (See Rubric in Office of Infant Baptism.)

"But," say our opponents, "we can prove that the *invariable* custom in New Testament times was immer sion, and consequently that it is the only valid mode of administration."

Now mark this well: *It would be no use at all for them to prove that immersion was the usual method employed*, for if they grant that "pouring water on" was used *at all*, then their whole case falls to the ground, for that would be allowing that *it was a valid form, and that is all we contend for*.

Let us now examine their so-called "proofs."

They say that the Greek word for "baptizing" always means "to dip under," or "immerse." We can easily show that this is not correct. Where we read in Luke xi. 38, "The Pharisee marvelled that He [Jesus] had not washed before dinner," the literal rendering is "that *Hewas not baptized* before dinner."

And again, when we read (Mark vii. 4) of the Jews: "When they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not," the literal rendering is "except they be *baptized*, they eat not." Now this washing before dinner was only the washing of the hands (Mark vii. 5). It is plain, then, that when it is said our Lord, "was not baptized before dinner," *it does not mean that He had not been immersed in Water, but that His hands had not been washed by a servant pouring water upon them, as the custom was*.

Again, in 1 Cor. x. 2 we read, that all the Israelites were "baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." It is hardly necessary for me to point out that *the Israelites were not immersed in, or dipped under the water of the Red Sea*.

We see, then, that "Baptizing" *does not always mean Immersion*.

"But," say they, "in the Scriptural accounts of the two cases of baptizing, where the *process* of adminis tration is described, there is to be found clear proof that dipping under the water was the method used."

One case is that of the Ethiopian eunuch. We read in Acts viii. 36, 37 (R.V.): "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip."

You might read over these verses a good many times before you discovered where they profess to find the proof that the eunuch was *dipped* under the water. They say it is in the words, "They went down both into the water"!

Now, if these words bore the meaning they say they do, they would prove too much, for then *Philip must have been dipped under the water, as well as the Eunuch!*

Without dwelling upon the fact that this was a "desert" place, where water must have been scarce, or upon the Eunuch's exclamation, "Behold, here is water!"—which certainly has the appearance of calling Philip's attention to a pool or spring not very conspicu ous, and therefore very unlikely to have been deep enough for "dipping under" the water; it is quite sufficient for our purpose to point out, that the Greek word properly translated "into," here, *never means "under."*

It is just as if one were to say, "The cow went down into the water." Would anyone think that meant that the cow went completely under the water?

Surely, blind prejudice drives men to queer conclusions!

The other case is the baptism of our Lord Himself. These are the words they rely on: "And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway *out of the water*." The Revised Version translates this "from the water," so that passage is of no use to them.

In Mark i. 10 we read that Jesus "was baptized of John in the Jordan. And straightway coming up *out of* the water he saw the heavens, etc."

Now, the very most that could be made out of these English words is that they show that Jesus stood in *the Jordan* while being baptized, but even this could not be proved from the original, for the word translated "in" is more than 100 times in the New Testament rendered "at," and in more than 150 others it is rendered "with," so that the words might, with equal correctness, read: "John baptized at Jordan," or "John baptized with (the water of) Jordan."

And the words translated "coming up *out of* the water" might as correctly be rendered "coming up *from* the water."

Another passage which they are very fond of quoting is this: "And John also was baptizing in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there" (John ii. 23).

"This," they say, "settles the question of John's practice. He went to Ænon because there was a sufficient depth of water there to immerse the people."

Now the literal rendering of this verse is as follows: "And John also was baptizing in Ænon" (that is *The Fountain, or Spring*)" because there were many *waters* there" (margin—R.V.).

Bearing in mind the great scarcity of water in parts of Palestine, so often referred to in the Bible in accounts of the digging of wells, disputes about the ownership of them, quarrels over the watering of flocks, and so on, we can readily see that the Baptist, when his mission took him away from the Jordan, would be sure to select a spot where there were "springs," "with many waters" flowing from them, not only for the purpose of baptizing, by any mode, but also to ensure that the crowds of people, who flocked from all the surrounding country to hear him, should have water for themselves and their camels.

I do not think that any candid reader will find here any *proof* that John's reason for going to "The Spring" was because he *could not baptize unless he had sufficient water to immerse his converts*.

Only one other passage remains to be considered, and that need not detain us long.

It is said that when St. Paul speaks of Christians "having been buried *with Christ* in baptism" (Col. ii. 12) and (1 Cor. xv. 4), the symbolism he uses requires the assumption that in baptism the body is *put under the water*—for a dead body is *buried under the clay*.

The weak point about this argument is that was Lord's body was not "buried " in that way—it only placed in a cave-tomb, not covered by clay, nor even placed in a coffin. So that "proof" falls to the ground.

We have now examined all the passages brought forward from the New Testament in the endeavour to prove that Immersion was the *only* form of baptism used then, and we have plainly seen that, far from proving this, *they leave it quite an open question how baptism was administered*—whether by "Dipping under" the water, or "Pouring water on" the person baptized.

