

The Tri-lemma;

OR,

DEATH BY THREE HORNS

BY J. R. GRAVES

CHAPTER III.

The Question in the New School Presbyterian General Assembly, 1854--Reports of Speeches, etc--The Tri-lemma.

IN the year 1854, this question came up for discussion in the New School General Assembly, and was discussed for two days or more. It was a practical question, since the sessions of one or more of their societies had received members upon their Romish baptisms, and one Mr. Riley, who had been so received, had been, for some time, a minister among them, and had baptized not a few infants and adults.

We have used great industry to obtain as full a report of the discussion and speeches as possible, from the most authentic sources, religious and secular.

The following Reports, which appeared at the time in the columns of the New York Observer, the organ of the *N. S.* Presbyterians, can be relied upon, so far as they go. There were certain sentiments advanced by distinguished doctors of divinity that the editors of the Observer did not wish for their lay readers to see, lest their fears should be alarmed.

For instance, we may suppose that Mr. Riley, in substance, said, when he moved that it was inexpedient for the Assembly to express an opinion on the subject:

"Mr. President, how can this Assembly decide that the baptisms received by the priests of Rome are invalid, and save the ecclesiastical existence of Presbyterian Churches? How many have been received from that communion, since Presbyterianism commenced, in the sixteenth century, upon their Romish baptisms, that have become ministers, and have baptized scores of other ministers, and thousands of members. What will you do with all these ministers, and with those whom they have baptized, if you decide this question negatively? I, myself, sir, have received no other than Romish baptism, and was received among you upon it, and I am, to-day, satisfied

with it. Will this Assembly nullify it by an *ex post facto* law? If this Report is adopted, you will nullify it, and declare me unbaptized. What will you do with me? exclude me, or re-baptize me? To be consistent, you must demand my re-baptism, and all those I have baptized since I have been a minister among you, and you must pursue this course with all those among you, who have either been baptized by Romish priests, or who have been baptized by those ministers who have been so baptized; and where will you stop sir?--where will you stop? Can you tell? I can tell you where you will have to *begin*--with Calvin and Zwingle, and Beza, and Knox, and all the first Presbyterian ministers, and re-baptize them, and all whom they baptized, and so on down to the present. I said I was satisfied with my baptism, though it was administered by a priest of Rome, and I expect to be so long as I am a Protestant; for why should I not be? Who of you, what Presbyterian minister in the United States, can give me a more valid one? You will not say, no Presbyterian will say, that your own Calvin was not validly baptized! I was baptized in the *same Church*, and by the *-same minister*--a ROMISH PRIEST!! The baptisms and ordinances of all Presbyterian ministers are from Romish priests indirectly--mine, *directly*. If my worthy compeers around me were baptized in the remote streams, I can claim to have received it at the pure fountainhead!"

Such, we suppose, was substantially the speech of Mr. Riley, from the meager outlines we have been able to gather.

We submit the Reports as published in the New York Observer.

"Extract from Report of Proceedings of Presbyterian General Assembly, held at Philadelphia, Pa., May 18-30, 1854, as reported in New York Observer:

*"Monday Morning, May 22.--*The Committee on Romish Baptism, through its Chairman, Dr. Hatfield, reported, recommending that the General Assembly declare that, in their opinion, baptism in the Roman Catholic Church is not to be regarded as Christian baptism. This Report is signed by Revs. Drs. Hatfield and Cox.

"The Rev. Henry B. Smith, D.D., of Union Theological Seminary, made a Minority Report, That it is inexpedient for the Assembly to decide that [such] baptism is necessarily invalid.

"We here reserve these Reports, not being able to insert them here.

"Rev. Dr. Barnes moved, that it is inexpedient for this Assembly to decide Romish baptism necessarily invalid.

"Rev. Mr. Niles, of Michigan, moved the indefinite postponement of the subject. This was seconded by Dr. Allen. The motion was lost.

"At this point of the debate, the order of the day was taken up, etc.

"Monday Afternoon.--The Report of the majority of the Committee on Romish Baptism was taken up. The Rev. Mr. Dobie read the definitions of baptism as given in Roman Catholic catechisms, to show that there can be no relation between our doctrine and that of the Romish Church.

"Rev. Mr. Riley offered the following Resolution, viz.:

"That in view of the great diversity of opinions, and of practice in the Presbyterian Church, on the subject of Popish baptism, and in view of the previous action of the Assembly, it may be inexpedient for the present Assembly to take action in the case.'