We might well rest content with this result, for no reason has been shown why we should change the practice of our forefathers, but as our opponents have appealed to the recorded accounts of the baptisms in the New Testament, let us glance at some of those about which they are discreetly silent, and see do they throw any light on the question, **"Was Immersion the *invariable* rule in New Testament times?"**

Take the case of the first Christian baptisms recorded—3,000 baptized in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost! Were they immersed? Is it at all likely? Jerusalem was, and is, a city where water is very scarce. Travellers tell us that when it rains the inhabitants place vessels in the streets to catch the water that comes from the roofs. The brook Cedron is only a dry bed, except when a flood rushes down after heavy rains. They say, "But there was the pool of Siloam which they could have gone to."

Fancy a procession of 3,000 people going through the streets of Jerusalem, surrounded by a hostile populace, and the soldiers of Rome, ever on the watch to quell any appearance of disturbance! And then think of the work of plunging 3,000 people under water! It is easy to speak of "3,000," but very hard to realize what an enormous crowd that would be.

A Cooneyite leader, writing to the ***Fermanagh Times of March 28, 1907***, makes very light of this. He brings his knowledge of arithmetic to bear on the problem. "One baptizer would do at least 20 in an hour. The 120 would, at that rate, do 3,000 in less than an hour and a half."

Such a conceit! The one hundred and twenty believers (*they were both men and women*) standing in deep water plunging the converts for all they were

Worth! Is it not, I ask, *far more likely* that a much simpler form of baptism than Immersion was used on that occasion?

Take the case of Saul's baptism (Acts ix.). Picture the man in a state of collapse. "He was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink." Ananias comes in and gives him his Master's message. "And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales, and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized, and when he had received meat he was strengthened" (v. 18, 19).

Fancy a man in the condition described, rising from his bed and, although three days without food, going forth with Ananias into the streets of Damascus, and, perhaps into the plain outside the walls, to seek for a pool or river where he could be immersed!

And yet that is what must have happened according to the "Dipping and *nothing else*" theory. How much simpler and more reasonable to believe that the account "received sight," "and arose," "and was baptized," "received meat," "was strengthened," gives a consecutive story of what took place in the room which Saul occupied in the house of Judas, in the street called Straight.

Consider the case of the jailer of Philippi (Acts xvi.). The earthquake, we are told, was "about midnight." The jailer "called for lights and sprang in, "...into the inner prison where he had put Paul and Silas for extra security (v. 24)—"He fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out (that is, clearly, out of the inner prison into the outer one, for he did not bring them up into his house until after he and all his were baptized— v. 34), and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou

shalt he saved, thou and thy house. And they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house, and he took them *the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately.*"

Now it is surely utterly incredible that *the jailer, "he and all his,"* went forth in the dead of the night to be dipped in some pool or river, leaving the other prisoners (v. 25), and the prison (whose doors had been burst open by an earthquake, which might be repeated at any moment) to take care of themselves! Indeed the word "*immediately*" effectually disposes of any such theory.

Another consideration, and one, I think, of great significance in regard to these two cases of baptizing, is this: If Ananias considered "dipping" essential in Paul's case, and Paul himself, afterwards, in the case of the jailer and his household, would not the former have waited until the starving Paul had partaken of food and been somewhat restored, before bringing him forth to some place of deep water to "dip" him?

And would not Paul and Silas have put off the dipping of the jailer and his family until the morning light had come, and all things could be done "decently and in order," and with safety to the jailer? The fact that there was no delay in either case is in itself a very strong proof that "dipping" was not the method employed.

Surely we are now in a position to answer the question, "**Was Immersion the *invariable* rule in New Testament times?**"

We can reply with confidence, "No, certainly not. It is quite evident that pouring water on the person to be baptized was the method used—in cases of emergency, at all events."

Further than that, we have no need to go, although the facts we have been considering certainly appear to warrant us in going much further, and concluding that "pouring water on," or simply "sprinkling" with water, appears to have been the rule; dipping under the water, the exception, in the early Apostolic times. (7)

CHAPTER III.

"GO PREACHING" THEORIES

Hitherto we have been considering those theories upon the subject of Baptism which the Cooneyites have appropriated from the sect of the "Baptists," but now we shall examine a claim of theirs which is specially their own, and parts them at once from the whole professing Christian world. They make a clean sweep of the ministry of all Christian bodies!

The destitute tramp preachers, male and female, are the sent ministers of Christ, "and there are none other sent ones."

They put the alternatives before us:

"The Jesus Way" or The World's Way.

Christ or The "Churches" (so-called).

His Apostles or The Clergy.

Will you have fellowship with Jesus the Pauper, the Tramp Preacher, and the Tramp Preachers sent out by Him, or the Clergy?" — (From one of their official publications.)

Whatever we may think of their claim there is no vagueness about it at all events. It is a clear declaration of war! It is Cooney and his Go-preachers against all the Churches ("*so-called*") and against their clergy. Surely before we dismiss our clergy, and scatter our congregations, we should satisfy ourselves by infallible proofs that the Cooneyites are right, and that what has passed for Christianity hitherto is not true Christianity at all, but radically wrong, that the "Churches" are no Churches and their "ministers" no ministers.

What, then, are the essential qualifications (according to the Cooneyites) which their preachers, and they alone, possess? The chief of them are to be found in their "*Destitute-Go-Preacher*," and "*Ignorant-Go Preacher*" theories. The first theory is generally stated in some such way as this:

"Christ tramped about homeless, living on the charity of those whom God moved to pity and help Him. As was Jesus, so were all the preachers He sent out. Like their Master they went out without purse or scrip, without salary, without a home, living on the charity of whosoever would shelter and feed them" ("The Jesus Way").

"He who goes forth to preach must 'renounce all that he hath' (Luke xiv. 33), which means in his case, 'sell that ye have and give alms' (Luke xii. 33). He must go forth on the lines described in Luke x." — (Letter from Edward Cooney to the **Fermanagh Times, April 18th, 1907**).

To show how absolutely essential they consider this literal giving away of all they possess by those who go forth to preach, hear what Cooney says in another letter:—"Some time ago I saw it was better to give the bicycle I had away, and now I get the use of a Saint's on the same terms as Jesus got the use of the colt!"— (**Fermanagh Times, April 25th, 1907**).

Cooney tells us, in the same letter, that: "When Jesus was the Carpenter at Nazareth, He had renounced all that He had, but did not scatter all and give alms until He went forth to preach. As a Carpenter He must have had a home where to lay His head, tools to operate with, timber to operate on...when He went out to preach He did that which He taught all preachers to do—sold all He had and gave alms."

It is hardly necessary for me to point out that not a word of all this is to be found in the New Testament, with the solitary exception that Jesus is called "the Carpenter." (9)

Cooney tells us in the same letter that Mary the sister of Lazarus "sat at the feet of Jesus, and drank in the living water, *intending to go forth and pourit out as a preacher*. She broke the alabaster box of ointment on the feet of Jesus, *valued for about £10, supposed to*

be her dowry-money, and was *probably one of the handmaidens spoken of as preaching with Peter and the other Apostles on the Day of Pentecost* (Acts ii. 17, 18).

Lazarus, Martha, and Mary were all disciples who renounced all to follow Jesus, *Mary being the only one who scattered all and went forth as one of Christ's destitute preachers.*" (Observe specially the words I have written in italics.) One may well ask, "How does Cooney know all this, for we do not read a word of it in the Bible?"

Let Cooney himself reply:—

"*The interpretation of the Scriptures was and is alone entrusted by Jesus to His destitute sent ones* primarily, and in a secondary sense to those in fellow ship with them"! (Letter, ***Fermanagh Times, May 2, 1907***).

Compare this with the Creed of the Roman Catholic Church:—"I do admit the Holy Scriptures in the same sense that the Holy Mother Church hath held and doth hold, whose business it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of them." (Creed of Pope Pius IV.)

Cooney's claim far surpasses that. It is so monstrous that words fail to characterize it. With infallible interpreters ("entrusted by Jesus"), such as Cooney, and his Go-Preachers, we may look for a "New Theology," that will soon leave us very little, if any, of the old Gospel. (11)

In exposing the Cooneyite theory of the *Destitute sent ministry*, I might dwell upon the glaring inconsistencies of Cooney's Tramp Preachers who, while professing to follow literally the directions given by our Lord to the seventy disciples and the twelve apostles (Matt. x and Luke x), and the example of St. Paul in the vicissitudes he underwent (1 Cor. iv. 9, etc.) yet neither hunger nor thirst, nor are they half-clad and buffeted. They "go forth" clad in good garments, many of them having two coats instead of one only, shoes instead of sandals, bicycles to ride on, and even (I am told) bringing with them bags into which the saints can drop filthy lucre—otherwise good coin of the realm. Instead let us go on to examine the theory itself.

When the Son of God came to visit this world, He became poor, not only, or chiefly, because He chose an humble birth, but because He "emptied" Himself of His glory, taking upon Him the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men (Phil. ii. 7, R.V.).

St. Paul speaks of this poverty when he writes: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. viii. 9).

When our Lord was about thirty years of age (Luke iii. 23), He began His public ministry. Up to that age it would appear He had dwelt in the home at Nazareth. From that time, for about the space of three years, He travelled about Palestine, having, as was only natural, no certain dwelling-place.

We read that on one occasion a certain scribe offered to follow Him about the country, thinking, doubtless, that he would thereby obtain some considerable worldly advantage. Jesus dashed his hopes by telling him that "the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head" (Matt. viii. 20).

We read that He went throughout every city and village and with Him the twelve, and certain women mentioned by name, "and many others" (Luke . viii. 3, etc.). How such a large party were provided for is told us. Some of these women were wealthy and "ministered to them of their substance."

The Cooneyites, for their own purpose, exaggerate all this into "He tramped about homeless, living on the charity of those whom God moved to pity and help Him. As was Jesus Christ, so were all the preachers He sent out. Like their Master they went without purse, etc."

And yet we are plainly told that our Lord and His Apostles possessed the means to pay for their necessities. *They had a purse* in which the common fund was kept. When our Lord said to Judas (John xiii. 27), "That thou doest do quickly," some of the Apostles thought that He was directing him to go and *buy* the things they had need of for the passover feast, for Judas carried the "bag" (v. 29).

At the same time it is quite evident that our Lord *was not rich in worldly goods, position, or power. For His own Divine purposes* He chose the lowly life. Now mark this: *Insofar as that life is a pattern, it is a pattern for all—preacher and people alike.* Nowhere in the New Testament is any distinction made, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. xi. 1), said St. Paul to *all* the Corinthians.