"Dr. Brainerd advocated this amendment, and showed the difficulties of taking either Report as the dogmatic assertion of a doctrine. For instance, if you say Romish baptism is valid, your converts from Rome will sometimes constrain your conscience by asserting that, in their estimation, Romish sacraments are valid. If you say that Romish baptism is invalid, you will excite prejudice in the minds of Catholics, which will prevent your making such advancement toward their conversion as you desire.

"Rev. Mr. Clapp said there might be pious persons in the Papal Church. Now, suppose such a parent in that faith has his child baptized, and twenty years after, that child is converted, will you re-baptize him, when he had been consecrated to God in the rite of baptism in faith? We can not pass an absolute rule such as the Majority Report lays down.

"Hon. Mr. Taylor urged the adoption of the Majority Report in a speech of great earnestness.

"Rev. Mr. LeDoux would have this Assembly leave the subject with the pastors and sessions of the Churches to decide each case as it arises. He hoped Mr. Riley's resolution might pass, as any more stringent rule will embarrass our Church.

"Dr. Beman said: The opponents of the Report which I sustain may be divided into three strata, (I do not mean to call my opponents fossils--I mean as a mere figure of speech.) The upper stratum considers Rome as a Christian Church, and her ministers as ministers of Christ. The middle stratum holds that it is not a Church, and that its ministers are not ministers


of Christ but, as laymen, men and women, may, in extreme cases, administer baptism, therefore Romish baptism is valid. Mr. Beman said there was no such extreme case which can be named. If I may guess what is an extreme case in their estimation, I should say that it means that a child is likely to die before an ordained minister can get there. If this be what is meant, we are on the ground of baptismal regeneration, and on the way to Rome. As for those cases in which some converted Catholics stand by their Romish baptism, no one supposes that they need be affected. There may be exceptions, but in this case we are called to make a declaration of sentiment. The lower stratum contains those who agree, in the main, with the Report; and as, in the physical world, the lower stratum is so hard pressed that its original features are lost, so with these men: they are pressed so hard, that you find nothing distinctive about them. This is a sort of dough-faced operation, into which I will not enter. Let us adopt one Report or the other. Our standards favor the Report, and I am not afraid, as a Presbyterian, of these standards. They declare the Pope to be Antichrist, and that his ministers must be excluded from the Christian ministry. Let us not shrink from the conclusion which flows from this principle. The Scriptures have decided this thing. Rome is the scarlet harlot riding on the beast with seven heads and ten horns. We have some Presbyterians who crave to lay a pillow under her old aching head, which is about to be scathed with the thunderbolts of the Almighty! Kind nurses are they!--very sisters of charity! This Church is drunk with the blood of saints, and yet there are some who advocate the validity of a baptism administered by men whose hands are dripping with the blood of the saints. As for offending the Catholics, it will not produce this result. It will be with them as with a converted Catholic woman I know of, who, on being asked if she wished to be baptized, replied: 'I certainly do. I wish to have the last mark of the beast washed off.' Mr. Beman hoped we would pass the Report of the Committee, as being in accordance with our standards, our Bible, and with the wants of the age.

*"Tuesday Morning, May 23.-- * * ** The unfinished business of yesterday was resumed, viz.: the consideration of Mr. Riley's amendment to the motion to adopt the Report of the Committee on Romish Baptism.

"Dr. James C. Fisher strongly advocated the entire repudiation of Romish baptism, and in support of this, recited the definition of baptism as given in the standards of our Church. He said the question turns on this: Is the Papal Church in any sense a Christian Church? Our standards denounced it as Antichrist.

"Dr. Riddle made a happy reply to the ridicule of Dr. Beman, yesterday, and protested against the disposition to bring up hypothetical cases to have a deliverance by the General Assembly *in these* ♦. This is not in accordance

with the analogies of our Supreme Court. It is a pure question of abstraction, not brought upon an actual case, where matters of discipline are involved. We are called on to decide whether it is expedient to declare that Popish baptism is necessarily invalid, and not whether the Pope is thus or so, and whether the Papal Church is a Christian Church or not. At considerable length, Dr. Riddle argued against the expediency of making any deliverance on this point. If made, it would not satisfy many consciences. Not only is the General Assembly divided, but there is the same diversity in the Church at large.