Therefore if, *from the example of our Lord*, it is wrong for a preacher to have money, or goods, it is equally wrong for any Christian—wrong for a preacher to have a home, it is equally wrong for any Christian; wrong for a preacher to occupy any station in life but that of a peasant, it is equally wrong for any Christian.

Cooney declares a *literal following of our Lord to be an essential for a preacher, he cannot stop there, he must make it incumbent on everyone who would lead a Christian life.*

When the Cooneyites begin to be thus consistent in their preaching, it will be time enough for us to show that our Lord has not called us to any such literal imitation of Him.

Let us now briefly consider the sending out of the twelve apostles and the seventy disciples, and see whether the Cooneyites have any grounds for their theory that the ministers of Christ were to go out, for all time, "on the same lines."

Our Lord sent out both the twelve and the seventy for a special and temporary purpose. They were directed to go to certain towns which He meant to visit. (The twelve were told to confine their preaching to the Jews.) They were not to make preparations for a lengthened absence, nor were they to delay on the road by going through the elaborate form of salutation then customary. They were given special powers of healing the sick, etc. Their preaching was only preparatory.

Like the Baptist, they were to proclaim that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mark x. 7). They knew nothing of the atonement to be accomplished by the Saviour when He expired on the Cross, or of His rising again from the dead. (11) They had no knowledge of the Holy Spirit, who should be sent by the Father and the Son to the Church. They soon returned, and gave the Lord an account of their completed missions, and there is no mention of any such sending out again.

Contrast the Commission given by our Lord to His Apostles before His Ascension, with these:

These to a few Jewish villages.

The other to the whole world!

These for a few weeks or months.

The other for all time! (11)

These just to proclaim that Jesus was coming.

The other to declare the Gospel of Redemption!

It is quite evident that we cannot conclude that the "marching orders" would be the same in both cases, or, rather, I should say, *we would naturally conclude that they would of necessity be very different.*

We turn to the accounts given us in the Gospels and Acts (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Mark xvi. 15-18; Acts i. 4-8) of our Lord's parting missionary charge to the Apostles, and we do not find one word in them to lead us to suppose that He meant them to go out on the lines laid down in Matt. x and Luke x.

In fact upon the night in which He was betrayed He had distinctly revoked the orders He had then given to the twelve and the seventy.

In Luke xxii. 35, 36, we read: "And He said unto them, When I sent you without purse and scrip and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. Then said He unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one."

Let us contrast two explanations of this passage. First hear what an old Presbyterian commentator (Barnes) has to say:

"*But now*" (v. 35). The Saviour says the times are changed. *Before*, he sent them out only for a little while. They were in their own country. Their jour neys would be short, and there was no need that they should make preparations for a long absence, nor for encountering great dangers. **But now** they were to go into the wide world, among strangers, trials, dangers, and wants. And as the time was near: as He was about to die; and as these dangers pressed on; it was proper that they should make provision for what was before them...They should *now* take money, as it would be necessary to provide for their wants in traveling, 'a sword'...It should be remembered that these directions about the purse, the scrip, and the sword were not made with reference to His *being taken* in the garden, but with reference to their *future life*. The time of the trial in Gethsemane was just at hand. Nor was there time then, if no other reason existed, to go and make the purchase. It altogether refers to their future life. They were going into the midst of dangers. The country was infested with robbers and wild beasts. It was customary to go armed."

But Barnes is old-fashioned (he wrote in 1837!). Let us hear what an "up-to-date" critic has to say, "*entrusted*," moreover, with "*the interpretation of the Scriptures*" (see page 35). Hear what Cooney says:

Having stated that Peter "*had backslidden in heart, and was about to backslide openly*," he goes on: "Matthew xxvi and xxxiv show that the others were in the same condition, unaware that they had lost confidence in Jesus in some measure, and departed from the simple faith they had in Him and His way at the beginning. See the 35th verse. 'And He said unto them, When I sent you without purse and scrip and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing,' meaning when I sent you at the first when your hearts beat true to Me, and you provided for yourselves neither gold, silver, brass, food, or extra clothes, did I not move hearts to provide you with home, food, clothes, gold, silver, brass, or anything else ye needed, as ye became My destitute sent ones, and went forth seeking first the kingdom? (Luke xii. 31-33.)

"But now...now that ye are going to backslide, **now** that Peter is going to deny Me, and go back to his fishing; **now** that ye are all about to forsake Me and flee because that ye are fools and slow of heart to believe (John xxi. 2, 3; Luke xxiv. 25): he that hath a purse let him take it, and likewise his scrip, and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. Verse 38 shows that they had gone so far wrong as to provide themselves with two swords, which they were probably hiding from the eyes of Jesus, but He knew their hearts, and when they produced the swords, He said, 'It is enough,' meaning it is enough to show you have lost confidence in Me and My Father. It is enough to prove your backslidden condition. (13) When He told the backslidden disciples to take purse, scrip, and sword it was because they had the heart to do it— 'He gave them the desire of their hearts and sent leanness withal into their souls,' etc."

It would be hard to beat this for a specimen of a palpably *absurd* (one is tempted to use a much stronger word) "*interpretation*" of the words of Holy Scrip ture, but the "*Destitute-Go-Preacher*" theory was in desperate peril, and had to be rescued at all costs, even by turning our Lord's plain meaning upside down!