"Rev. Mr. Boardman said that it was not a question *in the* , but a practical question. Our business is to affirm or deny the sentiments of that Report; and it is expedient for us to affirm with emphasis, the invalidity of baptism administered by the man of sin. There are three questions which will guide my vote: 1. Is the Romish Church a true Church? 2. If it be a true Church is the baptism administered by it valid? 3. Is lay baptism valid? These points Mr. Boardman argued at some length for the purpose of sustaining his views in favor of the Majority Report.

"Rev. J. G. King said it was the desire of many of the younger pastors, 'Junior Patriarchs,' as they had been facetiously called, to have this question discussed. They wanted the advice and counsel of this body. They have to deal with this question in a practical manner.

"Dr. Franklin Knox, of San Francisco, said, we have no right to consume time in discussing whether the Roman Church is a Christian Church. There are practical difficulties connected with this subject, and if you adopt an iron rule (I would call it a Papal rule) you will do mischief.

"Rev. Mr. Snyder, in an admirable strain, advocated the inexpediency of passing the Majority Report, not because he did not believe it to be true, but because he did not believe he had any right to force his inferences on those who differed from him.

"Rev. Mr. Waterbury moved that a committee of three be appointed, to which should be referred the whole business.

"Dr. Beman would second the motion with a single modification: that both the papers shall be referred to the same committee, with the addition of two members of this body, with instructions to report at the next Assembly.

"Mr. Waterbury accepted the suggestion of Dr. Beman.

"Rev. J. G. King called for a division on the question.

"Dr. Brainerd was in favor of the commitment, and was delighted that we had reached such a termination. We express a general principle, and yet preserve the rights of conscience.

"Rev. Mr. Sherwood was opposed to the motion, because many had not expressed their sentiments and because, also, no good can be secured. The next Assembly will have to travel over the same ground. We ought to settle the question at this meeting of the Assembly.

"At this point the hour of adjournment arrested the discussion.

"Tuesday Afternoon.--The motion of Mr. Waterbury to refer the Reports on Romish baptism to a committee to report to the next Assembly was taken up.

"Dr. Spear opposed the motion. He wished the Assembly to distinctly vote that they can lay down no general law to bind others in this matter. We can fix no rule on this point; Dr. Beman himself acknowledged there were exceptional cases.

"At this point Mr. Waterbury asked leave, to withdraw his motion of commitment and it was granted.

"The original amendment of Mr. Riley was then taken up. The discussion was suspended at this point, to take up the order of the day, etc.

"Tuesday, May 30.--The subject of Popish baptism was indefinitely postponed."

The following corroborating, and in some cases, fuller reports, are from the columns of the *New York Daily Times*: PRESBYTERIAN GENERAL ASSEMBLY--NEW SCHOOL.

"PHILADELPHIA, Monday, May 22, 1854

This reverend body has occupied itself this morning with several grave and exciting subjects. After a Report commending the Union Theological Seminary in New York, and the Lane Seminary at Cincinnati, and speaking encouragingly of the projected Seminary at Galena, two Reports, majority and minority, were presented from a committee previously appointed, to consider the question--*Is the Baptism of the Romish Church valid?* The Majority Report, signed by Revs. Drs. Hatfield and Cox, took ground against the validity of such baptism. It argued from previous decisions of the

Assembly; from the Confession of Faith; from the acknowledged apostasy of the Romish Church; and from consistency. As the Church of Rome was Antichrist, she was not to be recognized as a Christian body, nor her priesthood to be regarded as a Christian ministry. All its other sacraments are universally repudiated by Protestant Churches; there was no reason why this should not also be. The Report concluded with these words:

"Planting ourselves on the broad and firm ground of a Protestant and a pure Christianity, and believing that the circumstances of the Church and of the age demand of us a manly and unambiguous avowal of our faith in relation to the pretensions and abominations of this "mystery of Iniquity," this General Assembly solemnly declare their conviction that the ministers of the Church of Rome are not authorized to administer the sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the Gospel; and that the administration of what is denominated baptism in the Roman Catholic Church is not to be recognized as Christian baptism.'

"Rev. Dr. Smith, of the Union Theological Seminary, presented a Minority Report, which was read by the Moderator. It argued that it was inexpedient for the Assembly to decide that baptism in the Roman Catholic Church is necessarily invalid. A presumptive argument was to be found in the unanimous consent of the Reformed Churches and theologians. The French, Dutch, German, and English Churches; the great Reformers, divines like CALVIN, TURRETIN, and HOOKER, admit the validity of Romish baptisms, while contending against the corruptions of the Papacy. During the century of the Reformation, only the Anabaptists, of all the sects of the Reformers, advocated the contrary opinion. With the exception of the Old School Presbyterian Church, no considerable Protestant body in this country has taken the position that Romish baptism is necessarily invalid; and against that, the *Princeton Repertory*, the great Review of the Church, took ground. The Assembly ought not to decide against such a current of testimony, except on the strongest grounds.

"It argued further, that baptism, like marriage, may be valid, even when the form of it is irregular. Even those Churches which insist most strenuously on sacramental grace, allow the validity of lay baptism in certain cases. It also distinguished between the Roman Catholic Church and the Papacy: because the latter was corrupt and Antichrist, does not prove that the former has none of the elements of a true Christian Church. Even a ministry is not essential to the being of a Church; and even in a corrupt Church there may be a lawful ministry. As the Roman Catholic Church, in its public confessions retains Christian truth on fundamental doctrines, as the Trinity and the necessity of grace, though intermingled and overlaid with errors, superinduced by the Papal and sacramental systems, it is still to be regarded

as a Church, and its ministry lawful, despite its apostasy, and the sacrament of baptism as administered therein may be held to be valid. The Report also argued the inexpediency of taking ground against the validity of such baptism, on the ground of consistency, and the relations of the Church to Roman Catholics in this country.

"On the perusal of the two Reports, a lively debate sprang up, which elicited a variety of opinions. Some were for postponing it, in order to have time to prepare for a regular discussion of it; others were for a discussion now; others still agreed with the advice of Professor Smith's Report that the Assembly take no ground on the subject. It transpired in the debate, that two of the clergymen of the body were converted Roman Catholics, one of whom had been rebaptized and the other not. Both now agreed that there was no good ground for denying the validity of Romish baptisms; because it is not to be assumed that the Romish Church is not a Christian Church, and because the real validity of baptism depends upon the intent and design of the subject of it much more than upon the regularity of its form. Some of the oldest and ablest men of the Assembly expressed themselves on one side or the other, very definitely: Dr. Beman warmly espousing the Majority Report; Mr. Barnes and Dr. Spear the opposite. No conclusion was reached before the order of the day arrived, and it is therefore to come up again.

"PHILADELPHIA, Tuesday, May 23, 1854.

"The subject of Romish baptism came up again in the afternoon, and drew forth a few strong speeches.

"Mr. Dobie read extracts from the Romish Catechism, to show the radical difference between the baptism of that Church and the baptism of the New Testament.

"Rev. Mr. Riley proposed to substitute a minute, declaring the inexpediency of any action on the subject. [See his position on page 56.]

"Dr. Brainerd also thought it inexpedient to legislate on the subject. It was not good policy to do anything to estrange us from Catholics. To make a violent assault upon their rites or their character, as a Church, would be just what the priests of that Church would like. Moreover the subject is invested with great difficulty. IF THE VALIDITY OF CATHOLIC BAPTISM BE DENIED, THEN LUTHER AND CALVIN, FROM WHOM OUR BAPTISM IS DERIVED, WERE UNBAPTIZED; AND TO MAINTAIN OUR OWN STANDING IN THE CHURCH, WE MUST BAPTIZE THE ASHES OF THE REFORMERS!! Questions like this, involving matters of conscience, can not be settled by majorities. The discussion would do good, but the Assembly should be slow to legislate.

"Rev. Mr. Clapp thought the adoption of the Majority Report--which declares the invalidity of Romish baptism--WOULD LEAD TO PRACTICAL DIFFICULTY. What if the child of sincerely pious parents within the pale of the Catholic Church should, present himself for admission to a Protestant Church? To require his rebaptism would be to deny the faith and sincerity of his parents. He opposed any such declaration, because the validity of any rite depends much more upon the intent and spirit of him who receives it than on the character of him who administers it; and because it would be attaching too much importance to the form, and too little to the substance of the ordinance.

"Hon. Elisha Taylor, of Cleveland, strongly advocated the invalidity of Romish baptism. Baptism, as defined by the New Testament, WAS AN INITIATORY ORDINANCE; IF SO, IT COULD RIGHTFULLY BE PERFORMED ONLY BY THOSE BELONGING TO THE CHURCH INTO WHICH IT ADMITTED THE SUBJECT. The question was not as to the intent of the subject, but as to the authority of the administrator. A few years ago a company of infidels in New York admitted their members by the rite of baptism, in derision of Christianity. What if any one had received this baptism innocently, and with good intentions, would it have been valid baptism? The hierarchy of Rome were as corrupt and as hostile to true Christianity as this band of infidels; and any principle which would admit the validity of their baptism would sanctify the mockery of the infidels. He was for speaking out on the subject. There was, quite too much disposition to trim and compromise for the sake of effect. This is no question of policy and if it were, he knew of no better policy than to declare the truth boldly.