No wonder such "*interpreters*" have to be backed up by the "entrusted by Jesus with the interpretation of Scripture" theory!

But perhaps it might be thought that the original instructions of Matt. x. and Luke x. were afterwards renewed by the Apostles, under the direction of the Holy Spirit. We have two epistles of St. Paul to Timothy, and one to Titus, which relate mainly to the offices of the ministry.

St. Paul enters into the subject very fully, laying down what manner of men the ministers of the Church are to be. Surely, if the commands given by our Lord in Matthew x. and Luke x. were to be binding on the Christian ministry now, we shall find frequent reference to them in these Epistles. Far from that *not one of them is even hinted at.* (14)

In fact, neither here nor in any other place, have we a trace of the existence of an order of "destitute teachers" in the Christian Church.

The Cooneyites claim that all the Apostles were so. St. Paul is their favourite example. They are very fond of quoting the different passages where he speaks of his vicissitudes.

St. Paul did, indeed, give up much, and suffer much, for the cause of Christ. He went forth among the heathen as a missionary, and suffered from perils, want, and persecution, and in the end died as a martyr.

But all this came upon him as a matter of course, just because of his zeal in preaching "Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness;" and not because he could not be a true minister of Christ unless he "went out without purse or scrip, without salary, without a home, living on the charity of whoever would shelter and feed him" (The Jesus Way). Thousands of missionaries have suffered, and are even now suffering, in the same way as St. Paul, and for the same reason.

They blunder badly in accusing St. Paul of "Living on the charity of whoever would shelter and feed him."

Hear what he says to the Thessalonians:—"For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail; *for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you*, we preached unto you the Gospel of God" (1 Thess. ii.9) (15)

Fond as the Cooneyites are of boasting that they are "tramping on the same lines" as St. Paul did, they are discreetly silent on the subject of his "labouring with his own hands" when he was "tramping," nor did I ever hear of them doing any manual labour to help the people in whose houses they were put up and enter tained free of all charge. (16)

But while St. Paul thus preferred to be independent of the Thessalonians, it was not because he thought it essential for the minister of Christ to preach the Gospel without pay.

He makes this abundantly clear in I Cor. ix. 1-15. The passage is too long to quote it in full here. Read it (in the Revised Version, if possible), and you will see there is no difficulty in understanding it.

The Apostle is defending himself against certain charges made against him by false teachers. The general line of his argument is as follows:

In verses 1 to 4 he claims his standing as an Apostle of the Lord. As `an Apostle he had the "right" (17) to eat and drink (that is to be supported) at the cost of the Churches (v. 4)

He had also the "right," which had been exercised by some of the Apostles and brethren of our Lord to bring about with him, on his journeys, "a wife that is a believer" (R.V.) at their expense (v. 5). Also he (and Barnabas his companion), had the "*right*" to look to them for their maintenance without any manual labour of their own (v. 6).

Then he goes on to give three examples from com mon life to show the *reasonableness* of the Christian minister being supported by his work (v. 7).

The *soldier* is paid for going to *fight*. The *husband man* gets his support from the fruits he grows, the *shepherd* from the "milk" of the flocks he tends (v. 7).

But the proof of this "*right*," for which he is con tending, is not a matter of human reasoning merely, but the Law lays down the same principle (v. 8). First he quotes Deut. xxv. 4, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn," and says that this command was not given for the sake of oxen, but "altogether for our sakes"—that the Christian teacher who ploughs in God's field, and threshes in His floor, is to be supported in his work (v. 10).

Then he calls attention to the provision made by the Law that the Priests and Levites should have a regular maintenance out of their sacred offices (v.13).

And then he says, "*Even so, did the Lord ordain that they which proclaim the Gospel should live of the Gospel*" (v. 14).

He who receives a fixed salary for his services cannot (according to the Cooneyites) be a true minister of Christ.

St. Paul makes it perfectly clear that by human *reasoning*, *God's Law*, and the *Lord's ordaining* he is as well entitled to it as the soldier to his daily pay, the husbandman to the profits of his ground, the shepherd to the proceeds of his flock, and the Priests and Levites to their tithes and offerings. (17)

IGNORANCE.

But, according to the Cooneyites, not only must the preacher be *destitute*, he must also be *ignorant*. For instance, in "The Jesus Way," we read—"The clergy are college-bred, trained in human learning Christ went out to preach straight from the carpenter's bench."

And Cooney writes, "Paul's education by the the theological professor Gamaliel made him an opponent of the destitute ministry of Jesus.

"It was a wonderful miracle that one belonging to the college-bred clerical class of that day could get converted and become poor enough and low enough to be a sent one of Jesus.

"It was the educated preachers of Christ's day that opposed Him while the common people heard Him gladly. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise." (Letter in ***Fermanagh Times, March 21, 1907***).

Now "education" is a question of degree. If a "college-bred" man is unfitted by his education to serve in the sacred ministry, what about a man educated in an Intermediate school, or one in a National school? Where will the Cooneyites draw the line?

But, without dwelling upon the manifest absurdity of their theory of ignorance, it is easy to see how utterly without foundation is their contention that our Lord, and His Apostles, when they went out to preach after His Ascension, were ignorant.