"Rev. Mr. LeDoux repeated his opinion that the Romish Church was a true Church of Christ, though greatly corrupted. Any just definition of a Church would necessarily include the Romish communion.

"Rev. Dr. Beman made a powerful speech in opposition to the Minority Report, in which logic and wit were finely intermingled. He divided the friends of the Minority Report into three strata--not intending, he said, to imply by that term that they were fossils. The upper stratum believed in the genuine Christian character of the Romish Church; they are opposed to telling the truth on the subjects because they did not believe it. The second stratum believed that baptism was valid by whomsoever administered--by laymen or women. The third believed in the principle of the Majority Report, but like the lower strata in the physical world, were pressed down flat, and were for quiet. They were opposed to action in any shape, for policy's sake. These several classes were held up to ridicule, and reasoned against in a manner that kept up a lively interest. Dr. Beman has but few superiors as a debater. Deliberate, shrewd, witty, and unmerciful, he makes the worst kind

of a foe; and generally marches off the field in triumph, if not stained with the blood and brains of his adversaries. His speech on this occasion disclosed not a little of the vigor of his best days.

"PHILADELPHIA, Tuesday, May 30.

"The Presbyterian General Assembly (New School) adjourned *sine die* this afternoon.

"The subject of Popish baptism was indefinitely postponed."

Thus closed the discussion of this vexed question, to be brought up henceforth, not once in a decade of years, but yearly, if the query will be entertained from their societies.

The reader will see that it is one question that Protestants can not answer, and save their ecclesiastical existences. The General Assembly confessed itself in a *dilemma*, but we should say it was in a *tri*-lemma. Its dilemma was this:

If it decided that baptisms, at the hands of the priests of Rome, are *invalid*, then they would destroy their own baptisms, and those of all Protestant sects, because the fathers and founders, and all the first Pedobaptist ministers received their baptisms in the corrupt Church of Rome, and at the hands of her priests.

If they should decide that the baptisms of Romish priests are valid, they would also destroy the validity of their own, as well as these of all Protestants, because the General Assembly would thereby declare the Church of Rome to be a true Church of Christ visible; which if she is. Pedobaptist societies are *schismatics*, and excommunicated parties, and no Churches, and consequently their ministers are unordained, and unbaptized, and without authority either to preach or to baptize as Gospel ministers. So it is fatal to them, decide it either way.

The *Tri*-lemma is the middle horn: the confession of the General Assembly of its inability to decide whether its own ministers are baptized, or have authority to baptize, and, consequently, whether their societies are visible Churches of Christ!

We should think, for the General Assembly to rest impaled upon this middle horn, would be as fatal as either of the others.

What! can not Presbyterian ministers, with all their boasted learning, decide among themselves whether they have received Christian baptism? Can they not tell the world, when convened in their great Assembly, whether they be duly ordained and baptized ministers of Christ or not? Can they not tell the world whether their societies are visible Churches of Christ? Did Presbyterian ministers return from their General Assembly, and confess to their people that they were lost in thick darkness, not being able to decide whether they or their members were properly baptized, or members, in reality, of visible Churches? This was their real situation; but we have not heard of one minister making such a confession to his people. Our impression is that all have agreed to keep their people in the dark about the whole matter. We have heard of their denying, stoutly, that such a question was ever mooted, and that the Assembly was unable to answer. We do not believe that one Presbyterian lay member, in one hundred, if one in one thousand, ever heard of it. They are in the profoundest ignorance of the fatal *tri*-lemma in which they are placed.

Would it not have been the part of conscientious Christian men, when they saw their situation as Protestants, as they did see it in the light of the powerful discussions of that General Assembly, when they returned to their flocks, to have called them together, and frankly confessed the case to them, and told them: "You must excuse us from preaching longer to you as *ministers*, or baptizing any more, or administering the Supper to you, for we can not see that we have authority to do so, having received only Romish baptisms, and you are not qualified to receive it, not being baptized by other than Romish priests, yourselves, indirectly. You must excuse us from all official duties until this vital question is settled?"

Now, when all these facts shall have been made known to Presbyterians, and to all Pedobaptist sects, what should an intelligent and conscientious membership do, but to wait upon their ministers *en masse*, and say to them, "Gentlemen, we have learned, through other sources than yourselves, that you have acknowledged yourselves unable to decide whether you are duly baptized and ordained ministers of the Church of Christ, visible; unable to decide that we, your members, are baptized, or members, in fact, of a visible Church. That we have been deceived by you, *intentionally*, hitherto, we do not charge; but you certainly do not wish to deceive henceforward, our children, and the world, intentionally, for you now see the position you occupy. Suspend your ministerial functions, preach no more as ministers, baptize no more, and introduce no more into our societies as valid Churches, until this question is satisfactorily settled: *Whether the baptisms of Romish priests are valid*, or whether Pedobaptist ministers can administer more valid baptism than Roman Catholic priests?"

Ought not all the Presbyterian membership in this land to unite in one huge petition--*instar montis*--of mountainous proportions, and roll it into the presence of the next General Assembly, calling upon it to answer, if they and their children have been baptized, and are really members of Christ's visible Church.

What position should the public take--men of the world who are appealed to to support and attend upon the ministrations of Presbyterian and Pedobaptist ministers and "Churches?" Should they not say: "You must excuse us, if we withhold our usual support and countenance, until this, to us, very important question is, to our minds, satisfactorily answered. If you be only Romish priests in fact, having no better ordinances than they to give to our wives and our children, then we do not wish them to receive ordinances at your hands. When you introduce them into your societies, they honestly suppose they are members of the Church of Christ, which your own General Assembly declares your societies are not, if the Romish Church is not a visible Church of Christ; and, in fact, are much less Churches, if the Romish Church is now, or was, in the days of Luther, a Church of Christ visible! We have no use for the baptisms of Catholic priests, nor for the Roman Catholic Church as a religious body, and wish purer ordinances for our families, whose guardians we are, and must therefore decline yours."

BAPTISTS need not be reminded of their duty in this case. Shall we be so kind as to step in and decide this matter for Presbyterians and Pedobaptists? Shall we, by our acts, say to them, and to the world that is watching us, we regard those men baptized and duly-ordained ministers in true Churches of Christ? Do we believe they have received valid baptism? Do we believe that their societies, originated and set up, not by the God of heaven, built, not by Christ, but by Luther, and Calvin, and Wesley, are Scriptural Churches, or Christian Churches in any sense? Do we believe it, or believe that their ministers possess the proper qualifications to carry out the commission of the Son of God--*i. e.*, preach, baptize, administer the Supper, etc.? Baptists do not. No intelligent and true Baptist can; and therefore they can not say so by their *acts*--associating with them as with properly-qualified ministers of Christ. If they preached the faith, in all respects, that was once delivered to the saints, we could not treat them as men qualified to preach as Christ's ministers; and how much less when we believe that they preach contrary to, and in subversion of the doctrines and ordinances of Christ, and would, if left alone, in one generation, obliterate from the world the last trace of the Church he established. Their organizations are rivals against the Church Christ set up, and their teaching is another gospel; and from all such, though they be angels from heaven, we are to withdraw--are to have no company with them, that they may be reproved and ashamed, and the world be warned.

How Presbyterian ministers, or members who have a knowledge of these facts can presume in the face of these things to demand of Baptists to recognize and treat them as ministers by inviting them into our pulpits to preach, as we only do qualified ministers, and to commune with them as baptized persons, and to acknowledge and treat them as evangelical Churches, is passing strange to us!

They all say their creeds and confessions teach that none are entitled to the Lord's Supper, or ought to be invited to partake of it, unless duly baptized; if there is any doubt about the matter, the Supper should not be offered until the doubt was removed; and yet, they, through their General Assembly, confess to us, that they can not tell whether they, themselves, any one of them, have been duly baptized; ay, more, confess that they are not baptized, having received their baptisms from the man of Sin and the Mother of Harlots.

We think that the action of the General Assembly forever settles the vexed question of open communion.

Anabaptists never did commune with Rome, or those who received her baptisms. The Baptists of to-day are the descendants of the Anabaptists who have, for so many centuries, witnessed for Christ against the corruptions of Antichrist.

We leave the question with the Protestants of this age to answer if they can, and preserve their ecclesiastical existences:

ARE THE BAPTISMS OF THE PAPAL HIERARCHY VALID BAPTISMS.