In Luke ii. 41 to end, we get a glimpse (the only one) of our Lord's early life. At the age of twelve He tarried behind at Jerusalem, when Mary and Joseph, after the Paschal Feast was over, had left for the home in Nazareth.

The Rabbis used to teach their scholars in a room attached to the Temple, and there Jesus was found by Mary and Joseph, "both hearing the doctors (teachers) and asking them questions" —as was the custom in Jewish schools, "and all that heard Him were amazed at His *understanding* and His answers."

Again, in John vii. 15, we read that the Jews marvelled at our Lord's learning.

But, surely, there is no necessity for me to dwell upon this sacred subject. We know how true it was what the officers who were sent to take Him declared, "Never man spake like this man" (John vii. 46), for He was the "Christ in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden" (Col. ii. 3).

To say that "Christ went out to preach straight from the carpenter's bench, "is nothing short of ignoring His Divine nature, treating Him as a mere man. To found a claim for an ignorant ministry on such a ground is simply monstrous!

But the Apostles—they were indeed ignorant (some of them, at all events) and sadly needed teaching, when they came to Jesus at first.

Over and over again their Master had to rebuke them. For instance, James and John asked our Lord to allow them to call down fire from heaven to consume the inhabitants of a Samaritan town, who would not receive them. "But Jesus turned and rebuked them" (Luke ix. 54).

On another occasion they requested our Lord to promise that they should sit "the one on His right hand, the other on His left in His glory," and Jesus said to them, "Ye know not what ye ask" (Mark x. 38).

When Jesus spoke of His sufferings and death, Peter said, "Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee," and "Jesus turned, and said unto Peter, " Satan, thou art a stumbling-block unto Me, for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men" (Matt. xvi. 21, R.V.).

One other instance will suffice: We read of mothers bringing their little children (St. Luke calls them "babes") to Jesus "that He should touch them, and His disciples rebuked those that brought them" (Mark x. 13), thinking, no doubt, that infants, who were without understanding, could not receive any spiritual benefit from the touch of Jesus.

"But when Jesus saw it, He was moved with indignation, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God...And He took them up in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands upon them."

The Cooneyites imitate the *ignorance* of the disciples in this very particular. They, too, will not suffer the infants to come unto Him. Surely, the Lord is still "moved with indignation," for He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

But if the Apostles were indeed ignorant when they came to Jesus at the first, they then entered upon a course of teaching and training without compare to fit them for their great work. For the space of about three years they had for their Master the Son of God Himself, and when He left them, the Holy Spirit came to complete the work, according to His promise. "The Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (John xv. 26).

And yet it is on the assumption that these Divinely taught Apostles were ignorant that the Cooneyites found their objection to an educated and trained ministry!

With regard to the opposition which the rules of the Jews showed our Lord: This does not surprise us—we could expect nothing else. It was quite natural that they should be bitter enemies, for He openly rebuked their system of tradition, which "made the Word of God of none effect," and they saw clearly that, if His principles took root in the minds of the people, their influence must decline, and their authority suffer, and the result be that, as they said, "All men will believe on Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation" (John xi. 48).

In so far as the education and training of the Jews extended to *principles and practices which were opposed to the Law of God*, they were hurtful to them, and made them the more bitter opponents of Christ, but it does not follow from that, that it was wrong to have an educated Jewish priesthood then, or an educated Christian ministry today.

With equal "reason"(?) might the Cooneyites contend that because it is wrong to educate and train boys to be pickpockets, it is therefore wrong to educate or train them at all!

It is a very remarkable fact that when all our Lord's Apostles "forsook Him and fled" for fear of the Jews, it was two of the *rulers* who had the courage to come forward and let all men see they were His followers!

It was Joseph of Arimathea, "an *honourable counsellor*," who went *boldly* unto Pilate, and begged to be allowed to take away the dead body of Jesus, and give it honourable burial in his own new tomb; and it was Nicodemus, "a Ruler of the Jews," he "who *at the first*

came to Jesus *by night*," that now came forward, *in the light of day*, to assist, bringing costly spices to embalm the body of their Lord. These were men of position, highly educated men, or they would not have been Rulers; did their education make them opponents of Jesus?

And did the education of the Jewish priests keep them from becoming Christians? What do we read in Acts vi. 7? "*A great company of the priests were obedient to the faith*"!

With regard to St. Paul it was not his education that made him an opponent of the "men of that way" (as the followers of Jesus were called at first), but his zealous character ("as touching zeal, persecuting the Church" Phil. iii. 6), which, after his conversion, made him labour more abundantly than all the other Apostles in the cause of Christ.

It is evident that God had been preparing him for the great work to which he was called, and we can easily see that his early training under Gamaliel was of great service to him, in place of being a hindrance, as the Cooneyites contend.

You remember what the Lord said of him to Ananias, "He is a chosen vessel unto Me to bear My name before the *Gentiles*, and *Kings*, and the *Children of Israel*."

It was these great *talents of education and training* that enabled him so to proclaim the Gospel as to gain the attention of Kings and Governors, and to "confound" the unbelieving Jews; when a man of little or no education would not have been listened to, or have made any impression.

Thus it was that, as St. Paul "reasoned of righteousness and temperance, and the judgment to come," the Roman Governor Felix "was terrified" (Acts xxiv. 25), and that on another occasion King Herod Agrippa could not restrain himself, but exclaimed "with a loud voice, Paul, thou art mad; thy much *learning* doth turn thee to madness" (Acts xxvi. 24).

St. Paul's intimate knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures stood him in good stead when addressing Jewish audiences.

It was his great object to prove to them that "Jesus was the Christ."—the Messiah. He traced the condemnation of Jesus by the Jews to their ignorance of the true meaning of the prophets (Acts xiii. 27).

In the Synagogue of Thessalonica he "reasoned with them from the Scriptures, opening and alleging that it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise again from the dead, and that this Jesus, whom, said he, I preach unto you is the Christ" (Acts xvii. 3).

In his lodging at Rome he "expounded, testifying the Kingdom of God, and persuading them (the Jews) concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning till evening" (Acts xxviii. 23).

We have very few of his addresses to Gentile audiences, but enough to show us how *he used his knowledge of heathen philosophy and literature* to make the proclamation of the Gospel more impressive upon them. For instance, when he spoke in the Areopagus to the assembled Athenians, he aroused their attention in his opening words by referring to an inscription which he had seen over one of their altars, "To an unknown God." Taking that for his text, as it were, he went on to reason with them in a truly philosophical and scientific discourse, *quoting words* written (as he told them) *by their own poets* (Acts xvii. 28). (19) It is very plain that St. Paul himself did not look upon his "college-bred education" as a hindrance to him in preaching the Gospel!

But surely, St. Peter settles, once for all, this question as to the fitness, or unfitness, of an unlearned ministry to interpret the Scriptures to the flock of Christ. Speaking of St. Paul's epistles, he says, "Wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the *ignorant* (or "unlearned"—A.V.) *and unsteadfast wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction*" (2 Pet. iii. 16)

This inspired warning completely upsets the Cooneyite theory. If the teacher and taught both be ignorant, it is a case of "If the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch" (Matt. xv. 14).

REVEREND, ETC.

A few words on one or two other points will suffice. They object to anyone being called Reverend on the ground that such a use of the title detracts from God's glory. "The clergy assume the title Reverend (the Word says Holy and Reverend is God's name)" ("The Jesus Way"). "I do not and dare not dishonour God by calling any mortal 'Reverend.' " (John West, in ***Fermanagh Times, May 2, 1907***).

But if it is wrong to call any mortal "Reverend" because it is written "Holy and Reverend is God's name," it is equally wrong to call him "Holy," and yet Christians are called by a Greek word which means "The Holy Ones" over sixty times in the New Testament (translated in our Bible by "Saints").

Many other instances might be given of "Holy" being applied to human beings. St. Peter speaks of "The holy women," mentioning by name Sarah, Abraham's wife.

So that if the Cooneyites wish to "improve" upon the New Testament Christianity they must give up their common practice of calling themselves "*Saints*."

But is it wrong to 'give reverence' to a human being? Calling him "Reverend" is only the outward expression of what is in our mind.

In Heb. xii. 9 we read, "We had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence"—from which fact the writer seeks to impress the lesson of subjection to God.

We are there plainly taught that it is right for children to *give reverence* to parents.

The truth is that certain attributes which are applied to God are often given to man also—of course in a lesser signification—while there are others which *implying perfection, can* be applied to God alone. Besides those just mentioned we find, for instance,

MERCIFUL.

"*The Lord* is merciful" (Ps. ciii. 8).

"Be ye merciful, as your *Father* also is merciful" (Luke vi. 36).

"Blessed are *the merciful*" (men) Matt. v. 7).

GOOD.

"*None is good*, save One, even *God*" (Mark x. i8).

"Well done, thou *good* and faithful *servant*" (Matt. xxv. 21).

But to *God alone* can be applied such a title as "Almighty" (occurs nearly sixty times in the Bible, and *always* used of God), for none but He is so.

It plainly follows that there is no moral reason against our giving "Reverence," or letting it be known that we do so by the use of the title "Reverend," to any person we please, be he clerical or lay.

A very favourite "argument" of the Cooneyites with ignorant people may be stated thus:

"Our Lord and His Apostles were opposed by the 'clergy' of their day.

"Our Lord and His Apostles were right, and the 'clergy' were wrong.

"We are opposed by the clergy of to-day; therefore it follows that we are right and they are wrong." (20)

It does not take "college-breeding" to see the un soundness and absurdity of this "reasoning." In the first place the use of the word "clergy" is very misleading. There were no "clergy" in our Lord's time.

If by that title the Jewish priests are meant, then it is quite absurd and impossible to draw a parallel between *their* hostility towards Christianity and the attitude adopted by our *clergy* against those whom we believe to be the enemies of the Gospel.

Again, the conclusion they draw would make murder, theft, adultery, drunkenness, to be good and right—for all these are opposed by the "clergy of the day"!

In the foregoing pages I have been very careful to state the errors of this heresy in the words of its "chiefest Apostles."

Of course the "Go-Preachers," in their tramps around the country are bound by no creed—not even that of Cooney—and each of them proclaims his own version of this new "religion," so that their hearers are "like children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of men, etc." (Eph. iv. 14).

The things which some of these men are reported to have said are so monstrous that one can hardly credit the reports.

I abstain from any notice of these. We have seen what the authorized, deliberate statements of the leaders are, and that view is quite sufficient to convince us that the movement *is* to draw men away from "the Faith which was *once for all* delivered to the Saints" (Jude 3).

As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and established in your Faith, even as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving" (Col. ii. 6).

END NOTES:

1. Treatise by Dr. William Wall (1647–1728): The history of infant baptism ([Ancient and Modern Library of Theological Literature]) (Messrs Griffith, Farran, and Co.)

2. A "disciple" means a "scholar."

3. For another instance see the case of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts viii).

4. See "Wall" for proof.

5. Baptism was, in fact, usually delegated to others by the Apostles.

6. See "Wall" for proof.

7. The same provision is made in the case of the baptism of an adult.

8. Has it never occurred to the Dippers what extreme Ritualists they are in thinking that God will withhold His blessing unless a certain quantity of water be used?

"Much water – God's Blessing;

Little water—no Blessing."

But perhaps they do not look for any Divine recognition of the Rite? Then, why these violent onslaughts on Infant Baptism and "Baby Sprinkling"?

9. This was in "His own country," and was said in derision by the unbelieving Jews (Mark vi. 3). The most likely explanation is that Jesus had wrought in the workshop of His reputed father Joseph. We recall how it is said that, at the age of twelve, He went down with Mary and Joseph to Nazareth, and "was subject unto them."

10. It is nowhere said in the Bible that the Holy Spirit will give infallible guidance to any individual in the interpretation of Holy Scripture. Our Lord's words, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth" (John xvi.13) convey no such promise. He was speaking to the twelve Apostles alone (Matt. xxvi. 20) on the night of His betrayal, and, having said to them, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (v. 12), He went on to tell them how He would teach them these things—namely, all "the truth" concerning Himself—after He had gone away from the world. We have one result of this teaching in the inspired writings of the New Testament.
11. When He spake of His coming death, "They understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask Him" (Mark ix. 32). And as to His Resurrection, "As yet they knew not the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead (John xx. 9).
12. I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 20).
13. The words, "It is enough," would seem to mean simply, "I have said enough now;" for immediately follow the words, "And He came out and went to the Mount of Olives."
14. Hardly necessary to say that, "Not *greedy* of filthy lucre," is quite a different thing from "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses" (Matt. x. 9).
15. In Acts 3 we read, "And because he [Paul] was of the same craft, he abode with them and wrought, for by their occupation they were tentmakers." This was in Corinth. In Rome he "lived in his own hired house." (Acts xxviii. 30).
16. Unless, indeed, to "put on the kettle to make tea" comes under the head of "labour." I heard of one "Go-preacher" who was very zealous to do this "with his own hands" immediately the "preaching" was over!
17. The Greek word which, in the "Authorized Version" of this passage, is five times translated by "power" is more accurately rendered in the "Revised" by "right."
18. When he thought it advisable St. Paul exercised his right to receive "wages." He says to the Corinthians, "I robbed (or 'spoiled') other Churches, taking *wages* of them that I might minister unto you." The word translated "wages" is the same as John the Baptist used when he said to the soldiers, "Be content with your wages." He speaks of having "spoiled" other Churches because he was not ministering to them at the time, but to the Corinthians.
19. The poets were Aratus, and Kleanthes (who was born 300 B.C.)
20. For instance, "John the Dipper, Jesus the Dipper, Peter and Paul, all Dippers—all were denied and cast out as evil by the clergy of the day." —John West, in the **Fermanagh Times, March 14, 1907.**

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- 1907, Mar. 7, *British Library advises none published for this date (letter of 5/25/95)*
- 1907, Mar 14, Pg 2 – Correspondence: The Pilgrims at Ballycassidy-Question of Infant Baptism
- 1907, Mar 21, Pg 7 – Correspondence: The Pilgrims at Ballycassidy-Question of Infant Baptism
- 1907, Mar 28, Pg ? – Correspondence: The Pilgrims at Ballycassidy-Question of Infant Baptism
-
- 1907, Apr 4, Pg 6 – Correspondence: The Pilgrims at Ballycassidy-Question of Infant Baptism
- 1907, Apr 11, Pg 7 – Correspondence: The Pilgrims at Ballycassidy-Question of Infant Baptism
- 1907, Apr 18, Pg 7 – Correspondence: The Pilgrims at Ballycassidy-Question of Infant Baptism
- 1907, Apr 25, Pg 7 – Correspondence: The Pilgrims at Ballycassidy-Question of Infant Baptism
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- 1907, May 2, Pg 3 – Correspondence: The Pilgrim Controversy-Question of Infant Baptism
- 1907, May 9 – (no article printed)
- May 16, 1907, Pg 2 – Correspondence: The Pilgrim Controversy-Question of Infant Baptism
- May 23, 1907, Pg 3 – Correspondence: The Pilgrim Controversy-Question of Infant Baptism
- May 30, 1907, Pg 6 – Correspondence: The Pilgrim Controversy-Question of Infant Baptism
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- June 6, 1907, Pg 7 – Correspondence: The Pilgrim Controversy-Question of Infant Baptism
- June 13, 1907, Pg 6 – Correspondence: The Pilgrim Controversy-Question of Infant Baptism
- June 20, 1907, Pg ? – Correspondence: The Pilgrim Controversy-Question of Infant Baptism
(Ended with: "This controversy is now closed.")